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SMALL PROJECTS ASSISTANCE (SPA)

A Joint Project of AID and the Peace Corps #PC-384-1010

An Evaluation Conducted in Cooperation with Benchmarks, Inc.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Acknowledgements		
Executive Summary		
Chapter I.	Introduction	1
Chapter II.	In-Country Management of the SPA Program.	9
Chapter III.	Impact of the SPA Program on AID and the Peace Corps, An Opinion Survey	81
Chapter IV.	SPA Projects	121
Chapter V.	Small Project Assistance/Technical Assistance (SPA/TA).	244
Appendices		

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Thomas J. Scanlon, Benchmarks, Inc.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EVALUATION OF THE

SMALL PROJECTS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SPA)

CONDUCTED BY

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES

AND

BENCHMARKS, INC.

APRIL 15, 1985

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The Small Projects Assistance Program (SPA) was launched in January of 1983 with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Agency of International Development (AID) and the Peace Corps. The program provides $2.2 million a year to the Peace Corps from AID for the purpose of supporting small projects at the village level which have been identified by Peace Corps volunteers working with local community organizations. Since then, 34 eligible countries have negotiated country agreements establishing independent funds of $40,000 per year. AID funding for the SPA program was provided in both FY '83 and FY '84.

The SPA program also consists of a $395,000 Participating Agency Service Agreement (PASA) between AID and the Peace Corps to provide (over the same two year period) technical and programming assistance in support of the SPA program.

Creative Associates and Benchmarks, Inc., were contracted by the Peace Corps in October 1984 to perform an evaluation of the SPA program.

The purpose of this evaluation was (1) to review the management of the SPA program in the field, (2) to assess the impact of the program on both agencies, (3) to determine the relative success and/or failure of SPA projects and (4) to assess the effectiveness of the Peace Corps' use of SPA/TA funds.

The results of the evaluation are summarized in the following four chapters of this Executive Summary. Each chapter addresses itself to one of the four evaluation objectives stated above. Different evaluation methodologies and instruments were developed to address each objective.

Underlying all of Creative Associates and Benchmarks' efforts over the past eight months has been a concern to deal with a basic issue related to the very essence of the Peace Corps itself.

Should volunteers become sources of funding for community projects? Does the use of SPA funds by volunteers negate the traditional values of the Peace Corps which emphasized community self-help? Will the volunteers be loved for their money or for their willingness to live side by side in poverty and on an equal footing with local villagers. The upshot of the evaluation on this important point is that the SPA program provides an essential tool for community development and that it contributes greatly to volunteer work satisfaction. However, like other small project assistance efforts with which volunteers have been involved over the years, the SPA program carries with it the incumbent risks of damaging fragile community initiatives as well as the Peace Corps spirit if not managed properly both by Peace Corps staff and volunteers.

CHAPTER II. IN-COUNTRY POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

DECENTRALIZED PROGRAM

The SPA program involves thirty-four inter-agency agreements between individual AID missions and Peace Corps country teams. Each system for managing SPA funds is different. The decentralized nature of SPA program management should be preserved. Guidelines aimed at standardizing SPA procedures worldwide would be resisted and could prove to be counterproductive.

Approval Systems

Project approval systems also vary from country to country. An effort should be made to provide technical assistance to AID and Peace Corps country teams on the advantages and disadvantages of different approval procedures.

Disbursement Issues

The disbursement of SPA grants is often marked by confusion and delay. In some cases, funds are being deposited in the personal bank accounts of Peace Corps staff and then disbursed to individual volunteers and communities. This procedure is not in accord with government regulations. Checks should be issued directly to the community, to the volunteer on behalf of the community, or to a bank account requiring the co-signature of both community representatives and the volunteer. The volunteers themselves do not want to be solely and ultimately responsible for SPA funds.

Clearer guidelines should be provided to the field on the disbursement of funds. Delays in the issuance of checks detract, in a few cases, from the "fast funding" nature of the program. There were no cases of misuse or abuse of SPA funds by volunteers reported or discovered in any of the countries visted.

Staff Requirements

AID staff are not greatly involved in program managment and time requirements for AID personnel are minimal. Both AID and Peace Corps field staff prefer that the Peace Corps manage the program with the appropriate financial and programmatic reports to AID. Peace Corps staff are able to absorb the additional work load involved with managing the SPA program. However, the Associate Peace Corps Director (APCD) with principal responsibility for the program has become overworked in almost all case--as has his or her secretary.

Given the number of funds now available to volunteers from both SPA and other AID-related sources and given the report's recommendation of an increase in the SPA program itself, it seems highly advisable to create the position of Small Projects Coordinator in Peace Corps' country teams. Both AID and the Peace Corps have used third-year volunteers for this purpose or ex-volunteers who have recently completed service. In order to assure proper management of these AID resources, AID should allow a small portion of SPA funds to be used to augment the Peace Corps staff capability for effective SPA program management. This would involve a change in the present AID/Peace Corps understanding, which precludes the use of any SPA funds for administration.

Funding Levels

A substantial majority of both AID and Peace Corps staff support an increase in funding for the SPA program. Several reasons are given for this including the success of individual projects, the limited number of volunteers who are presently able to obtain SPA funds, and the need for resources in the communities where volunteers are stationed.

The report recommends that funds available for the SPA program be doubled; that the present "formula" level of $40,000 per country be retained; and that additional increases be based on requests from individual countries (some have adequate funds for small projects), performance to date in use of SPA funds, the number of volunteers and the level of poverty in the country in question. A joint AID/Peace Corps technical committee should review individual country requests for increases.

Expanding Eligible Sectors

A majority of AID and Peace Corp staff favor making Health and Education projects eligible for SPA funds. Many stress that SPA projects in Education should be income generating and community based and not substitute funding for materials which ought to be provided by public educational insti- tutions. Others feel that SPA funds should be used for Education projects without these restrictions. The issue of how funds should be spent in the Education sector deserves consideration by the AID/Peace Corps Coordinating Committee as an important policy issue.

Inter-Country Communication About SPA

Due to the decentralized nature of the program, individual country teams are highly desirous of receiving information about how other countries run their programs and about individual project success and failure. The Peace Corps should take steps to provide periodic information to all posts on common pitfalls and promising practices. "Promising practices" that have been developed in individual countries and should be shared with others include:

- country-specific guidelines aimed at achieving an equitable distribution of SPA resources among volunteers and program sectors in Ecuador
- use of third-year volunteers as SPA program coordinators in Senegal
- public signing ceremonies to reinforce community commitments to SPA projects in The Gambia
- use of a checklist on SPA project completion during "close-of-service" conferences in Thailand
- administrative procedures for application, review, and accounting for SPA projects in Honduras

- an evaluation and follow-up questionnaire for SPA projects in Honduras
- creation of a Volunteer Project Advisory Committee in Ecuador
- creation of a Small Funds Guidebook for volunteers in Togo
- information packets that provide volunteers with complete information on applying for SPA funds (several countries do this but in others, volunteers can be confused about the SPA program.)

Other promising practices exist around the world. The Peace Corps should make the effort to share good ideas on SPA management with all Peace Corps teams responsible for SPA funds.

Project Supervision

Peace Corps staff become involved in the management of SPA funds principally during the review and approval period. There is very little staff oversight of projects while they are being implemented. In all countries except one, there was no evaluation of projects after completion. No country had a follow-up to determine long-range impact on the community nor was any doing systematic reviews or analyses of volunteer reports. There is a need to design and implement a simple system to determine whether SPA projects are a success or failure and to learn from these experiences.

Training

Peace Corps training practices have not caught up with the SPA program. Volunteers need to be trained in project analysis, supervision, proposal writing, and fiscal accountability practices. Most importantly, Peace Corps training programs must prepare volunteers to use SPA funds in appropriate ways

that encourage rather than stunt the growth of community responsibility and initiative. Few volunteers felt they had adequate training in the use of SPA funds.

Staff training is also necessary in project selection and management--as well as in the overall objectives, opportunities, and dangers involved with the SPA program.

AID/Peace Corps Relations

The SPA program has increased communication between AID and the Peace Corps in the field. In half the countries visited, the SPA program led directly to other AID/Peace Corps joint initiatives. A more systematic and detailed briefing of AID by the Peace Corps of SPA project results would be welcomed by AID missions and could lead to even greater cooperation. Unfortunately, the annual briefings called for in the McPherson-Kuppe Letter of Understanding which created the SPA program were neither requested by AID nor provided by the Peace Corps in any of the countries visited.

CHAPTER III. IMPACT ON AID AND THE PEACE CORPS: AN OPINION SURVEY

The report attempts to determine the impact of the SPA program on AID and the Peace Corps by means of an opinion survey conducted among 44 Peace Corps staff members, 23 AID personnel, and 87 Peace Corps volunteers. An overview of the results of this opinion survey is provided below.

A. PEACE CORPS STAFF VIEWS

1. **Advantages Versus Disadvantages**

The advantages most frequently cited by Peace Corps staff were:

- o helps volunteers do their jobs
- o PCVs have a greater impact on their communities

The disadvantages mentioned most often were:

- o communities can see volunteers as a source of money
- o delays in disbursement of funds

When Peace Corps staff mentioned the disadvantage of volunteers being seen as a source of money, they stated it contingently; i.e., the disadvantage could develop if the program is not handled properly. It is interesting that only four staff persons mentioned the additional workload as a disadvantage.

Eight Peace Corps staff persons felt there were no disadvantages.

Forty-one felt that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages of the program. None felt the contrary. Two were undecided.

2. **Impact on Role of Volunteers as Community Motivators**

Thirty-five Peace Corps staff felt that the SPA program increased the volunteers' ability to motivate communities toward self-help efforts. None felt it decreased it. Four felt the SPA program was neutral in this regard and five were undecided. Cited as reasons why the SPA program increases volunteer effectiveness in this regard were:

- o provides the community with a sense of accomplishment
- o SPA projects require community participation

3. **General Effectiveness of Volunteers**

Thirty-five staff members felt the SPA program made volunteers more effective. None felt it decreased effectiveness. Nine felt it either had no impact on effectiveness or were undecided.

4. Contributions to Country Development Goals

Thirty-three Peace Corps staff felt the program contributed to the Peace Corps' overall goals in their country. Three felt it did not. Eight were undecided.

5. Necessity of the SPA Program

Staff felt the SPA program was necessary--despite the existence of other programs such as the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund and other "fast-funding" mechanisms by a 41 to 3 margin. Reasons given were the SPA program's (in order of frequency):

- quickness and reliability
- flexibility
- control by the Peace Corps
- responsiveness to community requests

B. VIEWS OF AID PERSONNEL

The overall result of the survey of AID staff opinions was highly positive in terms of the impact of the program on AID itself. All twenty-three AID staff interviewed felt that this joint effort with the Peace Corps enabled AID to get resources to the community level at a reasonable cost. In answering this question, AID staff cited the cost effectiveness of the program; its outreach to communities; and its ability to deliver concrete results as its major advantages.

Twenty-two felt the SPA program assisted AID to respond to basic human needs in developing countries. One (a Mission Director) felt that this was not the case, since AID no longer had a strategy in his country that concerned itself with basic human needs.

AID staff were asked to list the advantages of the SPA program. Those most commonly cited (in order of frequency) were:

- extends AID's outreach
- cost effectiveness
- high success rate
- speed and ease
- benefits of inter-agency cooperation
- improved image of the United States

They were also asked to list disadvantages of the program. Most frequent comments were (in order of frequency):

- no disadvantages
- administrative workload
- perception of volunteers as a funding source

In light of the above, AID staff were then asked, is the SPA program more trouble than it's worth? This concern had been expressed by some AID staff personnel in Washington who were interviewed prior to the development of the evaluation instruments. No AID field staff felt the program was "more trouble than it's worth."

C. VOLUNTEER OPINIONS

Peace Corps volunteers were also asked to describe both the advantages and disadvantages of the SPA program. Advantages cited (in order of frequency) were that the SPA was:

- a reliable source of funding
- an encouragement to community development

- a necessary resource to get the job done
- under Peace Corps control
- efficient and accessible

Twenty-nine volunteers saw no disadvantage in the program. Disadvantages mentioned (in order of frequency) were that the program:

- was too slow in providing funds
- created the danger of a Santa Claus image for volunteers
- was never clearly explained to them
- was too restricted in terms of funding sectors
- was insufficient
- lacked continuity
- was sometimes managed inequitably in terms of which volunteers received funds
- could put pressure on volunteers to "have a project"

When asked whether the advantages outweighed the disadvantages, 76 volunteers said yes, 5 said no, and 6 were undecided.

Impact on Community Self-Help

Consistent with concerns expressed at the early stages of the evaluation by the Peace Corps Director herself, volunteers were asked whether the SPA program had a negative impact on the self-help abilities of local communities. Ten volunteers felt this was the case, 52 said no, and 25 were undecided.

Differences of opinion were not sharply drawn to this question and behind them can be found a rather common view among volunteers. Of those answering yes, nine gave qualified answers saying that the SPA program will detract from

self-help community efforts *if* volunteers rather than communities handle the money or *if* the program is not monitored and managed properly.

Among those answering no, there were also many contingencies and cautions mentioned. Twenty-three of the 52 said no *if* the projects were managed properly in the communities themselves. Another 16 said that there was a danger that communities *could* come to depend on outside help.

The large number of undecideds (25) reinforces the views of both groups and indicates volunteer awareness that the SPA program is a double-edged sword when it comes to fragile community self-help initiatives and that SPA grants must be managed properly by the volunteers and Peace Corps staff alike.

Help or Hinder Development Work

Seventy-four volunteers felt that the SPA helped Peace Corps development work. Two said it hindered. Twelve had no opinion in the matter.

PCVs as Grantspersons

Volunteers were asked whether the program created this image for volunteers and whether this hindered their effectiveness. Twenty replied affirmatively, 52 negatively, and 16 were undecided.

Risks of SPA Program

Volunteers were asked to list the risks involved with the program. All listed hypothetical risks, not ones based on actual experiences. They were (in order of frequency):

- misuse of funds
- danger of creating community dependency
- volunteers becoming money source, not human resource
- no risk if managed properly

Means of avoiding these risks mentioned by volunteers were:

- o achieving community participation in the project
- o proper planning and assessment by volunteers
- o better training and orientation
- o careful management by Peace Corps staff.

Need for Training

Although the importance of proper training in the use of SPA funds was noted frequently by volunteers, 20 of those interviewed had received no formal training whatever. Most had learned about it from their APCDs as they were about to begin a project or by word of mouth from other volunteers. Of those who had received Pre-Service Training (PST) about SPA (20) only one felt it was adequate. Those who had learned about the SPA program during In-Service Training (IST) were generally satisfied with it.

Only one volunteer of the 87 interviewed had received any guidance or orientation regarding the risks involved with SPA grants to a community.

Volunteers were asked two final questions: whether they favored further AID/Peace Corps cooperation and whether the SPA program should continue. The results were:

Favored Further AID/Peace Corps Collaboration	64
Did Not Favor	16
Undecided	7

The SPA Program Should Continue	84
Should Not Continue	2
Undecided	5

CHAPTER IV. THE PROJECTS

Sixty-two SPA projects were evaluated in eight countries.

Project evaluators used both volunteers and community residents as sources of information. They chose the projects using criteria aimed at providing a good cross section of projects and at helping them avoid being programmed to visit only successful projects. After each visit to an SPA project, evaluators were asked to write a "journalistic appreciation" of the strengths and weaknesses of the project and of its impact on the community. These journalistic reports are including in the report in their entirety.

Also included for each project is information on the amount of the project, number of persons served, the impact (both potential and realized), the extent of community involvement, and specific problems. Each project was rated as very successful, successful, marginally successful, unsuccessful, or too early to tell. It was also coded according is a system described on page 125.

Pages 126-131 provide a complete list of projects and their ratings. A summary sheet appears on page 132.

The results of the evaluations of individual SPA projects were as follows.

1. Of the 62 projects, 43 were rated as successful; 5 were unsuccessful, and 14 were "too early to tell."

2. Of those actually rated (excluding those "too early to tell"), 89.6 percent were rated as successful.

3. Project success or failure is distributed evenly among projects of different size, with larger projects being somewhat less successful. Seventy-five percent of all projects under $500 were successful, as were 75 percent of those in the $500-$1,000 range. Projects between $1,000 and $2,500 were successful in 72 percent of the cases and those over $2500 had a 62 percent success rate.

4. The degree of community involvement in projects had an important and measurable relationship to project success. Of these projects rated as very successful, 73 percent had substantial community involvement. Among the unsuccessful and marginally successful projects, there was substantial community involvement in only 40 percent of the cases.

5. Although the report does not recommend requiring cash contributions from community groups, there is a strong correlation between success in SPA projects and the provision of some cash support from the community.

   It is extremely difficult for communities living at this level of poverty to provide cash contributions to SPA projects. However, communities did so in 50 percent of the very successful projects. In projects rated as either unsuccessful or marginally successful (10), only one saw a community cash contribution.

   Among all projects actually rated (excluding those "too early to tell"), those with cash contributions were successful in 14 of 15 cases.

6. Twenty-nine percent of all the SPA projects evaluated could be classified as "Women In Development" projects in that their chief protagonists and beneficiaries were women.

7. Six projects would have to be considered to be outside the guidelines for SPA projects. Although most of these were rated as successful, the decentralized management of the SPA program should not be carried to the point where the field can ignore guidelines that are already quite flexible.

8. Numerous projects showed a need for better technical information in their development, approval, and implementation. Some were grounded on incorrect technical assumptions. AID and the Peace Corps should cooperate more in providing good technical support to SPA projects.

9. Projects in the sector of Small Enterprise Development had a lower success rate than other SPA projects. Three of the five unsuccessful projects were SED projects. This reflects the fact that starting new enterprises--especially among poorly educated persons in developing countries--always presents special risks and challenges.

10. The high number of projects rated "too early to tell" reinforces the observation made in Chapter II of the report that the Peace Corps needs to develop a follow-up system to determine the ultimate success or failure of projects.

11. The highest number of projects is in the sector of Food Production and Agriculture (34). This sector also had the highest success rate--92 percent.

CHAPTER V. SMALL PROJECT ASSISTANCE/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SPA/TA)

During FY '83 and '84, the AID Office of Rural and Institutional Development, Science and Technology Bureau (S&T/RD) provided $395,000 to the Peace Corps Office of Training and Program Support (OTAPS) for the delivery of programming and technical assistance in support of the SPA program.

The evaluation of this technical activity was performed in a manner totally different from and independent of the activities described in other chapters of the report.

Originally, it was thought that the evaluators visiting the eight countries in Asia, Latin America, and Africa could bring back informaton useful to the evaluation of SPA/TA. However, it soon became apparent that time was insufficient for them to do this and that the field needed more detail on the SPA/TA activity before it could provide an accurate evaluation.

Consequently, two survey forms were designed and sent to all Peace Corps countries using SPA/TA funds. Each was accompanied by a detailed description of how SPA/TA funds had been used there. One form was completed by the Peace Corps Director, after consulting with his or her staff. The other form was completed by the APCD responsible for the activity under review.

Response from the field was extremely good and exceeded expectations. Information was obtained on 10 of 20 program consultations funded by SPA/TA and on 12 of 24 in-service training programs--a 50 percent response in both cases. Forty-three percent of Peace Corps Directors responded to their survey questionnaire.

A summary of the staff evaluation of individual SPA/TA activities is provided on page 264. Pages 265-286 summarize the data received on all 22 projects, including amount, sector, project description, origin of request, SPA program connection, volunteer reaction, impact on Peace Corps, and suggestions for improvement.

Conclusions based on a review of the survey forms included:

1. In half of all countries obtaining program consultations, new SPA projects were generated because of it.

2. In 75 percent of the countries, SPA/TA had an impact on programming and led to approved relationships with host country officials.

3. Peace Corps regional staff training conferences supported with SPA/TA funds led to improvement of the administration of the SPA program in 50 percent of the countries. Staff especially appreciated and benefitted from the opportunity to exchange ideas on SPA management.

4. Field staff percieve the SPA/TA fund as a quick and flexible way of obtaining assistance. However, some felt it should be able to respond even more quickly.

5. Among program consultations, seven were regarded as successful and three as unsuccessful.

6. Among In-Service Training Programs (sponsored for both volunteers and host country counterparts), eleven were regarded as successful and only one as unsucessful.

7. Seventy-seven percent of all SPA/TA activities were rated as successful and 86 percent were rated as "worth the extra effort" (i.e., although the activity may not have been successful per se, some residual benefits were derived from it).

8. Smaller SPA/TA grants have a higher success rate than larger ones. The average cost of activities rated as unsuccessful, or only moderately successful, was $4,000 higher than those rated highly successful or successful.

9. Improved communications between the field and Washington about SPA/TA emerges as the most promising way of improving the of the program.

Recommendations for improving the SPA/TA program include:

1. Activities should be designed in-country as much as possible.

2. Field staff should be encouraged to use SPA/TA funds to hire locally available technical resource persons.

3. Due to the turnover in field staff, communication about the availability of SPA/TA funds and their appropriate uses must be continuous.

4. Information should be shared among all countries about how SPA/TA funds are being used world-wide. This will serve to provide illustrative examples and help generate ideas on how SPA/TA can be used. Also current information will create the opportunity for greater coordination among countries in the use of SPA/TA monies.

5. Field staff should be consulted prior to selecting a consultant for technical assistance.

6. There should be greater coordination between AID and the Peace Corps at the individual country level in using SPA/TA funds.

7. SPA/TA funds should be used more frequently to assist countries improve their management of the SPA program itself.

8. The Advisory Group now guiding the use of SPA/TA in Washington should be given clearer responsibilities and power. A joint AID/Peace Corps technical committee should be created to review projects. It should consist of SPA program managers and inter-agency liaison officers from both agencies.

I. INTRODUCTION

		Page
A.	The SPA Program and The Peace Corps	1
B.	Background of the Small Project Assistance Program.	3
	1. Uniqueness of the SPA Program Among AID/Peace Corps PASA Agreements.	5
	2. Uniqueness of SPA as a Fast Funding Mechanism . .	5
C.	Technical Assistance.	6
D.	Background of Evaluation.	6

I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE SPA PROGRAM AND THE PEACE CORPS

Since the Peace Corps was launched, over twenty-four years ago, the essence of Peace Corps service has been defined in terms of strictly human, as opposed to material, values. A volunteer was a person who lived in impoverished and harsh conditions, learned the local language and culture and strove to the best of his or her ability to motivate small communities to help themselves.

Somehow this notion of Peace Corps service -- as well as the historical context in which the Peace Corps was born -- precluded the notion that volunteers could be involved in the management of grant funds.

The historical context was the era of the "ugly American." Peace Corps volunteers were to be different than any American who had preceeded them. This meant different -- and apart from -- tourists, diplomats and especially AID officials who, in the opinion of many volunteers and Peace Corps administrators, sought to solve the problems of the developing world with money. "Money," to use the words of one of these early Peace Corps visionaries when he was apprised of the development of the SPA program, "is the root of all evil."

Although the U.S. government and other agencies have provided funds to Peace Corps projects since mid-1960's, the SPA program makes it possible for the Peace Corps itself to actually approve and manage small grants to communities where volunteers are stationed. Many persons who follow the Peace Corps today -- and who serve its interests either in the Administration, the Congress, at AID, the State Department or in many private walks of life -- find it extremely difficult to accept the idea that volunteers can manage grant funds -- however small -- and not do damage to the Peace Corps' essence. Many of these persons are among the 100,000 or so Americans who have been volunteers themselves.

But if you press these same persons, they will usually describe for you their own efforts to raise outside resources for their projects while they were volunteers. And they will describe the frustration -- or the joy -- involved in actually getting something accomplished in communities accustomed, more often then not, to ever-compounded poverty, broken promises and the fracturing of community efforts.

The Peace Corps has changed in the past twenty-four years; and, in many important ways, it has remained the same. It has grown older and wiser. It has become more committed to development and more professional. The central issue of this evaluation is whether the SPA program has been a change for the better or whether it compromises the real spirit of the Peace Corps.

One Peace Corps official who had served as a SPA Coordinator in the field and is now a desk officer in Washington described this issue as the "Charlie the Tuna question." Is it more important, he asked, to have Peace Corps volunteers "with good taste" (as he would characterize the Peace Corps purists) or "who taste good" (as he would characterize volunteers who use SPA funds)?

Creative Associates and Benchmarks, Inc. have sought the answer to this question through a careful and detailed examination of how the program is managed in eight countries, through opinion surveys of field staff and volunteers, through a look at sixty-two individual SPA projects and, finally, through an assessment of how funds were used to provide technical assistance to Peace Corps managers in the use of SPA funds.

B. BACKGROUND OF THE SMALL PROJECT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Small Projects Assistance program (SPA) is one of the most important program innovations ever introduced by the Peace Corps and AID. This is true in terms of both the material resources provided to the communities served by volunteers and in terms of the kind of AID/Peace Corps cooperation which the SPA program represents.

The SPA program developed out of conversations in 1982 between the Peace Corps staff managing a Participating Agency Service Agreement (PASA) with AID in the field of Energy and the AID/Peace Corps Coordinator in AID. It was their intention to design a collaborative project which drew on lessons learned from previous PASAs and fast-funding mechanisms.

In January 1983 a Memorandum of Understanding between the Peace Corps and the Agency for International Development (AID) was signed establishing the SPA program. The program provides $2.2 million a year to the Peace Corps from AID. These funds are designed to support the implementation of small projects at the village level which have been identified by Peace Corps Volunteers working in conjunction with local community organizations. Since that time eligible countries have negotiated Country Agreements in the field establishing independent funds.

The SPA program consists of two parts: a Small Project Assistance fund of up to $40,000 for each selected country in which both AID and Peace Corps operate, and a $395,000 Participating Agency Service Agreement (PASA) with the Peace Corps to provide technical and programming assistance in support of the SPA program.

In AID, the Office of Rural and Institutional Development, Science and Technical Bureau (S&T/RD) has management responsibility for the PASA. The Office of Training and Program Support (OTAPS) has responsibility at the Peace Corps.

The criteria for country participation in the SPA program is two-fold. The first requirement is that a Peace Corps and a USAID administrative relationship exist in the country. The second requirement for receipt of SPA funds is that there be at least ten volunteers serving in the country.

Following the execution of the Country Agreements participating countries enter into Individual Activity Agreements (IAA) with local communities which support small projects intended to enhance the quality of life at the village level in the areas of:

1. Food Production
2. Income Generation
3. Energy
4. Small Enterprise Development

The SPA program guidance sets forth the following criteria for selection of SPA activities:

1. The activity must be scheduled for completion within one year of its implementation.
2. The estimated contribution of SPA funds toward completion of the activity must not exceed $10,000.
3. It must involve development in the broad sectors cited above.
4. It must not encourage reliance on U.S. assistance.
5. The project must be conceived and implemented in conjunction with a local community organization or group.

Since the SPA was established in January 1983, Country Agreements have been signed in thirty-four countries, making the following counties participants in the program during FY'84.

AFRICA	NANEAP	INTER-AMERICA
Benin	Morocco	Belize
Botswana	Nepal	Costa Rica
Burkina Faso	Philippines	Dominican Republic
Cameroon	Thailand	Eastern Caribbean

AFRICA	NANEAP	INTER-AMERICA
Central African Republic (CAR)	Tunisia	Ecuador
The Gambia	Yemen	Guatemala
Ghana		Honduras
Kenya		Jamaica
Lesotho		Paraguay
Liberia		
Malawi		
Mali		
Mauritania		
Nigera		
Senegal		
Sierra Leone		
Swaziland		
Togo		

1. Uniqueness of the SPA Program Among AID/Peace Corps PASA Agreements

The Small Project Assistance Program (SPA) represents a change from previous PASA agreements and other forms of Peace Corps/AID collaboration.

a. The funds go directly to the field.

b. Material support to village-level projects involving PCVs is available to all countries where there is a Peace Corps and an AID presence (provided there are at least ten volunteers).

c. Sectoral support is considerably broader than in previous sector-defined PASAs with activities permitted in the broad areas of food, energy, competitive enterprise development and/or income generating activities.

2. Uniqueness of SPA As A Fast-Funding Mechanism

However, the SPA is also similar to its predecessor PASAs in that it builds on prior and on-going field-level AID/Peace Corps collaborative efforts. These efforts include other "fast-funding mechanisms" such as the Special Development Activities Program which has operated in Latin American and Caribbean countries since 1964: the Special Self-Help Program which has operated since 1965 in African countries, the Improved Rural Technology Program which was initiated in 1977 in Africa and the Accelerated Impact Program which has operated in Africa

since 1976 and Asia since 1979. The SPA is different from these "fast-funding mechanisms" in three respects:

a. Peace Corps involvement is required before a village project is approved.

b. The SPA is administered by the Peace Corps.

c. The SPA program also includes a Washington-based support element -- a $795,000 (for two years) AID PASA with the Peace Corps to provide training, technical and programming assistance to SPA-funded projects generated in FY 1983 and FY 1984. Requests for assistance can be generated by AID or the Peace Corps staff in Washington or by AID or the Peace Corps staff or volunteers in-country.

C. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Integrally connected with SPA funds, is the technical assistance effort that provides funds to Peace Corps country staff for programming and technical assistance.

The SPA/TA PASA was created between AID and Peace Corps in conjunction with the SPA program and in order to ensure that the maximum benefit be derived from the SPA fund in the support of small, village-based projects. The Office of Rural and Institutional Development, Science and Technology Bureau provided $395,000 to the Peace Corps Office of Training and Program Support (OTAPS) for the delivery of programming and technical assistance to the Peace Corps field staff. The purpose of this agreement is to stimulate and support the development of small projects in the field.

Technical assistance is provided to the field in three ways: through program consultations, through the provision of In-Service Training, and through other forms of assistance including regional programming conferences. All three are reviewed in this evaluation.

D. BACKGROUND OF THE EVALUATION

Creative Associates and Benchmarks, Inc. were contracted by the Peace Corps in October, 1984 to perform an evaluation of the SPA program. The

purpose of this evaluation was (1) to review the management of the SPA program in the field; (2) to assess the impact of the program on both agencies; (3) to determine the relative success and failure of SPA projects; and (4) to assess the effectiveness of the SPA/TA funds. Each chapter of this evaluation report addresses itself to one of these four concerns.

Chapter II covers a wide range of issues related to the management of the SPA program "in-country" or the field. It describes AID and Peace Corps staff involvement in SPA program management and systems created for the approval of projects and disbursement of funds. It also raises a number of policy and management issues related to the SPA program and provides Creative Associates' and Benchmarks' recommendations with regard to these issues.

Chapter III assesses the impact of the program on AID and the Peace Corps through an opionion survey of AID staff, Peace Corps staff and Peace Corps volunteers. It was determined early in the evaluation that the best way to assess the impact of the program was to ask the professional staff and volunteers whose knowledge of each agency's efforts in each country was bound to surpass what an evaluation team could learn during an eight day visit.

The opinion surveys also provide a view of how the SPA program affects the effectiveness of Peace Corps volunteers in their communities. Since the early days of the Peace Corps it has always been said that the volunteers <u>are</u> the Peace Corps. Thus the views of the volunteers themselves have to be considered to be of the utmost importance.

Chapter IV provides individual assessments of sixty-two SPA projects visited in eight countries -- along with a series of conclusions and summary tables drawn from the experience of reviewing them.

Chapter V is an evaluation of SPA/TA activities based on a survey sent to all Peace Corps teams which had received SPA technical assistance.

Each chapter is preceeded by an explanation of the methodology used in conducting that particular phase of the SPA program evaluation.

In preparing all chapters of this report, Creative Associates and Benchmarks have made an attempt to be responsive to the needs and interests of managers and policymakers at both AID and the Peace Corps. Washington staff officials were interviewed as part of the process of designing the evaluation instruments. AID staff expressed strong interest in knowing if SPA projects have measurable impacts, create income and bring AID closer to the community level. The Peace Corps officials -- including Peace Corps Director Ruppe herself, were concerned about the impact of the program on the traditional "community motivation for self-help" role of the volunteers, as well as the impact of the program on volunteer effectiveness. CA/BMI has made every attempt to make the following report responsive to their interests and concerns.

II. IN-COUNTRY MANAGEMENT OF THE SPA PROGRAM

		Page
A.	Introduction: De-Centralized Nature of SPA Program Management	11
B.	Evaluation Methodology	12
C.	AID Involvement in SPA Management	13
	1. Extent of AID Involvement	14
	2. AID Workload	14
	3. AID Knowledge of SPA Program	16
	4. AID Perception of Problems	17
	5. Changes Proposed by AID Staff	18
	6. Peace Corps Staff View of AID Involvement	20
D.	Host Country Involvement	21
E.	Peace Corps Management of SPA -- General	22
	1. Division of Labor (Workload)	22
	2. Approval Systems	23
	3. Field Developed Criteria	24
	4. Why Projects Get Disapproved	25
	5. Disbursement	27
	6. Staff Programming SPA Funds	28
	7. Peace Corps Staff Perception of Problems	28
	8. How Fast is Fast	29
F.	Peace Corps Management of SPA -- Specific	30
	1. Morocco	31
	2. Honduras	33
	3. Senegal	37
	4. Costa Rica	39
	5. The Gambia	42
	6. Ecuador	46
	7. Togo	50
	8. Thailand	53
G.	Policy and Management Issues	56
	1. Funding Levels	56
	2. Eligible Sectors	59

G. Policy and Management Issues (continued)

3. Oversight 60
(a) Project Supervision 61
(b) Pre-Mature Termination of Volunteer . . 62
(c) Monitoring. 62
(d) Evaluation. 63
(e) Follow-Up 63
4. Training. 64
(a) Staff Training. 64
(b) Preparing Volunteers to Use SPA Funds . 65
5. Field/Washington Communications 66
(a) Field Guidance. 67
(b) Reporting to Washington 68
(c) Increasing Communications About SPA . . 69
6. AID/Peace Corps Relations 69
(a) Negotiation of Country Agreements . . . 69
(b) Increased Cooperation 71
(c) Reporting About SPA to AID. 72

H. Conclusions and Recommendations 72

II. IN-COUNTRY MANAGEMENT OF THE SPA PROGRAM

A. DE-CENTRALIZED NATURE OF SPA PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The SPA program is an experiement in the de-centralized management of a Washington initiative. It is really not one but thirty-four inter-agency ("PASA") agreements between AID and the Peace Corps, since the AID mission and Peace Corps country team in each country develop their own country agreements as to how the program will operate.

The de-centralized nature of SPA administration has numerous advantages. It encourages AID and Peace Corps staff to communicate more closely and affords them the opportunity to develop a system for approving small grants that is tailored to the needs and interests of both agencies in that country. Also, it greatly increases the relevance and appropriateness of management systems to the national government, culture and local communities involved.

However, there are disadvantages as well, especially to an evaluation of this nature. Evaluators had to learn a new administrative set-up for the SPA program in each country visited. Generalizations about the approval process or systems for disbursement of funds are almost impossible since all are different in one way or another. Dealing with questions of management efficiency is much more difficult when dealing with eight systems rather than one.

Among the questions asked by AID and Peace Corps officials in Washington at the beginning of this study was "can the administration process be standardized?" The answer came after three months of travel through Latin America, Africa and Asia. It can be, but it shouldn't be. When the evaluators were reviewing their findings at a special meeting in March, they were not able to agree on a single new rule which should be imposed on the field from AID or

the Peace Corps in Washington. More technical assistance, ideas, examples and information were welcomed everywhere by the field, but the constant refrain heard during the evaluation was "no more rules, please."

Each individual country system for managing the SPA has flaws and each can be improved substantially, but Washington's role in achieving this should be to assist the field to improve their present systems while mantaining their present appropriateness for the national context in which they must function.

B. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A special effort was made to interview AID and Peace Corps staff in Washington regarding their most critical management concerns. AID representatives expressed an interest in determining the extent of AID's interest and involvement in the management of the program and the increased work load this represents for AID. Peace Corps officials had a similar concern about workload -- and about numerous other management issues as well. AID and Peace Corps staff responsible for the SPA program were invited to attend the training sessions for evaluators at which the instruments for collecting data on the SPA program were finalized. The evaluation instruments used in the field (see Appendix A) reflected their views and had their approval.

Evaluators were asked to spend from two to three days in the capital city of each country interviewing AID and Peace Corps staff. A separate questionnaire was prepared for the Peace Corps and for AID.

At the Peace Corps, the Country Director, SPA Coordinator, one other APCD and the Administrative Officer were considered essential interviews. In addition, evaluators were encouraged to interview as many other Peace Corps staff as possible -- including any volunteers involved with the management of the SPA.

Volunteers whose SPA projects were reviewed were interviewed not only on their project but also about how the SPA program is administered in their respective countries.

At AID, interviews with the Mission Director or Deputy Mission Director, Program Officer, SPA Project Manager and Administrative Officer were considered essential. Sector specialists, and Assistant Program Officers were also interviewed if possible.

The information and recommendations in this chapter of the report are based on interviews with forty-four Peace Corps staff, twenty-three AID staff and eighty-seven volunteers; all of whom gave very generously and patiently of their time; answering what must have seemed like an endless stream of questions.

Evaluators advised all interviewees that this portion of the SPA evaluation was not judging individual country performance but rather identifying management and policy issues related to SPA program on a global basis.

Interviews with host country government officials were held only if the Peace Corps or AID team requested it. Courtesy visits were also made to the U.S. Ambassador if the country teams felt it was appropriate.

Questions asked of AID and Peace Corps staff were of three kinds: fact finding, questioning on issues and opinion survey questions. This chapter of the evaluation report covers responses to the fact finding and issue questions. Responses to the survey questions are described in Chapter III.

Appendix B is a digest of AID and Peace Corps responses to the questions in the AID and Peace Corps staff questionnaires.

C. AID INVOLVEMENT IN SPA MANAGEMENT

An item of great interest to AID in Washington as it reviews the participation of AID in the SPA program is the extent to which the program requires the involvement of AID personnel overseas and the workload incumbent on AID field

staff in implementing the joint AID/Peace Corps program. The evaluation set out to determine:

1. The extent to which AID staff were involved in SPA program evaluation;
2. workload involved;
3. the extent of their knowledge of the program;
4. AID staff perceptions of problems; and
5. recommendations to improve the program.

The evaluation findings with regard to these questions will be covered in this section of the report as well as a short report on Peace Corps staff views of AID involvement.

1. Extent of AID Involvement

Most AID personnel believe that their role should be to remain a funding source and to provide technical support where necessary. Even in Honduras, where an AID representative sits on the project approval committee, the AID staff was divided on the necessity of AID's participation at that level. In essence, AID personnel want to be kept informed of projects and be assured that established criteria are followed.

2. AID Workload

All of the AID staff members interviewed, except two, said that they spend one hour or less per week in the administration of the SPA program. Many senior staff members at AID stated that they spend little or none of their time directly involved with the SPA administration, and that the combined effort of AID staff time spent working on the SPA amounted to one hour or less per week. One Program Officer broke the demand on his time down to the equivalent of one day per year.

In another country the project manager stated that not more than three to four hours per week was spent involved with SPA -- sometimes much less. The greatest time spent was in Honduras where the Project Manager spends seven hours a week, 20% of her time, involved with the administration of SPA. She sits on the approval committee and is very active in SPA oversight.

Many AID personnel expressed an interest in visiting projects but in no instance was a desire communicated that AID should directly supervise projects. AID personnel were emphatic that the SPA program remain a Peace Corps project. When asked if AID staff should make visits, one Mission Director replied, "No, no, let Peace Corps carry out program -- it's their program." This sentiment was expressed in other ways by various AID staff members: "Confident in Peace Corps ability", "Leave full management and monitoring of SPA projects to Peace Corps", "Peace Corps should do the bulk of supervision, not AID", "No, that is the responsibility of Peace Corps", and "since we know Peace Corps does it, we stay away".

A second reason for AID personnel not desiring to visit projects was the demand on their time. One staffer mentioned that he hadn't been out of the office in six months, although he would like to see the projects, he just didn't have time to spare.

Those that stated that AID personnel should make site visits again reiterated that the visits should be for informational purposes only and not for the purpose of supervising the projects. In Thailand it was obvious that AID staff, from the Mission Director on down, enjoyed visiting SPA projects and felt it was part of their duties to see what was being done with AID monies at the small project level. Others who have traveled to see SPA projects did so with the attitude that they could possibly learn something from visiting the project. It was recommended that AID staff combine visits to SPA projects when they are doing field work in areas close by.

3. AID Knowledge of SPA Program

AID personnel were asked a number of questions to determine how familiar they were with the SPA program. Most AID personnel seem to have a general knowledge of the set-up of the SPA program, although detailed knowledge of the mechanics of the program were familiar to only those involved in the day to day management of the program. Knowledge about the administration of the program varied widely from country to country. In one country, the AID Deputy Director was familiar not only with the issues involved with the transference of funds but also with the reporting system used between AID and the Peace Corps on each project. However, this was not usually the case at this level.

AID personnel were generally aware of the time it took SPA Projects to receive funds from AID -- usually two to four weeks and were committed to and pleased by the quick funding ability of AID in this program.

In all countries except one, AID staff were aware of the approval criteria for projects.

AID personnel were asked if they could descirbe SPA projects which were notably successful or unsuccessful. In practically all countries, they were unable to mention specific projects but were articulate about the kinds of SPA projects which most deserve funding. The success of a project in their eyes, would depend on the groundwork done by the PCV, the commitment of the community group, and certain technical considerations.

SPA project officers at AID were well aware of why specific projects were not approved and listed them as:

a. Fall outside of the areas of concentration mandated by the Country Agreement;

b. lack of community involvement in the project;

c. project that could not support recurrent costs;

d. project proposed by persons that were not poor; and

e. projects with political implications.

4. AID Perception of Problems with SPA Management

Two out of three AID personnel interviewed saw no problems in the management of SPA funds. Of those who mentioned administrative difficulties, none of these difficulties caused them to question the basic set-up or the soundness of the concept of the SPA program.

One AID official felt that the limited number of sectors for SPA funding was a serious problem and that the criteria should be expanded to include other sectors besides agriculture, energy and small business development. All other problems mentioned had to do with either the accounting for or the disbursement of funds. Individual management problems are described below.

In Morocco, there was confusion over whether funds used for transportation could be included in the cost of the project and paid for with SPA funds. The decision was made (incorrectly) that transportation costs were essentially administrative and that no transportation costs, either of the community group or the volunteer could be reimbursed. In The Gambia, transportation costs for hauling materials from the capital city to isolated villages were included as line items in the budgets of the SPA requests. This was done at the suggestion of AID. The misunderstanding in Morocco was due to a lack of clear understanding of the guidelines and should have been consulted with Washington.

In Togo, the process of disbursing funds to SPA projects was characterized by AID personnel themselves as cumbersome and slow. Administrative slip-ups have also plagued Togo. Requests for two checks have been lost or misplaced by the Regional Budget and Finance Office (RBFO) in Abidjan. In addition, a U.S. disbursing unit in Paris once sent a check for SPA project in Togo to Tonga!

In Ecuador and Costa Rica, other disbursement issues were cited as problems by AID staff. In Ecuador disbursements are actually advances, but they are recorded as expenditures. This could cause problems in accounting for the funds. In Costa Rica, SPA funds are transferred first into the Peace Corps'

Programming and Training Officer's personal checking account and subsequently transferred to the volunteers for SPA projects. The same occurs in other countries. This system is not consistent with U.S. government regulations pertaining to the management of federal funds, and AID staff were concerned about this.

5. Changes Proposed by AID Staff in SPA Management

In all but two cases the AID personnel felt the present system was adequate for administering SPA funds and should not be changed in any major way. Typical responses were "All is done by Peace Corps and it works well", "It's left to the PCV and Peace Corps staff", "It is one of our smallest programs and runs smoothly."

In Ecuador, however, one AID official recommended that the SPA projects be related closer to AID projects and that the SPA program is a "good mechanism to begin participation of volunteers in AID projects." He felt volunteer participation in AID reforestation projects would be especially beneficial. He saw the Peace Corps/AID relationship in SPA as a "golden opportunity" for developing a better working relationship between the two agencies.

In Ecuador, another recommendation was made that voucher requests and disbursement documentation be more widely circulated internally within AID to give a wider knowledge of the kinds of projects funded.

In Thailand an AID officer felt that SPA resources should be targeted toward more refined purposes. "A collection of good acts, does not a program make," he said. "Now the funding goes to those who are first off the mark or those who write the best proposal. We should get more sophisticated and have some sense of national needs through use of AID's analysis of priorities."

It should be noted that the above thoughtful and well-articulated views about new ways of programming SPA funds represented a small minority of AID personnel interviewed.

A general caution was heard that, in any attempts to improve the program, care be taken to "avoid the tendency of any bureaucracy to build up paperwork and regulation."

The basic soundness of the design of the SPA program was alluded to numerous times. In no AID interview was a major restructuring of the system requested or suggested. One Deputy Mission Director summed up these views by saying, "I feel it should stay small and emphasize self-help."

Many recommended that the SPA funding mechanism remain a "one shot deal", that is, that Peace Corps and AID not fund projects that have recurrent cost but rather continue with self-sustaining projects.

The most frequently heard recommendations were that (1) AID and the Peace Corps do more of the same; (2) that the amount of funds be increased; and (3) that the areas for funding be expanded. It was felt by many that any increase in funds or broadening of sectors be determined on a country-specific basis. One AID Mission Director added that he was in favor of increasing the level of AID funding for the SPA, "as long as it is not taken from the AID country budget."

Other recommendations made by individual AID staff were:

a. Peace Corps volunteers should be less heavily involved in the financial management.

b. There should be a clearer definition of how to transfer funds from AID to Peace Corps.

c. The full $40,000 per year should be advanced to the Peace Corps and the Peace Corps charged with the responsibility for managing the program with only periodic financial reporting to AID and a bi-annual briefing on the impact of the small projects funded.

d. Some SPA funds should be used for loans to income generating projects so that communities would understand the realities of business.

e. The AID Controller in one country suggested that the SPA fund be combined with the Ambassador's Special Self-Help fund and that all of the funds be administered as the SPA funds are currently managed in that country (this would bring the SPA program to a level of $140,000 per year).

f. Peace Corps operating expenses associated with the SPA fund such as transportation of volunteers to the capitol city, when working on SPA related business, should be covered by SPA.

6. Peace Corps Staff View of AID Involvement

Peace Corps staff members were asked to characterize AID's involvement in the SPA program management as "cooperative", "indifferent", or "antagonistic". Answers to this question brought out the fact that the working relationships between AID and Peace Corps personnel on this program has remained very good. Thirty Peace Corps staff characterized AID as "cooperative" when dealing with the SPA program. Several of the SPA Coordinators gave enthusiastic praise to the personnel they deal with in their local AID office. Eight responded that AID's involvement was "indifferent" or "neutral". In the opinion of these staff members, the relationship between the two agencies was carried on in a businesslike manner but AID staff did not have an enthusiastic interest in the program. Two described AID as "antagonistic".

Nearly all Peace Corps staff members felt that AID's role in the program should remain as it is. Basically, Peace Corps staff would like to keep an "arms-length" relationship where the approval process is conducted by the Peace Corps with AID supplying financial oversight and some technical assistance.

Although many references were made to continuing a close relationship, Peace Corps staff members see a definite division of labor. The Peace Corps sees itself as the best suited to propose specific projects and to approve or disapprove them. AID's role is seen as being a source of funds, financial management expertise and technical assistance.

D. HOST COUNTRY INVOLVEMENT

The amount of host country involvement in the management of SPA projects varies. In half of the countries visited the government plays no role in the SPA program. In other countries, however, such as Thailand, the government plays a critical role. No SPA projects are approved without prior Thai country clearance. The SPA Program in Thailand was preceded by a small projects program first funded by the Thai government in 1978 and continued since then. For a discussion of the unique situation in Thailand related to small projects, see the Benchmarks memorandum in Appendix C.

In Senegal, district level officials sign-off on individual IAAs. In Togo, there is a close working relationship between volunteers and ministries. In all countries where there are SPA programs there is usually some informal review by local government officials -- at least at the level of volunteer supervisors.

An overwhelming majority of AID staff felt that the host country government should play as small a role as possible in the SPA program, especially the national bureaucracies. If the host country is involved in the process it should be at the level of the local community. However, several AID staff also mentioned that the host country should be informed of the SPA projects.

In the countries where the national government was involved, AID staff felt that this involvement was entirely appropriate. Overall, it appears that the goals of the SPA project match the development goals of the host country governments. No conflict in this area was mentioned by any of the AID personnel interviewed.

The Peace Corps staff views were very similar, with regard to involving the host countries. They did not want to increase the participation of bureaucracies. However, Peace Corps staff members felt that it is good to keep host country officials informed of the activities of volunteers involved with SPA projects.

In the countries where there is a heavy government involvement, few disadvantages were cited due to this relationship. In Thailand, all SPA projects must be approved by the government.

Government involvement in projects varies with the type of project being considered. Large projects, especially if it includes some type of construction (such as the building of a bridge), are more likely to include host government participation. In quite a few of the countries, government agencies assist in the transportation of materials or with technical assistance.

E. PEACE CORPS MANAGEMENT OF THE SPA PROGRAM: GENERAL

1. Workload

In the countries surveyed, the division of labor related to the SPA program was similar. The bulk of the responsibility for analyzing projects, providing technical assistance and counseling volunteers falls to an APCD charged with being the SPA Coordinator. In some instances this consumes up to 70% of the APCD's time (and even more of his or her secretary's). After initially approving the project, the SPA Coordinators pass on their recommendations either to a committee or to the Country Directors.

In all of the countries, except Togo (where the PCD shares responsibility with the AID Director and the Ambassador), the Peace Corps Country Directors make final approval based on the recommendations they receive. Country Directors also take the responsibility of communicating with AID concerning SPA projects.

None of the APCDs/Administration actually play a direct role in the process of approving individual projects. Other members of the staff, APCDs not assigned as SPA Coordinators and Program and Training Officers (PTOs) sit on the approval committee or help the SPA Coordinator to analyze projects.

No dissatisfaction was expressed over this division of labor, except that the SPA Coordinators often seemed overworked (the job of SPA Coordinator has usually been added on to their other duties). In several posts there is only one APCD who handles all programming for the country in addition to being the SPA Coordinator.

There is a very clear and dramatic correlation between job responsibility and amount of time spent devoted to the SPA program. The APCD that acts as the SPA Coordinator spends a major portion of his or her time involved with the administration of the SPA program. Peace Corps Country Directors responded that they spend between "very little time" to four hours per week, with only one Director spending more than two hours a week. APCDs/Administration spend between one to four hours per week on the SPA program.

Several APCDs mentioned that they were spending up to three or four days per week on the SPA when the program first began. They are still spending over one day per week (20% of their time) helping PCVs involved with SPA projects.

Program and Training Officers (PTOs) usually spend no time or less than four hours per week on SPA; although one PTO spends up to ten hours per week in giving assistance to PCVs working with SPA projects and chairing the approval committee.

It is not surprising that many Peace Corps staff called for additional staff help at their post. Other APCDs said that they had been effective in combining SPA related duties with the work they usually do with volunteers.

2. Approval Systems

One of the most important features of the Peace Corps' management of the SPA program is the approval process itself. In half of the countries visited by the evaluation team, a committee is used to review individual projects (Togo,

Costa Rica, Ecuador, Honduras). In Thailand, The Gambia, Morocco, and Senegal there is no committee. Rather, the projects are discussed informally and analyzed by staff members at both the Peace Corps and AID.

There is no clear evidence that one system is better than the other. Both systems hold risks. With a committee there is the chance that the process could become over-bureaucraticized and the approval process significantly slowed-up (without actually improving the analysis performed on each request for funding). Where a committee is not used, there exists the danger that an individual could be narrow-sighted, only consider projects in one area, repeatedly make the same mistakes, repeatedlyfund the smae kind or projects, show favoritism, or use the SPA funds as a programming tool to keep certain PCVs employed.

Under both systems there have been considerable successes in making use of the SPA funds and there have been problems too. Again, one of the major strengths of the SPA project, which was often referred to by those interviewed, is the opportunity it affords to field staff to design the best management system for their needs. In essence the SPA program in each country has been custom designed to fit the needs, working realities, and personalities involved in that country.

3. Field Developed Criteria

Two general rules have developed in all of the countries visited by the evaluation team concerning the timing of SPA grants. There was nearly unanimous agreement that a PCV should not be able to seek funding for a SPA project until he or she has been in the country at least six months. Although volunteers are often approached prior to that time by members of a community group (in Thailand volunteers have found project requests waiting for them when they arrived at their post), Peace Corps staff felt that the PCVs first needed to adjust to

their primary assignments and become familiar with the language, culture, and social realities of the country in which they are working. One staff person recommended that a PCV be in the country between eight months and a year before becoming eligible to take on a SPA project. Others would allow PCVs to apply as early as three to four months into their service, depending on the maturity of the PCV and the type of project proposed.

Another rule applied in all countries and generally endorsed by Peace Corps staff is that a PCV have at least six months left in his or her service before being able to apply. Staff felt that the highest rate of failure or difficulties among projects came when volunteers had to leave the site when the project was just beginning. This is when the PCV's leadership, motivation and group dynamic skills are most necessary.

Many staff members expressed a willingness to be flexible on this rule if the project is small and uncomplicated; the volunteer is capable of finishing the project before leaving the country; the community group has the leadership necessary to complete the project on its own; and if there is another PCV willing to finish the project after the original PCV leaves the country.

In nearly all of the countries surveyed, an informal rule to limit the upper size of projects to $5,000 has been instituted. Although $10,000 is the maximum size set forth in the guidelines from Washington, most staff members, and volunteers themselves, see even $5,000 as a high sum of funds for a small community. In one country, a lower limit of $100 has been set for approval of SPA projects.

4. Why Some Proposals Do Not Get Approved

Because of the nature of the approval process, few proposals get turned down directly. Rather the projects progess from the initial idea stages through

a gradual weeding out or series of modifications. The main reason why projects don't get approved usually has to do with the lack of community involvement -- according to Peace Corps staff. If the local community group is not sufficiently involved or committed; if the group is unwilling to contribute its share of the projects cost, or if it does not seem that the group has the required leadership capability, project proposals may be turned down. Projects are also turned down if the community group had no history of working together. "We don't want to be involved with a community group that was only formed for the purpose of receiving funds," observed one Peace Corps staffer.

Project approval also depends on the Peace Corps volunteer involved. If a particular PCV has obtained too many SPA funds already or if the volunteer is too busy, the request may be discouraged or rejected. In one country, it was stated very strongly that a volunteer with no work other than the proposed SPA project, would not receive funding.

Projects are also rejected for technical reasons. These could include any factors that base the project on the wrong technical approach; make a project too difficult or impossible to complete; or would build in recurrent costs or require use of materials that are not appropriate to the local community.

Proposals are also discouraged or rejected because they do not fit the criteria established in Washington or in-country guidelines. Projects which are too large or badly conceived will be denied. In Honduras, a group of middle class agronomists wanted $10,000 for a banana plantation and a volunteer sought SPA funding for them! The proposal was rejected.

If funding is available from another source, projects may be turned down. Thus, the SPA program becomes the resource of last resort for many communities.

5. Disbursement

The actual handling of funds to purchase items appears to be different in each of the countries visited. In two countries the monies are depostied into the personal accounts of Peace Corps staff members, a PCD in one case and a APTO in the other. Checks are then written to the PCVs or directly to the vendors. In another country checks are written to the PCVs, with a cosignature of a Host Country Ministry official. Other countries issue checks to either the PCV, the community group, or to the two jointly. In one country, all checks are made out directly to vendors based on invoices received for goods delivered.

Two conflicting values were proposed by AID staff in about equal numbers regarding handling of checks or cash disbursement. Some persons were concerned about accountability if checks were issued directly to the community. An equal number favored the disbursement being made to the community in order to involve it more in the project.

There is a hugh variance of opinion as to how SPA monies should be disbursed. In one case, the psychological benefits of issuing checks to the community group, and holding them responsible, was mentioned as a positive factor. Others felt that PCVs should be responsible in order to give them more control. Whenever monies are handled, there is a potential for abuse (no matter how elaborate or refined the accounting system is). It is most impressive that the use of SPA funds worldwide has been virtually devoid of misuse.

The issue of how the funds are to be disbursed and re-imbursed is the most important management issue which faces the future of the SPA program. Some of the present methods being used are not appropriate. Others create delays in the funding of small projects.

6. Are Peace Corps Staff Programming SPA Funds?

One of the concerns stated at the very outset of this evaluation was whether SPA funds were being used by the Peace Corps staff for their own programming purposes rather than by volunteers responding to the needs of their communities. By this is meant the use of SPA funds to supply the necessary materials and supplies for Peace Corps programs or identifying projects which the Peace Corps staff wanted to see funded rather than letting the ideas come from the community. Only in one country did this seem to be the case. In every country, Peace Corps staff emphasized that the ideas for the SPA projects come from local community groups in conjunction with a PCV.

Although Peace Corps staff members keep an arms length from the actual project identification process, they do eventually become involved. A SPA Coordinator might actively encourage or discourage certain types of projects. SPA Coordinators and other staff members act as catalysts to the community groups and PCVs. Often the SPA Coordinator carries on a dialogue during the development of a project and helps to identify weakneses and strengths of a particular proposal. The SPA Coordinator also gives feedback to the appropriateness of a project idea, considering host country priorities community needs and capabilities.

7. Peace Corps Staff Perception of Problems in SPA Management

The Administrative problem most frequently mentioned by Peace Corps staff also pertained to the handling of funds. Most frequently mentioned were delays in getting the funds after a project had been approved. Many Peace Corps staff said that there was room for improvement in the process for handling funds. Another problem was the inexperience of volunteers in managing government funds. These problems include: developing accurate budgets for projects; calculating the effects of exchange rates; and the general problem relating to making PCVs responsible for SPA funds.

The demand placed on the time of Peace Corps staff, particularly APCDs and administrative officers, was mentioned as a problem by various staff members. One Peace Corps Country Director requested an additional APCD just to assist PCVs with small project funding.

Another problem was volunteer compliance with paperwork requirements. One staff member described the problem as "getting PCVs to understand that there is some red tape that must be followed."

Reporting, evaluation and follow-up of SPA projects were considered to be inadequate by Peace Corps staff. The lack of time was cited as the major constraint inhibiting better supervision and management.

Another problem that Peace Corps staff members are very aware of is ensuring community participation in the SPA projects.

Peace Corps staff in Togo cited their difficulties with AID offices in both Abidjan and Lome. They felt AID should be removed from such a close participation on the project approval process for SPA projects, and that in the future, project approval should be left to APCDs and the PCD with AID or State present only as a technical resource.

8. How Fast is Fast?

In all countries staff members said that if everything is in order, a SPA project can be approved and ready for funding in less than a month. In many instances turn around can be as short as two weeks. But realistically, things do not always work as smoothly as planned. Most often delays occur during the process of developing a project idea and doing the groundwork. In most cases after a solid, well thought-out and analyzed proposal reaches the Peace Corps office in the capital the approval process moves quickly. There is little doubt that the SPA is a unique fast-funding mechanism for small projects. The country

that seemed to have the most structural problems with implementing the SPA project as a fast-funding mechanism was Togo; and even there, steps are being taken to expedite the process.

F. PEACE CORPS MANAGEMENT OF THE SPA PROGRAM: SPECIFIC

Since the Peace Corps management of the SPA program is de-centralized and widely diverse, this evaluation will describe the system in use in all eight countries visited by the teams prior to raising policy or management issues and prior to offering its own conclusions and recommendations with regard to the in-country management of the SPA program.

1. MOROCCO

a. Request and Approval

In Morocco, one APCD is designated as the SPA Coordinator. Prior to submitting a SPA request, the volunteer must receive approval from the appropriate Ministry officials. Projects are reviewed by the SPA Coordinator and the Program Officer at AID. If there are any matters that are unclear, then the PCV is contacted by the SPA Coordinator.

After the SPA Coordinator and the Program Officer at AID determine that the SPA proposal is sound and meets the SPA criteria, the proposal is passed to the Peace Corps Country Director for final approval. One volunteer described this process as "simple and straight-forward, not wildly bureaucratic".

Approval of a project by the Peace Corps usually takes two to three weeks. The review by the AID Program Officer is usually done within four days. One project review was completed in five days. Another project was approved within three weeks of the original request for funds!

b. Disbursement

When the SPA program was first set-up, checks for approved projects were written by AID to the SPA Coordinator. He would then make the funds available to the PCV from a local bank account in his name. Now checks go directly from AID to the Peace Corps volunteer. The volunteer then either opens a joint bank account with the community group, or handles the money through his or her own bank account. Generally, the disbursement of funds progresses as quickly as the approval process itself.

a. Views of Volunteers

Volunteers suggested that transportation costs be allowable as acceptable project expenses. One community could have purchased materials at a considerably lower price in a place somewhat distant but had no funds to pay for the transportation of those materials. (In fact, these transportation costs are allowable by the present SPA guidelines and could have been included in the project's budget.) All of the volunteers interviewed cited the lack of training about SPA. Communication was also a problem. Volunteers felt that there were many PCVs that did not know about the SPA program, and that additional training and information exchange was needed. As one PCV said it, "get the word out to the field".

As in many countries, PCVs cautioned that the SPA approval process not be too fast. PCVs emphasized the necessity of analyzing projects thoroughly. One volunteer admonished, "Make sure local people understand their responsibilities, especially for follow-up or recurring expenses."

2. HONDURAS

The Peace Corps staff in Honduras has done a meticulous job in setting up the administrative procedures required to complete the request, approval and financial disbursement activities associated with the SPA program. The country is suffering from one over-riding problem though. There aren't enough SPA funds to go around. With approximately 200 volunteers in the country, the SPA funds are obligated very quickly, and many volunteers feel left out of the process. In FY'83 there were thirty-two requests for SPA funds. Of these requests, twenty-one were approved (three were disapproved and eight were cancelled). In FY'84, twenty projects were approved. At the current level of funding only one in ten volunteers can become involved with a SPA project. Both AID and the Peace Corps in Honduras requested additional funding for use in SPA projects during FY'85. Increasing the SPA funds with local currencies of up to $50,000 was under active consideration when the evaluation team was in Honduras.

a. Request

The volunteer applies for SPA funds in conjunction with a local community group. A SPA Program Instructions Packet is distributed to volunteers which details the information required to apply for SPA monies.

To aid the Peace Corps volunteers in writing the proposal, an appendix to the Program Instruction Packet contains information on how to write specific qualitative and quantitative project objectives for the project. In addition, to the general criteria, other criteria have been added in Honduras. For income-generating projects, an analysis of the socio-economic changes that the project might bring is required. The host government agency to which the volunteer is assigned must support the project. Volunteers who have served less than three months or those who have less than six months remaining in their tour of

b. Approval

A volunteer gives the proposal to his or her APCD for initial review. If the proposal meets the APCD's approval, it is then passed on to the SPA Approval Committee. This committee is composed of Peace Corps staff members. It is chaired by the PTO and includes several APCDs. There is an AID representative on the Approval Committee. The committee meets as often as is required to consider proposals. The committee reviews each project for technical feasibility to insure that all the necessary information is included.

Upon approval by the committee the SPA proposal is passed to the Peace Corps Director for signature. The approval process seems to be working quite smoothly. The average time required to approve a project is estimated at only four weeks. Some projects have been approved in as little as two weeks, and the longest period cited for approval of a project was two months.

c. Disbursement

The volunteers receive cash from the Peace Corps cashier for purchases consistent with the SPA Project budget. In theory, the volunteers should involve the members of the community group in handling the funds, purchasing of materials, and accounting for expenditures. Peace Corps/Honduras suggests that volunteers open local bank accounts with the members of the community group so that the group representatives can learn money handling and recordkeeping skills. In practice, the involvement of the community group varied widely. Some volunteers took total fiscal control of the project and handled all funds. One volunteer noted that one community group asked to participate in handling the funds but that the volunteer on the project refused to let them. In other cases, volunteers did handle the responsibilities jointly with members of the community group.

d. Views of the Volunteers

Volunteers expressed their satisfaction with the approval process. Several volunteers thought that the committee was anxious to help the volunteer and community group as well as cautious in allotting the use of SPA funds.

Delays in receiving funds, disbursement methods and recordkeeping requirements were mentioned as problem areas by volunteers. Several volunteers stated in their interviews that they wished that they had included the community group more in the financial management of their SPA project.

Both Peace Corps staff members and AID personnel are divided on how funds should be handled. Most felt it was vital that PCVs retain control of the funds. Many, however, thought that the community groups should play a more active role.

Nearly all volunteers interviewed requested that more training be given both in Pre-Service (PST) and In-Service (IST) Training. Some volunteers felt they had not received very good communication from the staff concerning the availability of funds and the types of projects which could be funded. One stated that the Peace Corps staff had kept communication about the SPA to a minimum because there wasn't enough money to go around. Volunteers who had received funds requested additional training in the accounting procedures required of them.

The majority of the volunteers had received no supervision of the SPA project from either the Peace Corps or AID staffs. They understood that this was due to staff time constraints. One volunteer saw this as another reason to keep the projects small. "You have to trust the volunters," he said. Other volunteers shared the view that the SPA fund should support small projects only.

e. Evaluation

Peace Corps/Honduras makes use of a nine page questionnaire as an evaluation tool of SPA projects. The questionnaire is completed by volunteers who have completed a SPA project or by other volunteers with direct experience in the SPA program. The questionnaire is comprehensive and represents the most serious -- indeed the only -- attempt at follow-up seen in the entire evaluation. Twenty questions cover areas such as: project impact; impact on the role of the volunteer; volunteer experience; the community participation; and skills introduced into the community as a result of the SPA project. Volunteers are also asked for their opinions on the administration of the SPA program; the identification of training needs; and any other comments that the volunteer might have. In developing and using this questionnaire, Peace Corps/Honduras has broken new ground in the responsible management of SPA funds.

3. SENEGAL

Judging by the responses of AID and Peace Corps staff members -- as well as volunteers -- the SPA approval and disbursement process in Senegal is one of the most responsive and efficient systems developed to date to handle SPA funds. In 1984, a third-year volunteer was placed in the position of SPA Coordinator. Recently, due to this volunteer's completion of service, PCVs were named on a regional basis to perform the initial review of all incoming SPA requests. (The use of volunteers to help administer the SPA program raises other issues which will be discussed later.)

a. Request

Before a volunteer and community group can submit a proposal for a SPA project, the approval and signatures of local village and government officials are required. Proposals are then either mailed or hand carried to the Peace Corps office in Dakar.

b. Approval

Project proposals are reviewed by the individual volunteer's APCD, and, if approved, are sent to the Peace Corps Director who is the person responsible for the approval of projects according to the Country Agreement between AID and the Peace Corps.

After the PCD has approved the project, it is reviewed at AID by the Assistant Program Officer. If the project seems sound and in keeping with the criteria for approval, the project is then sent to the AID Controller's office so that funds may be obligated for the project.

c. Disbursement

A check for the full amount of the project is then ordered. Checks are written to the administrative officer at the Peace Corps who then deposits the funds in a special SPA account. To withdraw funds, dual signatures are required. Payments for materials necessary for SPA projects are based on purchase orders and checks made out directly to the vendor. Where cash payments are necessary, a check is written to the volunteers who subsequently make the payment. At the close of the project, all checks and receipts are reconciled at the Peace Corps administrative office.

d. Views of Volunteers

All of the volunteers interviewed said that the approval and disbursement process in Senegal was a fast means of making SPA funds available for small projects. It was estimated that a volunteer may spend between one to three months in the initial development of the project idea (including the sign-off by local authorities). Final approval by APCDs and the Country Director takes approximately two weeks. Funds are available for the project usually within one week. Volunteer's responses to this system varied from "Okay", to "Feel it was smooth and timely", and, simply put, "Great".

In other areas of SPA administration, the volunteers felt the Peace Corps was doing an admirable job. Practically none of the volunteers interviewed had problems with the SPA procedures or had recommendations for improving the system. Most volunteers felt that the information they had received concerning the SPA at In-Service Training Programs and in the Volunteer Newsletter was sufficient. A volunteer commented that by going to Dakar and typing his own IAA and Purchase Orders, he could speed up the process. This may have been an isolated case, but the volunteer did suggest further that blank IAAs and Purchase Order forms be made available to PCVs so that the PCVs could relieve the Peace Corps staff of

4. COSTA RICA

a. Request

In Costa Rica, the generation of a project idea follows the guidelines coming from the volunteer and community group. The proposal is submitted to the Program Manager (APCD) of the volunteer involved. The original proposal varies between two to eight pages in length. The APCD makes suggestions and recommendations regarding the feasibility of the project and its compliance with the SPA criteria. The project can be rejected at this stage or, if there are modifications to be made, the APCD may return the proposal to the volunteer for more information.

b. Approval

Actual approval of a SPA project is done by a committee comprised of the Programming and Training Officer (PTO) and all of the APCDs. After review, the proposal can be sent back to the volunteer and community group again if the committee feels that information is lacking or that there is a flaw in the basic concept of the project. Once approved by the committee, the project is submitted to the Peace Corps Director for final approval and signature.

The SPA approval committee meets approximately once a month or whenever there are proposals to act on. The approval process usually takes between four to ten weeks. In one case, a project was approved and the funds were disbursed within seven days. Several volunteers credited the PTO and the new Peace Corps Country Director with streamlining the approval process.

Some projects, which the committee felt were poorly thought out and written, took up to four months before qualifying for a grant. One volunteer noted that other funding mechanisms took from six months to a year before they approved grants and disbursed funds.

Several volunteers expressed the view that the process of staff review and return of the proposals to the volunteers for improvement was a beneficial process. This also gave both volunteers and the community the opportunity to make adjustments in the project's budget.

c. Disbursement

At the start of the SPA program funds were deposited in a bank account controlled by the PTO. The PTO then would disburse the funds to the personal bank accounts of the volunteers. Now the funds are deposited directly by AID into the bank accounts of the volunteers. The system of disbursing directly to PCVs was criticized by nearly everyone involved in the process. Many felt it was inappropriate for the volunteer to distribute the funds or be totally responsible for them. Some volunteers had lost or failed to get receipts. One volunteer mingled the SPA funds with her personal monies and had difficulties reconciling them. She eventually had to reimburse the SPA project funds with her personal resources.

All of the AID personnel interviewed felt that checking accounts should be managed by the members of the community group involved with the SPA project. Peace Corps staff members also thought that checks should be distributed to the communities and that a control system involving joint signatures of both the volunteer and community representatives should be set up. It was emphasized, however, that when there were problems with the present system of disbursement, the Peace Corps staff were "on it right away".

d. Views of the Volunteers

Some volunteers interviewed felt there was a lack of information or poor communication of information to the volunteers in the field. They felt that "what will do, and what will not do" had never been adequately explained prior

to applying for SPA funds (although information was sent out via the country newsletter). Because some of the volunteers were unsure of the criteria and were not prepared with enough details in their proposal, they sometimes felt that the approval system was arbitrary. They requested that a SPA checklist, sample forms, examples of good project ideas and information on accounting procedures be sent out to volunteers to assist them in applying for SPA funds. Other volunteers interviewed were quite satisfied with the present review process.

5. THE GAMBIA

a. Requests

In The Gambia a community group fills out a request in conjunction with a PCV. Volunteers are encouraged to have the members of the community group fill out the request form. Usually the volunteer helps the community prepare the request; but, in some cases, school teachers, local ministry officials, and even scribes (hired for a small fee) are enlisted to help. While this form lists the goals of the project, it only requires an estimation of the required funds.

b. Approval

The APCD in The Gambia reviews the project to determine if it is technically feasible and well conceived. Several additional criteria for project approval have been added in The Gambia. Preference is given to groups that have a history of working together; "bricks and mortar" projects are generally ruled out, and animal husbandry projects which would require imported feeds are also discouraged. The APCD then recommends approval or disapproval to the Peace Corps Director. (AID does not play a role in the analysis or approval of specific projects.) The Country Director approves the project usually in less than two weeks.

The request form is then returned to the volunteers with recommended modifications or limitations. At this time, the volunteer is given a supply of price quotation forms and a final budget form. Volunteers and/or members of the community then collect signed price quotes from vendors (vendors have become familiar with this process and now compete against each other to provide the best prices). When all price quotes and a final budget has been compiled, the forms are returned to the Peace Corps office and Purchase Orders (POs) are cut

for each of the price quotes received. Then the Individual Activity Agreement (IAA) form and the POs are sent to the AID Controller for approval and signature.

c. A Public Ceremony

Before work on a project actually begins, a public signing ceremony is held in the village attended usually by everyone involved: the villagers, the volunteer, government officials, AID officials, local leaders and occasionally Embassy personnel. After speeches by the appropriate representatives, the actual SPA agreements are read publicly both in English and in the local languages. This includes a condition which states that if funds are used for anything other than the uses agreed upon, the grant will be cancelled.

This ceremony is described here in detail because it is an important innovation and has many functions. It gives recognition and acknowledgement to the people who have conceived the project; strengthens the community groups; acknowledges the contributions made to the project; and makes public the agreements made on respective roles. In addition, the ceremony gives recognition to the volunteer, the Peace Corps and AID and also provides a gathering where ideas and support can be exchanged between all involved. On occasion, the ceremonies have turned into all-day celebrations involving hundreds of villagers, benedictions for the success of the project and a feast. Sometimes drumming and dancing continues long into the night.

d. Disbursement

By the of time the signing ceremony, the POs have already been cut; and the volunteer and the community group can collect the materials immediately from the vendors. Receipt forms are supplied to the volunteers by the Peace Corps

office. When goods are picked up these forms are completed and then submitted to AID so that a check can be ordered. Checks arrive in two to three weeks and are made out to the vendor. AID either delivers the checks to the vendor; the check goes to the volunteer, who then delivers it to the vendor; or the vendor picks up the check directly from AID.

e. Views of the Volunteers

One volunteer requested that more training be done about the SPA program, particularly during In-Service Training program (IST). He also felt that he did not receive enough support from the Peace Corps staff for his project. Other volunteers interviewed felt support had been adequate.

Two volunteers cautioned against making funds too accessible or too easy to receive. For example, one volunteer's project was delayed several months because staff members pushed for further development of the project idea. This volunteer felt that staff questions had led to a tighter proposal.

One volunteer commented that the paperwork requirements of the SPA program were not oppressive. Volunteers thought that the process of making a budget from exact price quotes was a good one. However, several complained that making all purchases with POs effectively limited the volunteers' ability to do business with small local vendors (such as village blacksmiths) who only deal with a cash economy and may not even have the capital necessary to make the items without first receiving payment.

In some cases, in order to make use of small vendors, the volunteers paid for goods out of their own pockets and then submitted receipts for reimbursement. Volunteers suggested that a better process for handling small cash payments be found, since it is unfair to expect the volunteers to advance the money from their limited living allowance.

The small size of The Gambia Peace Corps team also creates problems for volunteers. Some mentioned that they occasionally make a trip to the Peace Corps office for the initial review of a SPA project and find that the one APCD is out of the capital city visiting volunteers in other parts of the country.

6. ECUADOR

a. Request

The approval process for SPA projects in Ecuador revolves around the Volunteer Project Advisory Committee (VPAC). This committee is comprised of the Programming and Training Officer, an APCD, the Volunteer SPA Coordinator and volunteers with technical skills. The composition of the volunteer members of the VPAC changes, depending on who is available at the time committee meetings are held. One volunteer with expertise in the area of small business is a permanent member of the VPAC. In addition, volunteers that have worked on SPA projects are included on the committee.

Initially AID was directly involved in approving SPA projects, but, after the first year of the SPA program, AID's participation in the approval process was minimized. Volunteers submit project proposals to the VPAC on behalf of a community group. Before a proposal is submitted, a member of the community group must be designated as the person who will act as the responsible representative of the community. The VPAC meets on Mondays as is necessary to review requests and no less frequently than once a month. Prior to the meeting the proposal is reviewed by the Program Manager. Final approval is made by the Peace Corps Country Director. At AID there is a SPA Coordinator that reviews all projects to assure that they are consistent with AID's over-all mission guidelines.

b. Additional Approval Guidelines

In addition to the original SPA guidelines, other criteria are taken into consideration by VPAC. There is a policy to distribute projects evenly throughout the country, and not to favor any one district over another. First

time applicants are given preference over volunteers who have already had a SPA project approved. Also, the VPAC prefers to fund projects in communities which have not yet had a SPA project. If an alternative source of funding is available for a project, the volunteer and community are encouraged to make use of the other source, especially if this other source of funds can support projects in sectors where the SPA does not.

Depending on the length of time required to complete the proposed project, the amount of time remaining in a PCV's tour of duty can also become a factor. The support of the volunteer's APCD is required before the VPAC will approve a project, since the APCD for the volunteer's sector is knowledgeable about the PCV's primary assignment as well as the proposed involvement in a SPA project.

The VPAC would not approve a project that is philosophically in conflict with the goals of national agencies. Also, as a general guideline no "brick and mortar" projects are funded. However a construction project can be funded if it contains an innovative idea, or if it is somehow related to income generation. The number of beneficiaries is considered when comparing projects. Finally, the projects should be aimed at making the group more competent and self-sufficient.

Because of the existence of other outside funding sources, the Peace Corps in Ecuador has placed some temporary restrictions on the types of projects that will be funded. In FY'83, forestry projects were excluded from the SPA because a special PASA agreement between AID and the Peace Corps made an additional $25,000 available for community forestry projects. A $10,000 donation from the National Extension Homemakers Council (NEHC) was also available for projects in the health and education sectors.

In developing these additional strategies for the use of the SPA, the Peace Corps in Ecuador has brought a great deal of additional thought and .pa intelligence to the challenge of making the best and wisest use of limited SPA resources.

c. Disbursement

After the project has been approved, a detailed budget, in local currency, is provided to AID. Checks for the full amount of the SPA project are made out to the community representative and delivered to the volunteer. The volunteer then goes with the community representative to a local bank where a joint signature account is opened. The volunteer and the community representative must co-sign each check as goods are purchased from vendors. Interim financial reports are not required; but, at the completion of the project, the volunteer submits a "finiquito" or final report which includes a one page narrative, details of all expenditures and all receipts.

d. Views of the Volunteers

The approval process was rated as fast and effective by the volunteers. Volunteers thought that the creation of the VPAC and the inclusion of other PCVs as part of the review process was important. Volunteers knew the constraints facing other volunteers, such as the demand on their time that a SPA project would actually make.

Volunteers said that the approval of projects, and the notification of the volunteer and community group, usually takes between three to four weeks. Although one project took several months to get off the ground, most volunteers described the approval process as "easy" or "fast".

All volunteers interviewed thought that the current system of disbursing funds from a dual signature account (volunteer and community representative) was a very good one. A check made out to the community can have an important emotional effect on the members of the community and can increase their confidence. Very few problems were mentioned regarding disbursement. The time

required to send a check to the community group after approval varied from one to six weeks. In one case, there was a communications lapse and a check was available for a community for a long time without its knowing it.

Several volunteers elaborated on how the funds were handled in the community. "The members of the club took an accounting test and the woman that scored the highest is running the store. All the people involved have accounting experience. Also, a PCV in small business working with 4-H clubs comes out once a week to review the books." Another PCV related his experience: "In accounting for the funds there was no problem. The man who is the community representative is very honest and well known in the community. They know that they will need receipts for everything."

The volunteers praised the support that they are receiving from the Peace Corps staff members in the SPA program. Favorable mention was also made of AID personnel visiting SPA projects.

A few final suggestions were made by volunteers for the improvement of the SPA program. Volunteers requested more training related to the management of small projects. Specifically, they would like training in skills such as bookkeeping, accounting, project analysis and reporting. One volunteer recommended that a small booklet be prepared with information on accounting forms, transportation costs, how to make up budgets and how to work with communities and individuals.

In reflecting on a completed project, one volunteer mused that the whole process may have been too quick: "It would have been better if the people could have been more involved. Maybe they should have been interviewed by the VPAC. They need to come to Quito to see the people involved." Comments like these show a deep concern for not only completing a small project but for involving the community as well.

7. TOGO

a. Request

The procedure for requesting funds in Togo is simple and straightforward. Volunteers are given a complete set of SPA forms and a cover letter which describes how to fill out the forms. In addition, all volunteers receive a publication entitled Togo Small Funds Guide for The Peace Corps Volunteer. This publication encourages volunteers to look at a small project as a complete process and encourages them to ascertain the needs of the community, and the limits which exist on community resources. The Guide urges them not to tackle problems which are too big or not feasible and to look to external sources of funds as only one of many solutions that should be considered. The community's enthusiasm for the project should be considered in developing the feasibility study, according to the Guide. This publication is an excellent resource for a volunteer who is developing an idea for a SPA proposal. The publication contains a list of over 40 project ideas as examples of good uses of SPA funds.

b. Approval

The problems begin when the request for funding arrives in the capital city. In Togo, the SPA cannot be considered a fast-funding mechanism. It is not unusual for a small project to take between four to ten months to get off the ground. This is due to a complicated approval process which involves officials at AID and the Embassy as well as Peace Corps staff members. The approval process used in Togo was cited by volunteers, Peace Corps staff members and the evaluators as a bottleneck. Unlike all other countries visited (where responsibility for analysis and approval is delegated to the Peace Corps) the approval process in Togo takes place at an unnecessarily high level.

The present approval team includes: the Ambassador, Deputy Chief of Mission, the Embassy Economic Officer, the AID Representative to Togo and Benin, the Peace Corps Director and an APCD. The presence of the Ambassador and DCM on the Committee is especially distressing since it presents the danger of SPA grants being made for political purposes.

c. Funding and Disbursement

In addition to this cumbersome and inappropriate approval process, the financial procedures for disbursing funds also contribute to delays. Checks take one to two months to arrive. On one occasion, a check took six months to arrive. Checks for SPA grants are requisitioned from RAMC in Paris and are written in the name of the Peace Corps Director. One check for a community group in Togo was sent mistakenly by RAMC to Tonga. The funds are then placed in a special account until checks are written to either the volunteer involved in the SPA project or to the community group. Volunteers deposit the funds into their personal accounts or into a special account set-up specifically for the SPA project. The volunteers interviewed said that they had no further problems in the handling or accounting of the funds once the project monies were finally disbursed to them.

d. Views of the Volunteers

Volunteers in Togo were highly critical of the delays in the approval and disbursement process. When five or six months are required to fund a project, this has a detrimental effect on the enthusiasm of the community group and on the volunteers themselves. Despite the many complaints along these lines, however, two volunteers interviewed felt that approval and disbursement had been well handled.

Volunteers specifically requested that more time be devoted to the SPA program during In-Service Training. They felt that the supervision and assistance provided by the Peace Corps staff related to SPA projects had been adequate. They were grateful to be given the flexibility to handle the SPA project in their own manner (all the while realizing that the staff was willing to lend a hand if required). One volunteer said that since the project was supposed to be a local project, "I feel that you should first try to get help from local technicians rather than from Americans or other expatriates."

8. THAILAND

The Peace Corps in Thailand has had a good deal of successful experience in the funding of small projects. When the SPA program began, Peace Corps/Thailand was aleady making use of $50,000 in AID monies as part of the AID/Peace Corps Accelerated Impact Program (AIP). In addition, the Government of Thailand has made $23,000 a year available directly to the Peace Corps for use in funding small projects since 1978. When the SPA program was launched in Thailand, its procedures were modeled after the procedures used for the other funding sources. In fact, no attempt was made to tailor approval procedures or criteria to the SPA Guidelines. Both the Thai government and the Peace Corps in Thailand see the SPA program as a continuation of other programs they have been administering for several years.

a. Request and Approval

APCDs in Thailand are authorized to review and give initial approval to SPA projects. Volunteers are encouraged to work closely with their APCD during the development stages of a proposal. Before final consideration of a project the volunteer must obtain the support and written comments of his or her host government supervisor. After receiving the support and signature of the host goverment and the APCD, the project proposal is passed on to the Country Director for final approval. AID has delegated the project selection and approval authority to the Peace Corps. The process of reviewing and approving a project which has been submitted in complete form to the Peace Corps in Bangkok takes only two weeks or less.

The essence of the approval process is the dialogue between the APCD and the volunteer. "Projects are never disapproved," said the SPA Coordinator in

Thailand, "but they are sometimes discouraged." By the time a project is submitted to the Thai government supervisors for their approval, it is, for all practical purposes, approved. In fact, the Peace Corps staff does not feel it would be culturally sensitive or wise to reject a project once it has this kind of official endorsement.

b. Disbursement

Funds are transferred from AID to Peace Corps on a quarterly basis -- $10,000 per quarter. The voucher for the $10,000 contains a list of SPA projects and amounts needed by each project to justify the transfer of funds. Checks are issued by the regional office of RAMC which is located in Bangkok. For items under $250 the volunteer can receive cash from the petty cash fund. For larger purchases either postal money orders, checks or telegraphic transfers directly to a bank account are made. Volunteers are responsible for clearing advances and returning receipts to the Peace Corps office for accounting purposes.

To date, there appear to have been few problems with the handling the funds in Thailand (mostly by volunteers). Disbursement of funds for a project occurs rapidly, usually within two weeks.

c. Views of the Volunteers

Volunteers interviewed expressed few difficulties with the approval or disbursement process. However, two did say that they or the community had advanced funds to get the project started. There were the normal complaints about the need to keep receipts, but no real problems in doing so.

All of the volunteers had received instruction and orientation on the SPA either at an In-Service Training program or from their APCD.

Little supervision during the implementation of projects had been received, but the volunteers were aware that assistance was available if necessary. (One volunteer pointed out that if you lived further away from the capital, you were less likely to receive supervision and technical help.) Strengths of the SPA program in Thailand -- as perceived by the volunteers -- included the fact that it gave responsibility to volunteers and that the money comes very fast. One volunteer expressed satisfaction that an outside evaluation of the SPA program was being conducted.

C. POLICY AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

In addition to obtaining the detailed information described above regarding how the program works in each country, CA/BMI raised numerous policy and management issues with both Peace Corps and AID staff. These issues were discussed with all AID and all Peace Corps staff interviewed. They can be conveniently summarized in the following categories.

1. Funding Levels
2. Eligible Sectors
2. Oversight
4. Training
5. Field/Washington Communications
6. AID/Peace Corps Relations
7. Other

The following sections of this report provide a review of present practices and a description of the views of AID and Peace Corps staff on these policy and management issues.

1. Funding Levels

Funding levels for the SPA program are determined by a simple formula -- $40,000 per year for each country where both AID and the Peace Corps have programs. Allocating levels by formula has numerous advantages. No review process of individual country needs or performance is necessary. However, this also can be a disadvantage. Countries with larger volunteer contingents feel that they should receive a larger share of SPA resources. What is the proper level of funding for the SPA program in a particular country and how should it be determined?

a. Peace Corps Staff Views

Peace Corps staff responses to the question of the most appropriate funding level for the SPA program were split rather evenly. Twenty felt that the present funding level of $40,000 per country was adequate, while nineteen that the funding level was "too little". One of the Peace Corps staff interviewed felt that the present level was too high. Four persons were unsure of what the correct level should be.

When commenting on the question of levels, nearly every Peace Corps staff person suggested that the amount of funding be tied to the number of volunteers in each country. In one country, given the average size of SPA grants and the number of volunteers, $40,000 was sufficient to fund only 20 projects. This meant that only one of ten volunteers could obtain SPA funding. In other countries the $40,000 SPA grant was spent in the first half of the fiscal year, meaning that there are no SPA dollars for good projects developed in the latter six months of the year. One possible new criteria for allocating levels, according to Peace Corps staff, could be the level of success that the particular country has had in administering the SPA fund to date and the level of success of SPA projects themselves in that country.

When recommending funding levels for the SPA, those Peace Corps staff who favored an increase recommended levels between $60,000 to $200,000 per year. One person suggested a gradual increase beginning with $60,000 in FY'85 and reaching $100,000 in FY'87. The tremendous need for small projects funding was mentioned most frequently as the justification. In Togo, a staff member commented, "Togo has an incredible capacity to absorb and make good use of replicable small projects, like 4-H clubs, community gardens, school agriculture, orchards and reforestation projects."

Many staff members felt that the SPA program should be tailored individually to meet the needs of each country. Constraints mentioned on the possibility of increasing the SPA included the limited capability of the staff to absorb the additional work load involved with funding a larger number of projects.

b. AID Views

The great majority of AID respondents maintained that $40,000 per year, per country was an insufficient amount for the SPA program. Sixteen replied that the current $40,000 level per country was too small; two found the level adequate; one felt it was excessive and four AID employees had no opinion. The serious needs for assistance at the community level and the success of past SPA projects were the reasons most frequently given for expanding the SPA program.

The criteria suggested most often by AID personnel for determining the size of the SPA program in each country was the number of volunteers assigned to that country. Ironically, in one country visited by the evaluation, there were fewer than fifty volunteers, and the SPA fund was fully committed in less than six months. Other countries had over 200 volunteers, but were still allocating the $40,000. Several AID staff recommended a SPA of from $60 to $200,000 per country, depending on the number of volunteers. Criteria which they recommended be taken into account included in setting levels per country included the number of volunteers; amount of other funding sources available; history of success; and levels of community support. They emphasized the need to determine the specific needs and characteristics of each country before determining the funding amount.

2. Eligible Sectors

Should other sectors besides Food Production, Small Enterprise Development and Renewable Energy be eligible for SPA funding? The majority of AID and Peace Corps staff felt that they should. Yet these positions were not expressed without considerable thought and discussions.

a. Peace Corps Views

About 40% of the Peace Corps staff interviewed felt that the eligible sector remain the same. The rest expressed a desire to make other sectors eligible.

Health and education were the sectors mentioned most often. This is not surprising since a large number of volunteers are assigned to these programs. Others would broaden the eligible program areas even wider by considering any projects that "relate to improving basic living conditions, and that respond to the real felt needs of the community."

In some senses, Peace Corps staff would narrow eligibility for SPA projects. Many did not want to see the SPA funds used for "brick and mortar monuments" or to fund projects which had recurrent costs which the local community may not be able to meet.

b. AID Views

AID personnel overwhelmingly believed that additional sectors should be included for funding by the SPA. (Eighteen of twenty-three interviewed.)

As additional sector for funding, health was mentioned most often. Also several AID staff would like to see educational projects eligible for

funding. Infrastructure construction was mentioned once, but TEFL was specifically mentioned as an area where SPA funds should not be used. It was also suggested that any new sectors introduced should also be subject to the traditional criteria of being community-inspired, involve no recurrent costs and be able to be sustained by the community.

SPA funding in the education sector was problematic for both AID and Peace Corps staff. In general, they wanted volunteers assigned to education projects to be able to have SPA projects which support them in their assignment. However, they did not want SPA funds to go for the purchase of educational materials or equipment.

With respect to the criteria for eligibility of SPA grants, AID staff were also asked whether the present criteria could be made more responsive to AID's interests and priorities. Of those responding, nine felt that they should be modified and twelve that they should remain the same. In the process of answering this question, several stated that the criteria for SPA projects should be determined in-country -- between AID and the Peace Corps -- and not in Washington.

3. Oversight

The Peace Corps and AID have embarked on a program which is generating hundreds of community projects a year. As will be seen in Chapter IV, a high percentage of these projects are innovative, well-conceived and successful. As was seen in this chapter, the system of review, approval and disbursement is, for the most part, working very well and is responsive to both volunteer and community needs. But what happens after that? Is the Peace Corps providing adequate supervision of the use of these AID funds? Does it have a

responsibility for monitoring the overall program to identify trends and learn lessons from project success or failure? Does it have any way to check systematically to see which projects are successful or to follow-up with communities six months or a year after the project is completed and the volunteer has left the community and returned home? The evaluators raised all these questions under the rubric of project oversight.

a. Project Supervision

The bulk of the work performed by Peace Corps staff members occurs up-front, during the project development and review stage. Actual day-to-day supervision of projects is the responsibility of volunteers. Most APCDs make a point of visiting SPA projects during the implementation stages -- as part of their usual visits to volunteers. When Peace Corps staff members do become directly invovled in the supervision of a project, it is usually because problems have arisen.

With regard to site visits to SPA projects, both Country Directors and APCDs make visits as time allows. One APCD stated that he only visits projects if there is a problem; others have made visits to SPA projects part of their regular schedule of visits to volunteers. One APCD stated that he didn't have time to make field visits and suggested adding an additional staff person to the team with the sole responsibility of overseeing the SPA program. Several APCDs pointed out the danger of giving volunteers with SPA projects more attention than other volunteers. They try not to give volunteers involved with SPA projects undue preference.

b. Premature Termination of Volunteers

Despite the appropriate cautions taken during the review and approval process, the danger always exists that volunteers will depart before the SPA project is completed. This was not a prevalent problem in any of the countries visited, but it did happen on several occasions. If a volunteer leaves the country when the SPA project is at a critical point, another PCV is usually found to look after the project. Sometimes this is arranged among the volunteers themselves and sometimes the staff will request that a nearby PCV step in to administer the project. In one instance, the funds for a project were turned back in when a volunteer had to leave unexpectantly. In another, a project faltered completely because of the premature departure of the volunteer.

In several countries a checklist is now used at Close of Service conferences for volunteers held one to three months before the PCV is due to leave the country. This list ensures that all SPA reports have been submitted, that funds and materials are accounted for, and that any last minute instructions for follow-up are put down in writing.

c. Monitoring

By "monitoring" is meant the organized attempt by the country staff to follow the progress of projects, individually and collectively, after they have been approved. Monitoring of projects in most countries is ad hoc. At the time of the survey, several countries were just beginning to look seriously at the need for monitoring projects. As stated above, the PCVs supervise the project. They also have the duty to report back to the Peace Corps staff. This reporting often occurs in the course of normal activities.

Also, volunteers prepare reports on their activities either monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly. Information on the progress of SPA projects are contained in these reports but are not recorded or analyzed systematically. Dissatisfaction was expressed with this system by some while others thought it sufficient.

Ultimately, the Peace Corps has to walk away from SPA projects and hope that the project preparation, the volunteers and the community will ensure their success. However, the need to monitor projects remains. The Peace Corps needs to know whether the approval decisions it made were good ones and it needs to learn from past successes and failures if it is to run a successful and responsible SPA program. The task is large (some countries have funded over forty SPA projects in the first two years of the program) but feasible. The need for an adequate monitoring system for SPA projects is just becoming apparent to Peace Corps staff in the field.

d. Evaluation

Evaluation in this report refers to knowledge about ultimate outcomes of SPA projects which will enable the Peace Corps to determine their degree of success or failure -- as measured against original program objectives. Any evaluation of SPA projects being done at the present time is informal. Peace Corps staff overwhelmingly favored keeping it that way due to time constraints. However, Peace Corps/Honduras has developed and implemented an evaluation system which takes a look at project impact six months after completion. This system was designed and implemented by volunteer leaders.

e. Follow-Up

By follow-ups in this context is meant the attempt by the Peace Corps staff to keep track of SPA projects after the project has been completed and the

volunteer has departed the country. Very little of this kind of follow-up is done and what little there is, is done informally.

Staff members were divided on the need for follow-up. Some felt it should be done -- even five years after the project was approved. Others felt it should be left with the community and that it was not worth the time or added investment. Those staff members who felt there should be follow-up suggested personal visits or some other "nonburdensome" way of checking on projects in addition to the completion reports.

4. Training

The recognition that the SPA program is a significant new departure for the Peace Corps -- with philosophical, policy and administrative ramifications -- caries with it important implications for Peace Corps training programs -- both of staff and of volunteers. Interviews with staff and volunteers revealed that training practices of the Peace Corps had not yet incorporated the SPA program sufficiently into the exercises designed to prepare Peace Corps representatives for service overseas.

Staff members are desirous, one might even say desperate, for information on how other countries operate their SPA programs.

Volunteers are committed to making the most effective use of SPA monies, but they have not always received adequate information or been warned sufficiently about the risks being perceived as "an American with money."

a. Staff Training

The staff interviewed in the field received little formalized training about the SPA program. More than 75% stated that they had received "little or no training in the SPA". Several noted that in Washington they had received

only one hour on the topic of SPA in staff training. While some regretted this fact; others thought that a lot of training was not necessary; that the informal training that they had received at post was adequate, and that information received in Washington "doesn't make much sense until you get to country anyway".

Specific requests were made for skills training in project analysis, and basic philosophical and strategic considerations which should be kept in mind when dealing with small projects. More than anything, staff requested an exchange of information among countries on what is actually working in the field. In this context many staff members mentioned the three regional conferences that were held in 1984 as especially beneficial. Other training mechanisms that were favored included: one-on-one communication between old and new staff members, staff meetings, staff retreats, memorandums, and "on the job training". It was suggested that Washington staff training include case-studies illustrating the SPA program, its successes, failures, administrative requirements and impact on the work of the volunteers.

b. Preparing Volunteers to Use SPA Funds

The same general training pattern for volunteers has evolved in all eight countries. During the Pre-Service Training (PST), which occurs when the new trainee is not yet considered a volunteer and has just arrived in the country, a "teaser" session is given describing the SPA program. The feeling was universal that a new volunteer is not ready to embark on a SPA project until he or she has been in the country for at least six months; has experienced the culture and has come to understand what limitations and realities exist in their new environment. This six month period is the point at which most countries provide an In-Service Training (IST) program. At this point, the SPA program is explained in depth and detailed training is given. Often PCVs practice filling

out the paperwork which has been developed in each country, and the PCVs review and discuss successful and unsuccessful projects. In addition the SPA Coordinator will consult with volunteers who have expressed an interest in the program. Other commonly used means of spreading information about SPA include: memos, newsletters, and the Peace Corps handbook developed by the Peace Corps in each country as a guide to Peace Corps service.

For training materials, most countries use examples of old projects, copies of the forms developed in their particular country, and the country handbook.

Most training of Peace Corps volunteers -- both in PST and IST has to do with basic information about the SPA program as well as how to apply. Very few volunteers reported receiving any training in how to avoid the risks involved in using SPA funds -- risks as this report points out several times not only to the "image" but also the essence of being a Peace Corps volunteer, namely of developing a relationship solely based on the fact that the volunteer has access to money.

The SPA program creates many new training requirements and opportunities for the Peace Corps which, if pursued, can help form even more effective volunteers.

5. Field/Washington Communications

The SPA program is unique in that it began operating with the assumption that "the field knew best" in terms of how to put the program into operation in each country. This policy has paid enormous dividends. Each country has been able to design the administrative systems which were most appropraite for its needs. Guidance was kept to a minimum as were reporting requirements. The evaluators set out to determine the reaction of AID and Peace Corps field staff to the original SPA guidance and to the reporting requirements.

The evaluation also attempted to determine where there may be a need for further clarification, advice or direction from Washington and whether additional information, from the field to Washington was indicated.

a. Field Guidance

Peace Corps staff members were unanimous that the guidance from Washington given so far on the SPA has been sufficient. "No more guidance, please" was one comment which summed up this general attitude. The flexibility of the guidance was cited several times as a strong point.

Requests for more information (never "guidance") were made several times. The APCD from one African country made the suggestion that "Washington could give more examples of how to use SPA drawn on the experience of other countries." Another in Central America requested "send us demonstration projects -- or sample proposals". The summaries of SPA projects which have been sent out by by Washington were cited several times for their usefulness. One person in Morocco suggested that journalistic reports on SPA projects be prepared and published in the Peace Corps Times.

In addition to the guidance being adequate and flexible, it was also clear. Most staff members stated that they had not needed to seek clarification for any reason. Of those that did need to request further information from Washington, the overwhelming response was that they had received it in a timely manner. On eight separate occasions, the SPA Coordiantor in Washinton was singled out for her responsiveness to inquiries from the field.

Four out of five of the AID personnel interviewed expressed the opinion that the program guidance provided by Washington had been adequate. The only request for additional guidance was for assistance in speeding up the disbursement process.

AID staff members were strongly of the view that more guidance would mean more bureaucracy. One AID Director said, "We could use more suggestions but no more rules." A Program Officer echoed this sentiment with "Washington should be extremely careful not to bureaucratize our effort and strangle it."

In one case both AID and the Peace Corps staff sought clarification from Washington and never received a clear response. FY'84 funds had been spent so quickly in Honduras that AID and the Peace Corps requested an additional .pa $40,000. This request could not be honored because all SPA funds had been committed based on the $40,000 per country allocation. Neither AID or Peace Corps/Honduras were aware of this, however. They waited six months before receiving a clarification of this matter, and this was done by the CA/BMI evaluation team!

b. Reporting to Washington

All countries send Individual Activity Ageements to OTAPS after each SPA project is initiated. Upon the completion of the SPA project, an Activity Completion Notification (ACN) is also sent to Washington. Some countries send yearly reports as well. They also send photographs of projects to the OTAPS office in order to keep Washington informed of what is going on in the field.

Nearly every staff member interviewed felt that the current reporting system to Washington is sufficient and not burdensome to them. They felt it should be kept to a minimum due to the other demands on staff time.

Several endorsed strongly the notion of doing the evaluation since it would greatly increase AID and Peace Corps knowledge of how the SPA program works in the field. They also urged that Washington-based personnel see SPA projects when they visit the field.

c. Increasing Communications About SPA

Field staff are interested in increased communications from Washington in one sense. They want more information which will be useful to them in administering their own SPA program.

The knowledge gained in administering the SPA program in one country is generally not shared with other countries. Sometimes APCDs from neighboring countries exchange information on projects. Some country newsletters with SPA-related information are also exchanged. Field staff read avidly the SPA project descriptions sent out by OTAPS and expressed great interest in this evaluation. Information on projects is also exchanged at the regional conferences. However, there is no organized or systematic way in which experiences are shared. So that staff could benefit directly from the knowledge being developed about successful and unsuccessful small projects, as well as management practices, throughout the world.

6. AID/Peace Corps Relations

Perhaps even more important than the impact the SPA program is having in each agency, is its impact on working relationships between AID and the Peace Corps. The negotiation of individual country agreements, it was hoped, would increase communication and improve cooperation. SPA projects could lead to new opportunities for sharing and pooling resources and could have an impact on the overall program of both agencies. The evaluation set out to determine whether any of these hopes had been met or whether it was still too early to tell.

a. Negotiations of Country Agreements

In nearly all cases the negotiation process establishing the SPA program in each country went smoothly. Issues which did arise at the initiation

of the SPA program, and have arisen since, have been of a procedural nature. Peace Corps/AID cooperation in this program was described as an "excellent working relationship between people and funds." Also, it was felt that the SPA program helped to get the agencies together for broader efforts and to erase historically distorted views that each agency may have of the other.

An indication of the successful relations between AID and the Peace Corps in this program is that one AID Controller wanted to use the SPA program to restructure the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund in the SPA format.

The most serious procedural problem existed in Togo where there have been extremely long delays in ordering and receiving checks for projects which had completed the approval process. There were also serious procedural issues because the U.S. Ambassador wanted ultimate control and the right to concur on all SPA proposals prior to approval. This caused Peace Corps staff and volunteers to complain that the SPA program was being directed toward the criteria and goals of the American Embassy or of AID rather than toward the separate and specific goals of the program and of the Peace Corps.

In Togo, negotiations for SPA funds were difficult in both FY'83 and FY'84. In other countries, it became an opportunity to streamline a process which was already free of major difficulties.

In another country, the AID Director initially wanted to see large SPA projects to reduce the administration work and to have a visible impact. This was ultimately resolved with the Peace Corps being given the final authority for the design of projects.

Procedural issues existed in other countries as well. It took several months to work out the administrative details required to run the SPA program in many countries. Some SPA procedures set-up by both AID and the Peace Corps

turned out to be labor intensive, burdensome and bureaucratic. In each of these cases, the procedures were refined as the countries acquired more experience in the administration of the SPA program.

An important issue arose in Morocco concerning the use of SPA funds to pay for "administrative costs" -- especially local taxes and transportation costs.

Other issues which arose in AID/Peace Corps negotiations were:

-- broadening the criteria for project approval,

-- insuring that SPA projects fit into the priorities of the local government,

-- deciding whether PCVs should handle funds.

It appears that by following the guidance from Washington and by mutual agreement between Peace Corps and AID in each country, most issues and concerns have been adequately addressed up to this point.

b. Increased Cooperation

In half of the countries visited new AID/Peace Corps cooperative projects have begun due to the interaction between AID and Peace Corps in the SPA program. For example, AID/Honduras has earmarked local currencies for supplementing SPA resources.

In countries where there is of yet no new joint program, the SPA has still had a postive effect, especially in the exchange of information and expertise. One SPA Coordinator perceived that the SPA had led to "a more supportive attitude by AID personnel towards Peace Corps."

Some staff (both AID and Peace Corps) chought it was too early to tell whether the program would have long-lasting effects on the relationship between the two agencies.

G. Reporting About SPA to AID

Reporting procedures between Peace Corps and AID varied from country to country. In some countries, only oral reports are given on the SPA projects. In others, written reports are submitted quarterly or semi-annually. Individual Activity Agreements (IAAs) are routinely forwarded to AID in some but not all countries -- as are Activity Completion Notices (ACNs). Much of the information which is requested by and sent to AID from the Peace Corps is of a financial nature.

In all countries except one, AID personnel felt that reporting was adequate. AID staff prefer that reporting be kept to a minimum, and the Peace Corps prefers it this way also. A desire to know about the projects and possibly learn from them was mentioned as a reason for wanting to be kept abreast of the SPA projects. One AID staff member thought that it would be sufficient if Peace Corps sent to AID all copies of reports which the Peace Corps generates for its own purposes on the SPA program (as long as the needed financial data was included).

H. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. According to Peace Corps and AID staff, the present division of labor between AID and the Peace Corps in administering the SPA program is functioning effectively. The roles of each agency are best described as the Peace Corps being the manager and AID the funding agency and technical resource. Both agencies are happy with this arrangement.

2. The SPA program is not imposing an undue administrative burden on AID staff. While many AID field staff cited their heavy workloads, none complained about the additional workload involved with the SPA program.

3. Although AID personnel are usually not involved in the details of program management, they are well aware of how the program operates and are interested in reports about the program.

4. Host country governments are involved in the SPA program at local levels only. AID and Peace Corps staff greatly prefer not to involve them further.

5. The Administration of SPA program fits into the work schedules of most Peace Corps staff quite well. The APCDs named as SPA Coordinators, however, have assumed a substantial increase in their duties. Their secretaries have also become over-burdened. Peace Corps administrative officers have also assumed increased workloads. The Peace Corps will need to name full time SPA or small project coordinators of funds available for small projects continue to increase. Also, it will need to provide some additional, part-time support to assure that financial records are kept adequately. Since both AID and the Peace Corps have an interest in the success of the SPA program, both agencies should seek to identify the resources necessary to provide the proper administrative support for the SPA program.

6. No one system for reviewing and approving projects works best. It depends on the unique circumstances in each country. All have advantages and disadvantages. Peace Corps/Washington should continue to monitor the wide variety of systems for the review and approval of SPA projects and provide the field with technical assistance on promising practices or pitfalls.

The length of time that the approval process takes is very important. Consider the following: Volunteers are in country for two years. In most countries, a guideline has been set up (which CA/RMI thinks is a good one) that the volunteers be six months in country before they apply for a SPA grant. There is also a desire that the volunteers be able to finish the project before they leave the country. If the project is one that will take a while to finish, perhaps up to the one-year maximum specified in the guidelines, there is really only a six-month window in a volunteer's service during which they can apply for the funds. As there is often a one to two month delay in receiving the funds after they are approved, the window is even smaller. Because of these factors, it is important that the approval process proceed as quickly as is consistent with good management.

7. The single most serious management problem related to the SPA program -- cited by AID staff, Peace Corps officials and volunteers -- is disbursement of SPA funds. In some countries, payment of grants to community groups are delayed for months. For other countries, grant funds are being disbursed to Peace Corps staff or to volunteers. There is concern everywhere about the volunteers assuming the responsibility for the funds, especially among volunteers. However, there have been no cases of volunteer mismanagement to date.

The systems which seem to work best is for AID or the Peace Corps to issue a check to the community group and volunteers as co-signators. In the cases where the check cannot be written to a community, it should be written to the volunteer -- in the community's behalf.

In countries where bank accounts are being opened in support of particular projects, some care needs to be taken with the arrangements being made. Some of the issues here are:

-- In the case of a co-signatory account between the volunteer and a member of the community group, some means must be found to insure that the person who represents the community group can be changed if the group desires to do so, even if the representative doesn't want to be removed. One possibility is to have it be a three signature account, with the third signatory being the APCD involved, with only two signatures being required to withdraw money. Then the money could be entirely withdrawn by Peace Corps if necesary and a new account opened with a new representative from the community group.

-- Arrangements need to be made in advance to allow for one volunteer to COS and be replaced on the account by another volunteer. These arrangements need to include not only changing the name of the account, but also giving the now volunteer access to the old records. This access to records has been a problem in one of the countries visited.

-- Arrangements also need to be made to deal with the death of a volunteer. This was already an issue in one of the countries, where there was a bank account frozen because of the volunteer's death.

Cash management is essential for longevity of projects. Accounting and management systems need to be discussed and set-up, early in the game, to provide for division of the profits, and to create a system for setting aside money to pay for repair as well as eventual replacement of the materials or machines which the SPA funds have provided. Even garden projects need long-term cash management to provide for fence repairs, tool purchase, expansion, possible water problems, and replacement of the fence when it finally rusts out.

8. The funds available for SPA projects should be doubled on a global basis -- but not in every country. CA/BMI recommends that the present formula of $40,000 per country be maintained and that all countries which meet the present criteria qualify for this as a floor level

amount. Additional funds should be made available and should be allocated according to the following criteria:

-- desire of the Peace Corps and AID staff in-country for an increase in their SPA fund. (Some countries now have sufficient funds for small projects and may not request more.)

-- performance of each country in the use of SPA funds to date

-- number of volunteers in each country

-- basic needs of the country in question

9. The eligible sectors for SPA projects should be expanded to include health and education because of the high number of volunteers working in these sectors. However, special guidelines should be developed for education projects to assure that to the greatest extent possible, projects in the education sector are community based, productive, income generating and do not substitute for materials and supplies which should be provided by Education Ministries or other large institutions with public responsibilities.

10. The Peace Corps must develop a system for tracking and providing the proper oversight of SPA projects after they have been approved, not only while the volunteer is still working with the community but also after the volunteer has left and the project has been completed. This process can be simple and informal, but it is necessary so that the Peace Corps can learn from past mistakes and successes as well as maintain a record of the long-term accomplishments of the SPA program. Volunteers and even trainees could play a part in all oversight activities related to the SPA program.

11. The Peace Corps needs to examine the numerous new training requirements and opportunities created by the SPA program and develop materials which can be used by training facilities both in the U.S. and overseas to train staff and volunteers in the proper and effective use of SPA funds.

a. Training of Volunteers

In some ways, the SPA program has institutionalized a change which has been occurring for some time within the Peace Corps, namely, that the volunteers are becoming more and more involved with projects that are funded, in whole or in part, from some diverse source, i.e. USAID, foreign donors (Dutch, Canadians) and PVOs.

This increase in involvement with funded projects implies a need for greater training of the volunteers (and the staff) in order to be able to utilize fully the resources which are now becoming available. Training is required in several areas.

Project feasibility -- volunteers need to know how to analyze a project, how to make reasonably accurate budget predictions, and how to make an educated estimate of the potential success or failure of a project.

Proposal writing -- volunteers need to know what differentiates a good proposal and a poor one, and how to write specific proposals for specific funding agencies.

Project supervision -- volunteers need to know how to supervise the work of others, how and when to delegate authority, how to keep in touch with what is going on in a project without having to be "in charge" of the project.

Community organization -- volunteers need to know how to assist the community in setting up an organization that can make decisions, allocate responsibilities, plan for the future, and generally give the best chance for the long-term success of the project.

Bookkeeping and records -- volunteers need to know how to keep the books for their project, and they also need to know how to teach someone else to keep the books after they are gone. Also, they have to understand their own accountability for the funds they receive.

Finally, and most importantly, volunteers need to be made aware of the need to manage a SPA project in a way which leaves in tact their fundamental role and responsibility to motivate communities to help themselves.

b. Staff Training

In addition to the volunteers, the Peace Corps staff also needs training in the use of SPA monies. Several areas suggest themselves:

Project selection -- as discussed elsewhere, the selection of projects is of utmost importance. One poorly selected project has the potential for doing considerable damage to the reputation of the volunteer, the village, the particular technology involved, or the Peace Corps itself. In addition to individual training in this area, CA/BMI suggests that time be set aside at APCD conferences for people to share their experiences with funded projects and to talk about what projects, styles, and techniques have worked best in their situation.

Management -- this is the key issue in all aspects of the management of SPA projects. Staff must provide monitoring and evaluation of projects and it must work with the volunteers to assist them to use the SPA funds as a means of increasing community motivation not substituting for it.

12. There is neither a need nor a disposition on the part of the field to receive more guidance on the SPA program if by guidance is meant more rules. However, the field is most interested in receiving ideas, practical suggestions, case studies and other aids to improved programming of SPA funds.

Promising practices which should be written up and distributed to the field could include:

-- Systems used in Honduras for accounting for SPA funds or evaluating projects.

-- Systems developed in Ecuador for involving volunteers in the review of projects and for refining the criteria for approval of SPA grants.

-- Techniques such as the Signing Ceremony used in The Gambia to re-enforce the SPA agreement with the local community.

-- Approval and disbursement systems which are speedy, in accord with guidelines and regulations and promote community involvement.

-- Exemplary projects such as those seen in all the countries visited.

CA/BMI recommends that a special SPA newsletter or manual be developed to provide ideas and promising practices to the field in all aspects of SPA program administration.

13. Reporting requirements for SPA projects from the field to Washington are regarded as non-burdensome and should be kept that way.

14. Most negotiations of SPA grants for both FY'83 and FY'84 went smoothly. The negotiation of these agreements has increased the communication between AID and the Peace Corps and led to new cooperative projects in half the countries visited. In Honduras, it led to the expansion of the SPA program by the AID Mission using national counterpart funds.

15. The requirement that the Peace Corps prepare an annual report in each country on the use of SPA funds seems to have been completely disregarded in all countries visited. AID is not requiring such a report and none of the Peace Corps country team visited is providing it. CA/BMI believes that an important opportunity is being lost here. An annual report on the SPA -- or even briefing of AID staff by Peace Corps staff -- would provide an opportunity to reflect on program successes and failures, improve AID/Peace Corps relations which are the very basis for the program and increase the probability that the SPA program will lead to other important cooperative programs.

III. IMPACT OF THE SPA PROGRAM ON AID AND THE PEACE CORPS: AN OPINION SURVEY

		Page
A.	Evaluation	82
B.	Peace Corps Staff Opinion Survey	85
C.	AID Staff Opinion Survey	97
D.	Volunteer Opinion Survey	105

III. IMPACT OF THE SPA PROGRAM ON AID AND THE PEACE CORPS: AN OPINION SURVEY

The scope of work of the SPA evaluation called for an assessment of the impact of the SPA program on AID and the Peace Corps. In designing the approach to the evaluation, it was felt that the most appropriate way to assess this impact would be through a survey of the views of AID and Peace Corps staff and also of Peace Corps volunteers.

A. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

1. Capital City Interviews

In the instruments designed for the capital city interviews (see Appendix A) for both AID and Peace Corps staff, certain questions were inserted which were designed to solicit the views of these staff persons regarding the SPA programs effect on their programs and their agencies. These questions were always followed by a grid where the evaluators could record the responses of the interviews. After each of these questions, the evaluators probed for an explanation of the response. In this chapter, both the responses and the comments of those interviewed are described.

A total of twenty-three AID personnel involved with the administration of the SPA program were surveyed in the eight countries visited (see Appendix D). This number included: six Mission Director or Deputy Directors, seven Controllers or Budget Officers, five Program Officers and five Project Managers. The evaluation teams conducted forty-four opinion surveys with Peace Corps staff members (see Appendix E). The Peace Corps staff surveyed: seven Peace Corps Directors, seven SPA Coordinators and six APCDs for Administration. An additional nineteen APCDs for Technical areas and five Programming and Training Officers (PTOs) were interviewed.

2. Volunteer Opinion Survey

After each volunteer was interviewed regarding his or her SPA project, an opinion survey was then administered. (See Appendix F) In addition, evaluation teams were instructed to interview a Peace Corps volunteer who did not have a SPA project for every volunteer whose project had been evaluated. This was to eliminate any positive bias toward the SPA program on the part of volunteers who had benefitted from SPA funds. Thus, the number of volunteers in each country interviewed was to be exactly twice the number of SPA projects seen, half SPA volunteers and half non-SPA.

The questions -- and responses -- described in this section may seem to provide too many opportunities to the volunteers to criticize the program. They probe constantly for an enumeration of the risks, dangers and disadvantages of PCVs managing grant funds. This was done purposefully. AID officials (many of whom were former volunteers who served when traditional Peace Corps values precluded absolutely the handling of grant monies) and Peace Corps officials -- including Peace Corps Director Loret Ruppe herself -- urged the evaluation team to address the issue of the dangers involved in the volunteers having access to to funds.

Creative Associates and Benchmarks decided that the best ways to address this issue, critical not only to the "image" but also to the very essence of the Peace Corps, was to ask the volunteers themselves -- both those who had obtained SPA grants and those that hadn't.

Evaluators probed in these interviews, pushing the volunteers to enumerate risks and to speak candidly of the impact of SPA grants on their work in their communities. As has been understood since its creation, the Peace Corps is the volunteers. The evaluators were determined to listen to their views on this important subject and to record their responses in as great a detail as possible.

This chapter will present in detail the ideas of AID and Peace Corps field staff on the impact of the SPA program. Perhaps most importantly, it will give the views of the volunteers on the impact which the program is having on their work in the community. The chapter is divided into three parts:

B. Peace Corps Staff Opinion Survey
C. AID Staff Opinion Survey
D. Volunteer Opinion Survey

The number of responses to open-ended questions may be greater or less than the number of persons interviewed. When elaborating on an answer a respondent sometimes made several important points. On the other hand, after giving a Yes/No answer some respondents chose not to elaborate further. This accounts for any discrepancy in the number of detailed responses cited. We emphasize that <u>every response</u> given by AID personnel, Peace Corps staff members and Peace Corps Volunteers is included in the analysis of each question.

B. PEACE CORPS STAFF OPINION SURVEY

1. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF THE SPA PROGRAM TO THE PEACE CORPS?

Peace Corps staff responded to this open-ended question with fifty-four different comments. Advantages mentioned most frequently were: (a) importance of the volunteers having access to resources, (b) the fast-funding nature of the SPA program, (c) the positive effects on community development, (d) the effect of the SPA on the volunteer's morale and performance in their community, and (e) increased credibility and public relations for the Peace Corps.

a. Provides Resources

The most frequently mentioned advantage was that the SPA makes funds available which enable the volunteers to do their jobs better. This was cited nineteen times. One Peace Corps staff member said that the SPA program "fills a vacuum created by the need for funds and resources." Another characterized this advantage as follows:

> The main advantage is that the volunteer has access to money in order to demonstrate what they are trying to convey. SPA is a means to a greater end. It shows what people can do. You set up a demonstration of what can be done, you create a community working together. This is terrific, it fights against generations of fatalism (or people waiting for a patron or president to come in and solve their problems). It stimulates leadership, decision-making and "the soft technologies" of community organization. I don't care what the project is, it is the process that counts, the people can say "we really did that."

b. Fast-Funding

"The quickness of the SPA program makes it more effective." This advantage was mentioned thirteen times. A PCV serves only two years, so quick

decisions on funding are vital. By helping a volunteer get a project off the ground, in a short period of time, the SPA program increases their effectiveness, according to these staff members.

c. Positive Effect on Communities

Six staff members cited the positive effect of SPA projects on the community as an advantage. After a SPA project has been completed, the local community has solved one of its problems and villagers have learned new skills. The SPA project leaves community organizational skills behind. These staff members described the SPA as a catalyst to self-help.

d. Positive Effect on PCVs

Eight staff members pointed to the positive effects of the SPA on the volunteers themselves as an advantage. One stated that he had fewer requests for transfers of volunteers to different sites because of the SPA. Another told the story of a volunteer who was about to terminate early but went on to become an outstanding volunteer because of her work on a SPA project. A SPA project helps volunteers to remain focused on a task and see it through to completion. Staff said that the responsibility accepted by volunteers helps them to grow as persons.

e. Credibility and Public Relations

Five staff persons cited the added credibility and good public relations which Peace Corps has received as a consequence of the SPA program. They believe that because of the SPA program, the Peace Corps is taken more seriously by host country governments. This has added to the prestige of the Peace Corps as a development agency. In several countries, individual SPA projects have received attention by the local radio and print media.

f. Other Advantages

One staff person said the SPA frees the Peace Corps staff from the constant pressure to find resources for volunteers. Another mentioned the beneficial effects on the relationship between AID and the Peace Corps.

2. WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES OF THE SPA TO THE PEACE CORPS?

Peace Corps staff have given much consideration and thought to the possible dangers and pitfalls of this new program. They offered forty-nine comments which covered thirteen areas of concern. Few of the comments referred to actual negative experiences. Most pointed to potential dangers with the program. They are contingent disadvantages where the program is not handled properly.

a. Volunteers Seen as Grantspersons

Thirteen staff members said that, if the SPA is not handled correctly, the volunteer could be seen as a grantsperson, a financial rather than a human resource. In the worst case, host countries could request volunteers only for the financial resources the volunteers would bring to the community. These staff members were concerned that the Peace Corps not become a funding organization. The antidote to this, in the views of one person, is to keep the projects small.

b. No Disadvantages

Eight of the staff members said that there were no disadvantages to the SPA program.

c. Delays in Receiving Funds

Five Peace Corps staff felt that the time it takes to approve projects and get the funds to the community level could become a problem. One Peace Corps Director said that this was actually a problem in his country.

d. Unfilled Expectations

Five staffers feared that the expectations of both the volunteer and the community members could be raised too high. If funds were not received, or if the project were not a success, the community could suffer a "let-down."

e. Demand on Staff Time

Four staff members mentioned the extra work demands for staff members as a disadvantage of the SPA fund.

f. Volunteers Handling Funds

Three staff members thought that it was a disadvantage of the program to expect volunteers to disburse funds.

g. Projects Not Well Conceived

Three staff members thought that if projects were not well conceived and structured in terms of community participation, failure would result.

h. Volunteers Neglecting Their Primary Assignment

Two stated that the availability of SPA funds might encourage volunteers "to do their own thing" and neglect their primary assignment. PCVs experiencing difficulty within the structure of their host-government institution could devote all their time to their SPA project. This could lead to dissatisfaction on the part of the volunteer and resentment from the host country supervisors.

i. Other

Other disadvantages and concerns cited were: the volunteer could create dependency on the part of the local community; there is still uncertainty over whether the projects funded to date will be self-sustaining; the volunteer may use a project for his/her own image building in a community; and new volunteers replacing ones with SPA projects may be automatically expected to bring funds to the community also.

3. ARE THERE MORE ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES?

After discussing the relative advantages and disadvantages of the program, Peace Corps staff were asked "are there more advantages or disadvantages." The responses were:

More advantages:	42
More disadvantages:	0
Uncertain:	2

Both "uncertain" staff members said that the ultimate advantage or disadvantage of the program depended on how the projects were managed.

4. IN YOUR OPINION, HAS THE SPA PROGRAM ALTERED THE VOLUNTEER'S ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY?

Peace Corps staff responded to this question as follows:

Yes:	24
No:	15
Undecided:	5

a. Yes, Role of the Volunteer Enhanced

Nineteen staff members felt that the SPA has enhanced the role of the PCV. Staff [illegible] that volunteers are more [illegible] seen in a

more serious light, and regarded as professionals. Several complete quotes are given below:

> The role has changed because it has given the volunteer the ability to complete a community project with funds that could not be obtained any other place.
>
> The SPA has helped PCVs feel more satisfied with their work and encouraged them to help villagers form development committees to define a project for themselves, and determine their input.
>
> Feel it has enhanced PCV role in the community -- example of a teacher who can do a secondary project that helps the community.
>
> Certainly if a fund like this had been available earlier, there would have been fewer frustrated PCVs. It helps them get more involved with villagers and helps to reduce Early Terminations.

b. Yes, Role of the Volunteer Damaged

Five staff members said that there are negative aspects to the image of the volunteer in the community. All five comments are quoted below:

> In some cases it has made the volunteer more useful, and in others it may have given a false impression of what the Peace Corps is.
>
> Now people think of volunteers as project supervisors and want their volunteers to go for money -- puts volunteers on hot spot.
>
> In some cases, because of the money and dependence.
>
> The Gringo has the money.
>
> SPA made the volunteer a grantsman, but it forces the volunteer and community to deal with small business and money generating issues, which is very postive.

c. No, The Role of the Volunteer Has Not Been Altered

Fifteen Peace Corps staff saw no change in the volunteer's role in the community. The following comments were made by personnel holding this opinion:

-- Seven said that they had feared the SPA would have a negative impact but this hasn't happened.

-- Three pointed out that the SPA did not represent a change since volunteers had always been seeking out -- and obtaining -- funds for small projects. As one Peace Corps Director commented:

> PCVs have always tried to arrange funding for their pet village projects. SPA increases the potential that they will be funded in a timely manner, and therefore improve the success potential of the project. The "one stop" nature of the funding means the PCV spends more time in the village and less time pounding the pavement.

5. DO YOU THINK THE SPA HAS INCREASED OR DECREASED THE ROLE OF THE PCV AS A MOTIVATOR IN ENABLING THE COMMUNITY TO HELP ITSELF?

The Peace Corps staff response was:

Increased:	35
Decreased:	0
Neither:	4
Undecided:	5

Responses to evaluators probing on this question included the following comments:

a. Motivating Factor of Accomplishing A Project.

Eleven staffers said that SPA funds increase community motivation because volunteers help them to get things done. As one staff member put it.

> In one village, because of the SPA, we increased the motivation -- got people to do more than they ever thought they could -- a coop was organized -- they put the name of the volunteer on the coop -- it's now a showcase for the Ministry of Natural Resources.

b. Motivating Factor of Community Participation Requirement

Nine staff members noted that the SPA guidelines require a community contribution to the project and that this was a factor in encouraging communities to help themselves.

6. HAS THE SPA FUND MEANT THAT VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN MORE OR LESS EFFECTIVE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES?

Staff responses were:

More effective:	35
Less effective:	0
Undecided:	8
Neither:	1

Since the staff had cited numerous reasons for increased effectiveness in their answers to previous questions, few elaborated in their response to this question. Those that did emphasized that the SPA provided new tools for promoting development to the volunteers and greatly increased volunteer satisfaction.

Some actual quotes were:

> The SPA has helped make PCVs feel more like development professionals. They have been very good about managing funds and assisting the community groups.
>
> The SPA has greatly increased PCV's effectiveness.
>
> The volunteer with SPA normally can do more. They have gotten the minimum resources they needed.
>
> I've seen cases where the SPA has made the difference for a volunteer. One asked for money for a loom project, now the community is selling clothing. The volunteer extended for six more months. She had been accepted by Berkeley but decided to stay on as a volunteer.

7. HAS THE SPA PROGRAM CONTRIBUTED TO THE PEACE CORPS COUNTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CMP) GOALS?

Responses were:

Yes:	33
No:	3
Undecided:	8

Every Country Director interviewed felt that the SPA program had helped his or her country fulfill the goals of the CMP. In most countries, programs reflect the same emphasis as the SPA program (Food and Agriculture, Energy Development, and Small Enterprise Development). This facilitates the integration of the SPA into the CMP. One APCD commented: "SPA money enables the Peace Corps to address more of the areas cited in the CMP than we were able to do before."

8. IN LIGHT OF THE EXISTENCE OF FUNDS SUCH AS THE PEACE CORPS PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM, THE SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FUND IN LATIN AMERICA, THE AMBASSADOR'S SPECIAL SELF HELP FUND IN AFRICA, AND THE ACCELERATED IMPACT PROGRAM IN ASIA, IS THE SPA REALLY NECESSARY? IF YES, WHAT ARE ITS UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS?

Necessary: 41
Not Necessary: 3

The reasons given for why the SPA is seen as a unique funding source were:

a. Quick and Sure

The quickness and the reliability of the SPA program was mentioned by eighteen staff members. One APCD said the following:

> SPA gives a sum of money that is readily available, and sure. With other donors there is a lot of uncertainty on timing and amount of funds you'll actually receive. I see the SPA now as the main fund available to PCVs.

Several times the reliability of the SPA to actually get the funds out was given as an example of the success of the SPA program. Comparing the SPA program to other funding mechanisms, one APCD stated, "the SPA is much more dynamic and quick and it has much more of a human element."

b. Flexibility

The SPA's flexibility was cited by eleven staff members. Other funds have other goals or may concentrate on program sectors in which Peace Corps volunteers aren't involved. Some funds are limited to certain regions within a country. Other funds may also have limits (minimums or maximums) on the size of projects they fund. Some other funding mechanisms are unwilling to fund small community related projects. Others have ceilings that may be unrealistic.

Many funding sources do not have the SPA's flexibility because they have particular targets or goals which were not designed for the Peace Corps. The SPA program, on the other hand, was designed with the volunteers in mind.

c. Peace Corps Control Of Funding Mechanism

The fact that Peace Corps actually controls this funding mechanism was cited by nine staff persons as the factor that made it unique and necessary. An APCD put this point across strongly when he stated that: "Peace Corps should have its own fund to assist small projects, and not always have to depend on other organizations like CRS or others".

d. Projects Originate With The Community

The fact that the ideas for projects come from the villagers themselves, with the aid of Peace Corps volunteers, was cited as a unique aspect of the SPA program by six staff persons. No other funding source responds to community ideas in this way. Even for funding sources that make the decision in the country where the project is proposed (and not all do), the decision maker or review committee may have little experience or knowledge of village groups, or responsiveness to them.

e. SPA Not Necessary

In one country three members of the Peace Corps staff said that the SPA fund was not necessary, since they had access to $75,000 through other funding mechanisms. Two of these staff members went on to say that although the SPA funds were not necessary they were useful nonetheless. The other staff member feared that because such a relatively large quantity of funds were available "it would cause us to lose control".

9. HAS INFORMATION GATHERED FROM SPA EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS BEEN USED BY AID OR THE PEACE CORPS TO IMPROVE THEIR PROGRAMS?

Yes:	13
No:	17
No Response:	10
Undecided:	4

a. Information Not Gathered

Eleven of the seventeen members who said that neither AID nor the Peace Corps used information from SPA projects also noted that little information had been developed or changed hands about the results of the SPA projects. In four of the countries, procedures to exchange useful information between AID and the Peace Corps were still in the process of being set up.

b. Information Put To Use

In countries where the SPA program has had a perceived effect, some examples were offered. In one country, the AID Mission decided to fund the purchase of 50 grain mills, based on the experience with two SPA funded grain mills. Experience derived from other SPA projects has been used as a measure of the feasibility of a project. A novel method of fencing trees to protect them

from animals in a reforestation project was used by the Peace Corps. Internally, the SPA program has pointed out training needs and methods to train PCVs in areas such as community and project analysis skills.

10. ARE SPA PROJECT FUNDS USED TO SUPPORT PRIMARY PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND GOALS OR TO SUPPORT SECONDARY GOALS AND ACTIVITIES?

In every country, staffs disagreed if the SPA funds were used for primary or secondary projects. Fifteen thought that SPA funds were used for primary projects; ten said secondary projects; eleven said that the funds were used for both purposes; and eight staff members said that they didn't know where the priority for funding was in their country.

In few cases, the PCVs entire workload is dependent on a SPA activity. Without the SPA funds the volunteer would not have a job. This is generally regarded as an inadvisable situation.

C. AID STAFF OPINION SURVEY

1. HAS THE SPA ENABLED AID TO GET RESOURCES TO THE COMMUNITY LEVEL AT A REASONABLE COSTS? IF NO, WHY NOT? IF YES, HOW?

Yes: 23
No: 0

When AID staff were probed as to why they answered this question affirmatively (there were no negative responses), their answers fell mostly in three categories:

a. Cost Effective

Eight AID staff cited the cost effectiveness of working through the Peace Corps. Their comments included:

> Having volunteers in the field reduces AID's overhead and costs ten times.
>
> This is the best AID investment because there is no overhead, and there is a good delivery system.
>
> One of the simplest things we do.
>
> With virtually no administrative burden on USAID we are able to get funds to the community level through the Peace Corps.

b. Level of Community Support

Four AID staff members stressed that working with the Peace Corps in the SPA program enabled AID to get to community levels that were otherwise impossible for AID. As one Mission Director stated: "We couldn't even be in those communities without the Peace Corps." Other quotes were:

> I'm pro-SPA. SPA has reached communities which otherwise would not have been reached by projects -- communities where there is no access to credit, markets or infrastructure. This is the beauty of SPA.

> There is a problem getting resources to the community level, since almost all other AID projects must go through local government agencies.

c. Concrete Results

Three AID personnel stressed the soundness of the SPA projects themselves and that they achieve concrete results as the reason for their affirmative answer. One typical comment was:

> I feel that the SPA is doing more than big AID projects. With Institution Development projects you don't see results, from the SPA program you can see farmers that are now irrigating more land.

2. DOES THE SPA ASSIST AID TO MEET ITS GOALS OF RESPONDING TO BASIC HUMAN NEEDS IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES?

Yes:	22
No:	1

The one AID staff person who answered negatively was a Mission Director who maintained that the thrust of his assistance efforts was economic stabilization and not basic human needs. Two other AID staff, including one other Mission Director, maintained that it is no longer AID policy to work toward the meeting of basic human needs.

The reasons given for AID responses to this question were:

a. Funds Go Directly To Poor Communities

Eight stressed this factor. Typically, one AID staff person commented:

> The SPA fund is used to working with grassroot organizations and with marginal people below the poverty line. SPA meets our mandate. It gets resources to the rural poor. It is based on the community's own perception of need.

b. Small Size Of SPA Projects

Two cited the small size of SPA projects as especially important in this regard. They saw too much AID money going to "gargantuan operations." The SPA was a way for AID to get its message of concern for the rural and urban poor across. As one said: "More people now knew of AID through the SPA program than through the 'giant projects'".

c. On-Site Support From Volunteers

Three responses stressed the positive effect of having volunteers in the field to assure the success of the projects and to give AID the local capability to respond to basic human needs. As one stated:

> It gives us someone in the field who knows the needs of individual communities. AID does not have this capability in a systematic way.

3. HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE ADVANTAGES OF USING AID FUNDS THROUGH THE SPA PROGRAM WITH THE PEACE CORPS?

Twenty-one AID administrators responded to this open-ended question. Many mentioned more than one benefit of the SPA program. In all thirty-nine comments were received. They fall into six main areas:

a. Ability to reach and make a positive impact on local communities;

b. cost effectiveness and financial accountability;

c. high success rate due to the supervision of projects by volunteers in the field;

d. the speed, ease, and low risk nature of the SPA program;

e. benefits of interagency cooperation; and,

f. the improvement of the image of America overseas.

a. Extending AID's Outreach

The SPA program's unique ability to get AID funds down to the village level was mentioned most often (thirteen times). Comments included:

> Our outreach capability increases twenty-fold through the use of PCVs.
>
> Funds go directly to community and don't have to go through all that red tape to deliver professional assistance at the community level.

b. Cost Effectiveness

The cost effectiveness of the SPA program was mentioned as an advantage ten times at every level from Mission Director on down. AID controllers especially praised the cost effectiveness of the SPA fund. One controller said that, when AID undertakes small projects, the costs rise too high. The advantage he saw of working through the Peace Corps was that the administrative system was in place. Others pointed out that an important advantage of using funds in this way is that the more highly developed AID accounting systems are used for the benefit of the Peace Corps.

c. Benefits of PCV Supervision

Seven AID employees cited the advantage of having Peace Corps volunteers in the field to supervise projects. This meant, in their eyes, "minimum loss of resources due to onsite supervision by PCVs." An AID controller said:

> I feel more comfortable with SPA since the PCVs feel very responsible for the money and its use. I would like to see more PCVs involved with self-help projects.

d. Fast and Flexible

The speed and ease of the funding mechanism was cited as an advantage four times. A Deputy Mission Director said:

> The SPA is a useful/flexible funding mechanism that can be used as needed.

e. Interagency Cooperation

Benefits of interagency AID/Peace Corps were mentioned as a positive benefit of the SPA program four times. Through the SPA mutual understanding of the two agencies has occurred. The AID/Peace Corps partnership was cited as a "fertile training ground for AID". Another AID employee thought that with this cooperation, the "Peace Corps could play a major part of foreign development work."

f. Image of Americans

An additional benefit attributed to the SPA program was the positive effect it is having on the image of the United States in the developing world. In Central America one AID staff member stated:

> We credit the Peace Corps with a lot of the good feelings toward the United States in this country, Americans are well received.

In addition it was felt that Host Country Government/Peace Corps/AID relationships were improved through their cooperation on SPA projects, and that PCVs helped to maintain a good rapport with local peoples.

4. HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE THE DISADVANTAGES OF USING AID FUNDS, THROUGH THE SPA PROGRAM WITH THE PEACE CORPS?

It was somewhat difficult to get AID officials talking about disadvantages of the SPA program. Problems mentioned were either potential or past difficulties.

a. No Disadvantages

Eleven, including all three Mission Directors interviewed, said they saw no disadvantages in using AID funds in this way.

b. Administrative Workload

The additional demand on the AID administrative load and the relative labor intensity (paperwork) of the SPA program was mentioned three times. However, none of the controllers interviewed mentioned the added workload as a disadvantage of the SPA program. It was also noted that it has been the Peace Corps staff that has absorbed most of the burden of administering the program.

c. PCVs As Funding Source

Three persons cited the potential danger that volunteers could be seen as sources of money in their communities. One thought that the Peace Corps should "insulate" itself from the funding source image. Another cautioned that steps be taken so that local communities do not rely on volunteers and take less responsibility for the projects themselves.

d. Other

Other potential disadvantages cited were: the negative attitude of PCVs towards AID; the turnover rate in Peace Corps (both staff members and volunteers); the lack of AID's on-site "spot checking" of projects; the fact that SPA can take money away from other AID projects; and the possibility that the funds could "be spent on disparate projects, here and there" and not fit into any overall plan or strategy.

5. IS THE SPA "MORE TROUBLE THAN IT'S WORTH?

Some AID personnel in Washington had stated the opinion that a $40,000 AID program of assistance to small projects through the Peace Corps in a developing country was "more trouble than it's worth." After talking about the relative advantages and disadvantages of the program with AID personnel in all eight countries, this question was asked of all of them. Responses were:

Yes:	0
No:	23
Undecided:	0

Some followed up their response with comments. Two staff members noted that the SPA program is just a token of what could be accomplished through AID/Peace Corps cooperation. Another characterized the SPA program as "No trouble, one cash transfer and a few reports." The informality of operating this joint program between AID and Peace Corps was cited once as a positive attribute of SPA. A Deputy Mission Director said that, even when the program was just getting off the ground and there were complications, it was still not "more trouble than it's worth." An AID Controller summed up:

> It is very useful for AID and for the U.S. government. AID people don't think how much work is this for us, but what does the U.S. government get out of it.

6. HAS INFORMATION GATHERED FROM SPA EVALUATIONS AND REPORTS BEEN USED BY AID TO IMPROVE ITS PROGRAM?

Few AID staff were prepared to say that the SPA program has influenced the AID program. The responses to the above question were:

Yes:	3
No:	11
Too early:	4
No response:	5

a. No Influence on AID Programs

Eleven saw no direct improvements in the AID program traceable to information gained from the SPA. Four elaborated. One noted that the two agencies had different criteria. Some mission programs are very far removed from the Peace Corps agenda. Another AID person said that although there was no direct influence on the program, a cross fertilization had taken place, and AID was now beginning to think of new ways to go about development work. Finally, one ascribed the lack of impact on AID programs to the lack of feedback from the Peace Corps about SPA projects.

b. No Response or Too Early To Tell

Nine respondents either didn't answer the question or felt it was too early to tell. One of these said it would take four or five years before any effect could be seen. Another responded that indirect benefits would probably come as a result of AID's increased knowledge of local institutions and of development progress made through the SPA program.

c. Positive Influence on AID Program

Of those answering affirmatively, one thought that the SPA program would help AID's public relations; and another pointed to the value of the experienced gained in approval and administrative procedures.

D. VOLUNTEER OPINION SURVEY

1. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF THE SPA PROGRAM?

This open-ended question was asked of all volunteers. The most frequently cited advantages were:

a. Reliable Source of Funding

The SPA program was said to be a reliable source for funding small projects by thirty-four volunteers. Volunteers felt that the system of applying for funds and receiving payments was quick and uncomplicated. Because the SPA is a convenient and easily accessible source of funding for the volunteer, it was felt that volunteers were able to help "get the money to where it is needed most."

b. Enhances Community Development

The ability of the SPA program to enhance community development was mentioned twenty-two times by volunteers. Because community groups conceive the ideas for projects themselves, the projects are more successful. Members of the community are involved in the process every step of the way. Due to this fact, the volunteers said that the SPA program does not create dependency. Rather, community groups take more pride and ownership in the projects they are working on. The fact that many of the SPA projects are income generating and, if designed well, should be on-going and self-sustaining projects, was cited by volunteers as another factor which aided the process of community development. Getting small amounts of money directly to the community group, bypassing complicated government channels, was another community development advantage of SPA mentioned by volunteers.

c. Provides Needed Resources

Nineteen volunteers cited as an advantage the fact that the SPA provides necessary resources which the PCVs need to do their jobs. The SPA gives volunteers the opportunity to put their ideas into practice. Volunteers felt that without the SPA funds, many of the projects that they have helped initiate would never have had a chance to get off the ground. Because the SPA funds are available the volunteer is able to put to use the skills that he/she possess together with the knowledge gained by living in the village to help fund new ideas to solve problems. The fact that the SPA is an accessible and quick funding source (see above) meant that volunteers saved time and accomplished more work.

d. Other Advantages

Volunteers mentioned several other advantages of the SPA program. Seven volunteers felt that it was an advantage that the Peace Corps controlled the SPA funds and that volunteers did not have to go to other agencies to seek funds for projects that they were working on. The same number of volunteers said that the administration of the SPA is efficient and that having easy access to the people who make the decisions about funding (the Peace Corps staff) was an advantage.

At least one volunteer cited each of the following reasons as a benefit. The SPA program is not too bureaucratic and the guidelines of the program are flexible; the SPA program strengthens the relationship with the Peace Corps as an institution. Volunteers were trusted to manage funds. The SPA program might mean that a record of what works and does not work might be kept. Finally, one volunteer said that the SPA program has a good public relations effect for the Peace Corps.

2. WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES TO YOU?

The volunteers responded to this question with the following comments and in the following frequency.

a. No Disadvantages

Twenty-nine volunteers saw no disadvantages to the SPA program.

b. Lengthy Process

Twenty volunteers thought that the process of actually receiving funds -- or vouchering to receive funds was too slow. The time delay in receiving funds was also mentioned as a factor which could affect the community's enthusiasm and motivation.

c. Santa Claus Image

Eight volunteers felt there was a danger of creating a "Santa Claus image" in the community due to the SPA program. Volunteers feared that the SPA could be seen as a handout or could develop dependency if the funds were not handled properly.

d. Other Disadvantages

Five volunteers said that there was a lack of orientation to and familiarization with the guidelines and criteria for obtaining a SPA grant in their country. Three volunteers felt that the criteria were too restrictive and should be broadened. Two volunteers complained that in their country there were not enough funds and too much competition for them.

Three observed that one or two years was too short a period to ensure the continuity of the projects. Two felt that the SPA funds were sometimes managed inequitably, (with one APCD in the position of approving projects). Finally, two said that the SPA may create pressure on volunteers to have a project when it may not be appropriate.

3. DO THE ADVANTAGES OUTWEIGH THE DISADVANTAGES?

The volunteers were asked whether the advantage of having the SPA funds available to them outweighed the disadvantages. They responded as follows:

Advantages outweigh the disadvantages:	76
Advantages do not outweigh the disadvantages:	5
Undecided:	6

a. Advantages

The volunteers were invited to provide comments after answering the above question. Six volunteers each offered the following comments:

> The SPA creates hope in the communities.
>
> The SPA money is important because it is necessary to start projects.
>
> SPA makes the volunteers feel more useful and makes them more effective.
>
> Technical projects force volunteers to learn new technical skills.

In addition, two volunteers mentioned the positive effect on the community that is derived from the participation the community has in the project. Three other volunteers mentioned that if any disadvantages arose that they felt that they could be easily rectified.

b. Disadvantages

Of the five who answered negatively, one of the volunteers said that the guidelines for project approval were too rigid. Another volunteer felt that the SPA program would be improved if the money could be directed to the Peace Corps in a lump sum rather than having AID pay the grants.

4. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE SPA PROGRAM HAS A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON THE COMMUNITY'S ABILITY TO ACHIEVE SELF-HELP. DO YOU AGREE?

Of the eighty-seven volunteers interviewed, the responses were as follows:

Yes:	10
No:	52
Undecided:	25

a. Yes, There Is Negative Impact.

Five of the thirteen volunteers answering positively attributed this to the fact that in their country, the volunteer, not the community, handles the money. This was said to inhibit self-reliance. Four of the volunteers gave a qualified "yes" explaining that the effect would be negative "unless the SPA is monitored closely". One volunteer added that the SPA creates the expectation in the community that the volunteer will have money.

b. No, There Is Not A Negative Impact.

Of the volunteers who responded negatively, twenty-three said it depended on how the projects were managed in the community. One said:

> It depended on the manner in which the volunteer administers and manages the project including: the nature of the project itself, the circumstances, the involvement of the community, and the way in which the PCV orients and assists the community with self-sufficiency in mind."

Volunteers added several cautions including: the PCV must assess the village's needs, should realize the short term nature of their presence, and should take care in handling the money.

Sixteen volunteers of those who saw no negative effect said that the possibility exists that communities could become dependent on outside help. One explained as follows:

> the SPA could hinder the self-help process but it is less likely to do so because it is small and works at the local level.

Sixteen volunteers stressed that volunteers promote the active participation of the community in all aspects of the project. In their view, community members should be required to design the projects and should actually fill out the forms to request assistance. Another volunteer said the community should be required to provide some funding towards the project. Another PCV suggested that the community group pay back SPA funds wherever possible.

Thirteen volunteers saw SPA funds as seed monies which do not inhibit the community from working on a self-help basis. Some of these pointed out that without the SPA funds, many of the completed projects would never have had a chance to exist. Ten volunteers pointed out that the objective of the SPA was to create self-sustaining projects.

The large number of volunteers who were undecided (26) on this question indicates an appreciation for the fragile nature of community self-help initiatives, and a understanding on the part of the volunteers that the SPA or any outside funds can be negative forces in community development if not handled properly.

5. DOES THE SPA HELP OR HINDER THE PEACE CORPS' DEVELOPMENT WORK IN THE COMMUNITY?

Responses were:

Help:	74
Hinder:	2
Both:	1
No Response:	11

a. SPA Helps Peace Corps Community Development Work

Of those who felt that the SPA helped the Peace Corps' development work, twenty volunteers said this was principally because the SPA program is a good source of funds to implement worthwhile projects. Volunteers mentioned that, without resources, they cannot accomplish much and credited the SPA with giving "the means for translating PCV enthusiasm into reality."

Ten volunteers added the caveat that care must be taken to ensure that the process for applying for funds, approval of projects and handling of funds are done properly.

Ten felt SPA funds helped Peace Corps development work increase the productivity of volunteers. It was mentioned that volunteers can be particularly successful when working with small projects because they live and work in the community. Also, because of the SPA program, volunteers said that they were perceived to be more serious and dedicated by the community.

Five volunteers said that the SPA contributes by helping to build organizational skills at the community level. If the community group is a full participant, the members should be able to undertake projects on their own in the future. This was said to be particularly true if the community takes ownership in the project.

Three volunteers cited as a critical factor the need for the community group to make a substantial contribution to the project if the SPA project is to really enhance the Peace Corps' development work.

Two persons said SPA helped by having a beneficial effect on the volunteers themselves. The skills that a volunteer learns while working with a small project were said to make the volunteer more valuable to the community.

b. Hindered the Peace Corps' Development Work

Four of the seven volunteers who felt that the SPA program hindered the Peace Corps' development work gave reasons why they held this view. One volunteer cited a specific example of a community group that ceased doing things on its own after receiving SPA funds. The remaining three said that development work could be hindered if the projects were not managed properly by the volunteers.

6. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT VOLUNTEERS WHO USE SPA ARE PERCEIVED AS GRANTS-PEOPLE AND THIS HAS A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE VOLUNTEER'S ROLE AND EFFECTIVENESS. DO YOU AGREE?

Volunteers were asked whether the use of funds caused them to be perceived as grantspeople, thus causing a negative impact on the volunteers role and effectiveness. Responses were:

Yes:	20
No:	51
Undecided:	16

Of those answering affirmatively:

a. Raised Expectations

Of those that responded "yes", over fourteen did so on a contingent basis, i.e. that this perception could be created but was not necessary. These volunteers felt that expectation could be developed -- with all PCVs being expected to bring money to their communities. It was thought that this would

especially be the case when a new volunteer follows another volunteer who helped sponsor a SPA project in the same community. It was also mentioned that Americans were perceived this way before the SPA program anyway.

b. SPA Before Primary Assignment

Three volunteers felt that there was a danger that a volunteer involved in a SPA project might neglect their primary assignment. This was thought to be especially true if the grants were too big.

Of those answering negatively:

a. Past Precedent

Twenty-two cited the fact that volunteers had access to funding sources in the past and this did not damage their image. All volunteers were assumed to have access to funding whether there was a SPA program or not. The negative aspects of volunteer involvement with funding were controllable, and the volunteer could be seen as an intermediary and not a "moneyman".

b. Volunteers Involve The Community

Seventeen volunteers pointed out that how the SPA project is administered is the vital determinant of the perception of the volunteer. If properly done there should be no negative affects. They stressed that before a volunteer becomes involved with a project, the volunteer should be well established in the community. Also, volunteers should always maintain good communications with community members regarding the SPA project.

c. SPA Improves Image Of PCVs

Fourteen volunteers took this opportunity to express their view that the image of the volunteers had been improved not hindered. One mentioned that he had gone a year without resources at the community level and felt that he had wasted his time. Others stressed that small amounts of money were necessary and facilitated the work they were doing in the community.

d. Volunteers Do Village Analysis

Five PCVs took exception to the question's portrayal of volunteers as grantspeople, saying that they first evaluate the needs of a village and then solicit funds. They emphasized that a thorough appraisal process is completed, and that SPA grants are not just gifts from the outside.

7. WHAT ARE THE RISKS INVOLVED WITH THE USE OF THE SPA PROGRAM?

With this question volunteers were more or less requested to use their imagination and list all possible things that could go wrong with the SPA program. All responses given by the volunteers are hypothetical, and not actual cases of problems occurring.

Fifteen volunteers saw a risk in that funds could be misused or mismanaged. Volunteers cautioned that money could be lost or spent for purposes not intended for.

Ten volunteers felt that "as with any financial aid program", the community could become dependent on the volunteer, and the project might not continue after the volunteer leaves.

Eight volunteers saw the risk that volunteers could be seen as a money source rather than a human resource.

Six volunteers said that there are no risks if the projects are managed well. Another six volunteers felt that funding a project too soon was a danger. Other volunteers mentioned the following risks: lack of follow-up; communities might not fulfill their responsibilities; slow funding could hurt the project; and the possibility that communities might undertake projects that they are not capable of carrying out.

8. WHAT SHOULD THE VOLUNTEERS DO TO AVOID THESE RISKS?

When asked how risks to the SPA program could be avoided, eighty-three responses were received. These responses fall into five categories.

a. Community Commitment And Participation

Thirty-two volunteers stressed the importance of the community commitment and paricipation in the project. Suggested means for making sure that communities are committed include:

1. Community members should complete some portion of the project before receiving SPA purchased materials.
2. The community must contribute resources to the project.
3. Good communications should take place to ensure that the community group fulfills their commitment.

b. Volunteer's Assessment Of the Project And The Community

Twenty-six volunteers stressed the importance of the volunteer's assessment of the project and the community. Volunteers should have a good knowledge of the community in which they are working, and thorough research on the project should be done. Volunteers offered some of the following advice: "Be cautious", "Be careful, take enough time", and put simply, "Plan well".

c. Better Training, Orientation And Follow Up

Ten volunteers said that one way to avoid risks was for the Peace Corps to provide better training, orientation and follow-up.

d. Careful Administration

Nine volunteers said that careful administration of the SPA program by Peace Corps staff was needed to control risks. These volunteers, in effect, asked for tighter control of the SPA program on the part of the Peace Corps staff. Some suggestions were:

> The PCVs shouldn't be able to apply for money for the first six months of service.
>
> There should be a more rigorous review and approval process.
>
> The money should have strings attached; it should be withdrawn if not used correctly.
>
> A limit should be set for the funds, possibly $5,000.

e. Community Involvement

Six volunteers expressed that members of the community should be involved in the actual responsibility of administering the project. As a part of this process the volunteer must, at an early stage, realize that the project belongs to the community, and not to the volunteer.

9. DID YOU RECEIVE AN ORIENTATION TO THE SPA PROGRAM -- AND TO THESE RISKS -- IN YOUR PEACE CORPS TRAINING PROGRAM? SHOULD YOU?

a. No Formal Training

Twenty of the ninety-six volunteers said that they had received no formal training concerning the SPA program. Of these, several said that they

obtained information about the SPA program from their APCDs after they had been at their sites for some months and were ready to begin working on a SPA project. Other means of receiving information about the SPA included word of mouth from other volunteers and country newsletters.

b. Pre-Service Training About SPA

Twenty volunteers received training about the SPA program during their Pre-Service Training. Only one of the volunteers stated that the training received during PST was adequate. For the most part, PST training about the SPA program consists of a brief overview of the process for application. Eight of these volunteers felt either that the training received was too brief or that they were overworked and suffering from an information overload. Four volunteers who had received PST about SPA felt that the proper time to give information to the volunteers about SPA is during In-Service Training programs (ISTs).

Only one of these volunteers said that they had received an orientation regarding the risks inherent in working with the SPA program.

c. In-Service Training About SPA

Sixteen volunteers received information about the SPA program during In-Service Training programs (ISTs). These volunteers were generally satisfied with the training. One mentioned that information about the SPA program should only be presented at the In-Service Training programs (ISTs are held four to seven months after the volunteer has been at his/her site) rather than during Pre-Service Training. This was because volunteers do not understand their communities until they have lived and worked with the people for several months.

None of the volunteers that received IST training referred to any instruction or information about how to handle the risks associated with work working with small projects. Rather, the instruction consisted mainly of how to fill out the project forms.

4. Training About Risks And Responsibilities

Twenty-three volunteers requested that training about the risks and responsibilities associated with working with small projects be included in Peace Corps training programs. One saw them as the key to good project development. Some of the risks mentioned by volunteers for training included: the handling of money; involvement of the community; and the effect of SPA projects on volunteers.

10. THE SPA IS A JOINT PEACE CORPS/AID PROGRAM. DID YOU KNOW THIS?

Yes:	77
No:	10

Of those responding to this question, 92% were aware of the role AID played in the SPA program. One volunteer was unaware that SPA funds came from AID until she applied for funding. Another volunteer mentioned that volunteers were confused at to whether the funds really belong to AID or the Peace Corps. Another volunteer (who had not participated in a SPA project) felt that the AID involvement in the SPA program slowed down the process.

11. DO YOU FAVOR FURTHER PEACE CORPS/AID COOPERATION?

They answered as follows:

Favored:	64
Did not favor:	16
Don't Know:	7

a. Of Those Who Favored

Volunteers favoring further Peace Corps/AID collaboration mentioned three basic reasons: Peace Corps benefits from AID's resources and experience, collaboration between the two agencies is beneficial to both and AID derives benefits from working with volunteers. Representative comments follow:

> AID is especially important for technical advice.
>
> AID has a lot of resources and Peace Corps has limited resources and a lot of people. It is a good combination.
>
> Cooperation with AID is only logical for volunteers.
>
> When AID and Peace Corps cooperate it makes for better projects.
>
> The Peace Corps is an excellent vehicle for AID to assist small communities.
>
> Peace Corps received funds from AID and used them successfully. Good use of AID funds.

b. Favored With Qualifications

Some of the volunteers who favored further AID/Peace Corps collaboration added qualifications. One thought that funds provided by AID were useful but that volunteers should not be assigned directly to AID projects. Two volunteers cautioned that the Peace Corps should keep its "grassroots approach" and that standards for projects should not be lowered even if more funds are made available. Another volunteer would like to see not only funds but also materials and technical assistance provided by AID.

Although these volunteers felt that there should be more Peace Corps/AID cooperation, they anticipated problems. Some of these volunteers saw AID as a bureaucratic giant and felt that AID saw volunteers as a thorn in AID's side. One volunteers said: "It is great if AID just provides funds to the Peace Corps but not if volunteers have to fit into the AID bureaucracy."

c. Did Not Favor

Of those that did not favor further Peace Corps/AID collaboration (beyond the SPA program), the most often made comment was that AID and Peace Corps are just two different organizations with different goals. One volunteer felt that AID's political goals precluded its working closely with the Peace Corps.

12. SHOULD THE SPA PROGRAM CONTINUE?

Responses were as follows:

Yes:	84
No:	2
Don't Know:	5

The volunteers after answering the above question, were also asked their views on how the program could be changed or improved. Their recommendations are itemized in Appendix G.

IV. SPA PROJECTS

		Page
A.	Evaluation	122
	1. Project Selection	122
	2. Volunteer Questionnaire	123
	3. Community Questionnaire	123
	4. Journalistic Appreciations	124
B.	Summary List of Projects Evaluated	126
C.	The Projects	131
	Table 1: Summary Sheet on SPA Projects	132
	Table 2: Success and Relative Size of Projects	133
	Table 3: Success and Community Participation Projects	134
	1. Morocco	135
	2. Honduras	152
	3. Senegal	168
	4. Costa Rica	182
	5. The Gambia	196
	6. Ecuador	208
	7. Togo	222
	8. Thailand	234
D.	Conclusions	240

IV. SPA PROJECTS

A total of 62 SPA projects in eight countries were evaluated. Usually one day was set aside for each SPA project.

A. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

There were four critical elements to the evaluator's approach to fact-finding and evaluation of SPA projects: project selection; volunteer questionnaire; community questionnaires and journalistic appreciations. Each is described below.

1. Project Selection

In almost every country visited, the evaluation teams found that the Peace Corps country team had pre-identified projects to be visited. Evaluators were instructed not to feel required to visit these projects, but to make their own selection of projects for evaluation. Also, they were instructed not to do a helter-skelter tour of many projects but to concentrate on approximately eight per country. Projects were to be selected to provide an appropriate mix of the following types of projects:

a) High (above $2,500); medium ($1,000-$2,499); and low (less than $1,000) cost activities;

b) a mix of the various types of activities financed (food, energy, competitive enterprise development, income generating activities);

c) sites where the PCV is still working vs. sites where the PCV has completed service;

d) sites where income or job generation data is likely to be found;

e) sites which are accessible or which do not require an inordinate amount of time to reach (should not exceed one project per day);

f) sites both with completed project and on-going project. If in the vicinity of a community with a completed project where no PCV remains, drop by for a visit, if feasible.

After identifying a group or set of projects representing the above mix, the projects were to be selected at random. All of this was done to avoid the evaluators being programmed to see only successful projects.

2. Volunteer Questionnaire

This questionnaire (see Appendix) consisted of ten questions designed to obtain information about project goals, community participation, success rates and problems. This was by far the best source of information on the projects. Volunteers, for the most part, were candid, informed, involved and seemed delighted that "some one from Washington" had come to discuss their project with them. The biggest difficulty faced in the evaluation of the SPA project performance was visiting SPA projects where the volunteer was no longer present. An attempt was made to keep this to a minimum but in countries such as Costa Rica where the majority of projects were funded in FY'83, this was unavoidable.

3. Community Questionnaires

This evaluation instrument (see Appendix) consisted of ten common sense, simply stated questions. Evaluators were told to memorize and ask the questions without taking notes and to jot down the recollections of their conversations later. This was done out of a desire to be sensitive to the feelings of the community members involved.

The questions to the community residents were usually woven into casual and informal conversations with them in their own language. Two evaluators wrote of the difficulty in obtaining information from community groups when they returned from Arica.

> Even in cases where the expected impacts were clearly specified, there are often other problems. Let's take gardens as an example again. Likely no one will know how many pounds of vegetables were produced. Also, the villagers may not know how much money has been earned; or if they know, they may not be willing to tell the volunteer or the evaluation team. We're talking sensitive information here -- if you walk up to a farmer in the States and ask how much money his farm made last year, what are the chances that he'll tell you? Additionally, in the village, they may just not tell the truth; either to make the number small so the gods or the neighbors don't get jealous or to make the number big to please the questioner.

4. Journalistic Appreciations

The evaluation team was asked to prepare a journalistic description on each project visited. This was to tell the story of the project beyond the list of objectives and impact data gathered. It was also designed to provide them with the opportunity to include information about projects which the volunteer or community questionnaires did not anticipate. In the early days of the Peace Corps, evaluators of country programs were done by journalists rather than social scientists.

A journalistic approach -- combined with the collection of good data -- provides additional insight into the problems and accomplishments of the community members who have worked with SPA funds.

The sixty-two SPA project evaluations which follow are based on a thorough review of the information brought back from the field. Following the individual project descriptions, are summaries of the more significant trends seen in the data, as well as conclusions about the SPA projects.

The coding following the evaluation indicates how each project was considered for the sake of preparing statistical summaries. The key to project coding is as follows:

F	=	Food Production
SED	=	Small Enterprise Development
EN	=	Energy
ED	=	Education*
H	=	Health*
I	=	Income Generating
J	=	Job Creating
IRC	=	Impact Realized Completely
IRP	=	Impact Realized Partially
W	=	Women were principle beneficiaries
SLC	=	Substantial Local Contribution
MLC	=	Minimal Local Contribution

* Education and Health are outside present SPA guidelines or sectors. Nonetheless they are included in the code because a few of the SPA projects evaluated clearly belonged in these sectors.

For the purposes of creating a full appreciation of the problems and accomplishments of community groups and Peace Corps volunteers working with SPA funds in the developing world, the complete journalistic reports on each project are included.

B. SUMMARY LIST OF PROJECTS EVALUATED

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	COMMUNITY	SECTOR	AMOUNT	EVALUATION
MOROCCO					
1.	Pump Repair Truck for Ouarzazate	Ouarzazate	EN	$ 8,608	Too early to tell
2.	Beni Mellal Fish Culture	Beni-Mellah	F	$ 7,500	Unsuccessful
3.	Women's Welding and Wood-working Cooperative	Marrakech	SED	$ 5,000	Very Successful
4.	Welding Shop, Save the Children Foundation	Casablanca	ED	$ 10,000	Successful
5.	Tools for the Association Hanane	Tetuan	ED	$ 650	Successful
6.	Welding Classroom Youth and Sports Ministry	Marrakech	ED	$ 10,000	Very Successful
7.	Wagner Apparatus	Koutoubia	H	$ 1,626	Very Successful
8.	Temara Women's Cooperative for Doll-Making	Temara	SED	$ 10,000	Marginally Successful
9.	Temara Women's Cooperative Honey Production	Temara	SED/F	$ 9,765	Marginally Successful
10.	Thermoform Duplicator for Alaouite Organization	Marrakech	ED	$ 3,700	Very Successful
HONDURAS					
11.	Industrial Cooperative of Tailors and Seamstresses	Tegucigalpa	SED	$ 3,700	Successful
12.	Fish Pond Project	Santa Maria de Real	F	$ 335	Marginally Successful

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	COMMUNITY	SECTOR	AMOUNT	EVALUATION
13.	Laying Hens	San Diego	F/SED	$ 1,500	Too early to tell
14.	Goat Raising	Catacamas	F	$ 3,400	Too early to tell
15.	Fashion Show	Siguatepeque	SED	$ 600	Successful
16.	Soil Conservation	Santa Cruz	F	$ 7,500	Very Successful
17.	Farm Irrigation	Yamaranguila	F	$ 2,400	Very Successful
18.	School Garden	Nuevos Horizontes	F	$ 400	Very Successful
SENEGAL					
19.	Well and Garden Project	Pane Sader	F	$ 2,340	Too early to tell
20.	Millet Machine	Bandandar	F	$ 2,404	Very Successful
21.	Well Repair and Garden	Bandandar	F	$ 434	Very Successful
22.	Garden Fence	Fanghat	F	$ 2,474	Successful
23.	Millet Grinder	Medine Niamar	F	$ 1,920	Very Successful
24.	Well Repair	Medine Niamar	F	$ 1,341	Marginally Successful
25.	Garden Fencing	Diakene Ouloff	F	$ 1,623	Successful
26.	Dispensary Project	Diakene Ouloff	H	$ 4,534	Too early to tell
27.	Well Digging	Djimande	F	$ 1,065	Too early to tell
COSTA RICA					
28.	Asociacion de Juvante	Limon	SED	$ 1,175	Unsuccessful
29.	Beekeeping in Agricultural High School	Guapiles, Limon	F	$ 916.57	Very Successful

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	COMMUNITY	SECTOR	AMOUNT	EVALUATION
30.	Forestry Nursery	Las Juntas, Guanacaste	SED	$ 210	Successful
31.	Egg Production	Pi ji je, Guanacaste	F	$ 130	Unsuccessful
32.	Coopesanti Savings and Loan Cooperative	Cervantes	SED	$ 110	Successful
33.	Restaurant Chicheme	Nicoya, Guanacaste	SED	$ 3,200	Unsuccessful
34.	San Gabriel School Garden/ Small Animals	San Gabriel	F	$ 950	Successful
35.	Mastatal	Mastatal	F	$ 5,016.69	Very Successful
THE GAMBIA					
36.	Bessi Young Farmers and School Garden/Orchard	Bessi	F	$ 1,350	Very Successful
37.	Latrikunda Kumba Njamay Fishing	Latrikunda Mampatokoto	F	$ 5,600	Too early to tell
38.	Bakau Carpenter's Cooperative	Bakau	SED	$ 3,650	Very Successful
39.	Ba-Nyiaka Gisoff-Litt/ Orchard	Ba-Nyiaka	F	$ 1,275	Too early to tell
40.	Gunjur Women's Community Garden	Gunjur	F	$ 330	Very Successful
41.	Republishing Historical Narratives	Banjul	SED	$ 2,175.90	Very Successful
42.	Tujereng Abattoir (Slaughterhouse)	Tujereng	SED	$ 500	Very Successful

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	COMMUNITY	SECTOR	AMOUNT	EVALUATION
ECUADOR					
43.	Rabbit and Guinea Pig Raising	Imbabuela	F/SED	$ 600	Successful
44.	Community Education Center	Quito	SED	$ 570	Too early to tell
45.	Improved Cattle Feed	Tasinteo	F	$ 816	Too early to tell
46.	Artesan Training Center	Cuatro Esquinas	SED	$ 1,890	Successful
47.	Agricultural Products Store	Pinguili	SED	$ 980	Very Successful
48.	Small Animal Production Extension Center	Rancho Ronald (Santo Domingo/ Pinchincha)	F	$ 5,590	Successful
49.	Food and Sewing Goods Store	Santo Domingo	SED	$ 1,800	Marginally Successful
50.	Potato Silo	Colta	F	$ 1,810	Very Successful
TOGO					
51.	Women's Weaving Cooperative	Dapaong	SED	$ 4,676	Too early to tell
52.	Improved Charcoal Stoves	Lome	SED/EN	$ 3,000	Unsuccessful
53.	Solar Wood Drying Kiln	Notse	EN	$ 6,000	Very Successful
54.	Improve Grain Storage	Bugu	F	$ 50	Very Successful
55.	Bridge Project	Bassar/Bafilo	F	$ 6,715	Successful
56.	Bridge Project	Bassar/Bafilo	F	$ 5,648	Successful
57.	Bridge Project	Bassar/Bafilo	F	$ 9,626	Too early to tell

PROJECT NUMBER	PROJECT TITLE	COMMUNITY	SECTOR	AMOUNT	EVALUATION
58.	Community Gardens	7 communities in Plateaux Region	F	$ 2,500	Successful
59.	Mushroom House	Rajmunee Rangsarit School	F	$ 338	Too early to tell
60.	Village Water Supply	Thung Kha	F	$ 3,178	Very Successful
61.	Chicken Crossbreeding	Kuhatai	F	$ 182	Too early to tell
62.	Bicycle Powered Pump	Ban Saiwai	EN/SED	$ 364	Successful

C. THE PROJECTS

TABLE 1

Summary Sheet on SPA Projects

1. Total number of projects: 62

2. Total SPA funding of projects evaluated: $185,851.20

3. Average size per project: $2,998.00

4. Sectors represented:*

A.	Food:	38
B.	Energy:	4
C.	Small Enterprise Development:	21
D.	Education:	4
E.	Health:	2

5. Impact:*

A.	Number of income generating projects:	48
B.	Number of job creating projects:	9
C.	Number of projects where impact was realized completely:	43
D.	Number of projects where impact was realized partially:	17
E.	Number of projects where principle beneficiaries were women:	18

6. Number of projects rated (includes all 62 projects):

A.	Very successful:	22
B.	Successful:	16
C.	Marginally Successful:	5
D.	Unsuccessful:	5
E.	Too early to tell:	14

* Projects may fall in more than one category.

TABLE 2

Success and Relative Size of Projects

PROJECT	UNDER $500	% OF TOTAL	TO $1000	% OF TOTAL	TO $2500	% OF TOTAL	OVER $2500	% OF TOTAL
VERY SUCCESSFUL (22)	5	42%	2	25%	7	39%	8	33%
SUCCESSFUL (16)	3	25%	4	50%	4	22%	5	21%
MARGINALLY SUCCESSFUL (5)	1	8%	---	---	2	11%	2	8%
UNSUCCESSFUL (5)	1	8%	---	---	1	6%	3	13%
EARLY TO TELL (14)	2	17%	2	25%	4	22%	6	25%
TOTAL PROJECTS (62)	12	100%	8	100%	18	100%	24	100%

TABLE 3

Success and Community Participation in Projects

Quality of Local Contribution	Success Rating			
	Very Successful	Successful	Marginally Successful	Unsuccessful
Substantial Local Contribution	73%	63%	40%	40%
Minimal Local Contribution	27%	37%	60%	60%

MOROCCO

1. PROJECT TITLE: Pump Repair Truck for Ouarzazate

COMMUNITY NAME: Ouarzazate

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $8,608

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: Unknown at this time
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The project will service and repair 93 pumps and 2 mills, which will indirectly improve economic standards of the community.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The project is in progress. The truck has just been constructed.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The local government will train local residents to care for water systems.

PROBLEMS: None as of yet

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: EN, IRP, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Ouarzazate, Morocco, suffers from being on the wrong side of the tracks. The tracks in this case are the Atlas Mountains, which divide Morocco into the side toward the coast, which is more developed, and the side toward the Sahara, which is less everything. Less people, less water, less agriculture, less animals, and less support from the capital.

Recently, PCV Will Lynch got a SPA grant to equip a truck to do well and pump repair. We visited the shop where the truck body is being built. It will have space for the welder and the tools necessary for well work, and will provide a secure, lockable storehouse for the tools on the road, as well as a place for the workers to sleep if need be.

The plan is for the truck to do hand pump installation. The truck will tour around to local villages. At each site, the local people will supply concrete, gravel, and food and lodging for the installation team. UNICEF had donated 180 hand pumps, but was very unhappy with the lack of people to install them. With the provision of the truck, UNICEF has now agreed to provide 75 more hand pumps, as well as windmill parts for the repair of the 12 windmills in the province. The truck will also carry tools and equipment purchased by the Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

This interrelation between the relief agencies is an interesting aspect of the project. CRS is now committing $50,000 worth of tools, equipment, and a vehicle to the project. This means that Peace Corps, AID, CRS, UNICEF, and the Ouarzazate Provincial Government all have contributed to the project.

The truck was just getting finished when we were there, so this story is a bit of a cliffhanger. Tune in next year to see how it all comes out. In any case, the idea is interesting, and has strong support. We were encouraged by the interest shown on all sides. We shall see.

2. PROJECT TITLE: Beni Mellal Fish Culture

COMMUNITY NAME: Beni-Mellah

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $7,500

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY:
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The project is to provide a new source of food and increase income for farmers.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Current drought forced project to halt.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The community has donated labor and equipment, the estimated value is $1,526.

PROBLEMS: Drought has forced the project to halt. Additionally the building of the breeding ponds has been done incorrectly.

EVALUATION: Unsuccessful CODING: F, I, IRP, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The work on this project suffers from two problems, one major and one minor.

The major problem is, unfortunately, insoluble. With the current drought, which has lasted much longer than anyone thought possible, there is not enough water to expand the production of the fish by using the five new ponds which were dug using the SPA funds. No water, no fish and nothing to be done.

The other problem, which is much more minor, is the design (done by the previous Volunteer) of the ponds for rearing the small fish. These ponds are too steep on the sides and too short. This can be solved by doing some more digging and reshaping, but it is pointless to correct until there is actually water available.

There are still $2,400 of SPA funds which have not been spent, and which are pointless to spend without water. In addition, it will only take about $200-$300 to finish the ponds. Because of this the local project director is looking for some alternate projects in fish culture which would be of value to the local area including:

1. Investigating fish culture, either in cages or free, in the local canals which are supplied from nearby mountains year-round.

2. Investigating locally available, inexpensive fish feeds to replace the chicken feed which they are using at present. Because of the cost of feed, it looks like the pond fish will be quite a bit more expensive than locally caught river fish; so cheap feed is a necessity.

3. Further research into pond leakage has been a problem in these pilot ponds. Several alternatives were discussed, including looking at cheap plastic liners for the ponds and how to utilize them.

The current Volunteer is very interested in all these possibilities, as is the project director, and if they develop good alternatives, some real long-term good may come from the project after all. Right now, however, it can only be rated as unsuccessful.

3. PROJECT TITLE: Women's Welding and Woodworking Cooperative

COMMUNITY NAME: Marrakech

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $5,000

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 25 women involved
INDIRECTLY: Their families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The cooperative provides women with a skill and an income. Additionally, the project supplies Morocco with an inexpensive, domestically manufactured orthopedic apparatus.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: In the last year women have tripled production and doubled personal income.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Community has provided a classroom and guaranteed maintenance of tools.

PROBLEMS: Marketing has limited sales.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: SED, I, J, IRC, W, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

This project was very exciting for several reasons.

First would be the fact that it is training women in welding, an area which has not been traditionally an occupation for women, and training them well. One of the women was described to us by the Volunteer involved with the project as "the best welder I know of in Morocco". Slight hyperbole, perhaps; but we have seen some of her work and it is totally professional.

Second are the products which are produced for sale by the pre-coop, which are wheelchairs and crutches. These are far and away the least expensive items of this kind for sale in all of Morocco, and have been used extensively by the Cheshire Homes (a local SPA funded project for the handicapped). The Director of the Cheshire Homes stated that the cost of the wheelchairs and crutches allows them to be used by nearly all of the children in the Homes. This could never be done with the competitive products. The items are attractive and well made, with a high level of craftsmanship, and they are being constantly improved as the women become more experienced in production. Since there are both metal and wooden parts, both sides of the pre-coop are involved. (What is a pre-coop, you may ask. Well, the process in Morocco for becoming a cooperative is long and complex, and they are in the middle of the process, so they are a pre-cooperative.)

Third, the women are extremely motivated and involved in the work that they are doing. For example, during the Solar Water Heater In-service Training held in Marrakech, they were invited to participate for four hours daily for four days. In fact, many of them worked eight hours a day for a month, on the roof of a building in 110 degree temperatures, to build the hot water heaters.

At present, the women are making a small living through the sale of their products. They are managing the money very well, with a portion of the proceeds being reinvested in materials, a portion going to the pre-coop, and a bit for themselves.

They are also saving money now for collateral for a bank loan in order to go into business on their own, and have already collected the astounding sum (for Morocco) of over $4,000. The Volunteer who is working with them now is currently engaged in role-playing an interview with a "banker" with them, to prepare them for applying for the loan. If given half a chance by the banks, I am sure that they will succeed.

What more can I say? I was amazed. This is one of the best uses of the SPA funds that we have seen to date.

4. PROJECT TITLE: Welding Shop, Save the Children Foundation

COMMUNITY NAME: Casablanca

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $10,000

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 10 children
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide an educational and commercial training program for eventual jobs in welding for handicapped children.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Project in progress, the first class of 10 children are currently being trained.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The Save the Children Center will provide a workshop, existing tools, and materials at the approximate value of 25.000 (DH)

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: ED, IRP, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The Save the Children Foundation, which is based in London, has an active program in Morocco. They mostly work with handicapped children, training and teaching them job skills.

About six months ago, SPA funds were used to equip a complete welding shop in the basement of the Foundation's office building in Casablanca. At present, about ten kids, ranging in age from about 14 to 19, are studying at the center.

The children are selected on the basis of a couple of aptitude tests, one in mathematics and one in physical coordination, as well as interviews. There are, as might be expected, many more applicants than there are places. Those who are acepted face a fairly rigorous course of classroom and practical study. Drafting, blueprint reading, and construction mathematics are complemented by practical instruction in welding, cutting, and shop techniques of all types. The shop is pleasant, immaculately clean, and has the best lighting of any shop we saw in Morocco.

Of couse, due to their handicaps, jobs for these children will be very hard to find; so they are starting to gear up for production on their own. Their goal is to produce what the Volunteer who is working with them calls "the best wrist crutch in all of Morocco, bar none." We were shown the prototype, which was very handsome indeed. If properly managed, as it seems to be at present, we feel that the business stands a good chance of succeeding and giving the children employment and income into the foreseeable future, more than they had ever dreamed of. Another good project, well conceived and very well run.

5. PROJECT TITLE: Tools for the Association Hanane

COMMUNITY NAME: Tetuan

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $650

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 17 children
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The purchase of hand tools provides the children with an education in carpentry and experience for an eventual job.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Children have made bulletin boards and benches for the school.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The school provides materials and workshop space.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: ED, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In Tetuan, Morocco, there is a school for the handicapped called the L'Association Hanane. It was founded in the early 1970's by a man who had a handicapped daughter named Hanane, and has since grown to include about 250 students. These students include a group of deaf or hearing impaired children, a part of whom are being taught carpentry by PCV Daniel Ryan.

Daniel made a proposal for and received US$650 to purchase tools for the caprentry workshop at the school, which was almost without tools. With the money, the school was able to purchase a number of saws, hammers, and other hand tools to allow the students to be properly trained.

Several things stand out in our minds about this project. The first is the obvious pleasure that the kids take in "their" tools. When we visited the site, everyone was waiting for Daniel to arrive. As soon as the door was opened, they all rushed in and went right to work. Their pride in accomplishment was very evident as they pointed out the things that they had made. In addition, there was a lot of pleasure for them in working together in groups on the project.

The overwhelming majority of the children are from very poor families, who pay about $5.50/month for them to attend the school. Since they obviously couldn't contribute to the purchase of the tools, Daniel made them contribute in another way. When each of them passes certain tests and examinations in the subjects being taught, they "earn" a tool, which is theirs to take care of in the workshop. A drawing of the tool is placed on a posterboard next to the child's name, and my sense is that they feel as though they have soemthing invested in the tools and that they take pride in them.

They are building benches now to be used in the workshop, bulletin boards for the other classes, and when their skill level is a little more advanced, they will begin to make a contribution to the ongoing classroom construction.

The dream, of course, is that they will be able to find work later on in the woodworking trade. How realistic this hope is remains to be seen; Morocco has a very high unemployment rate at the moment. However, even if they end up being supported all of their lives by their families, they will be productive members of the family, able to contribute their skills on the home front.

All in all, we were impressed by this project. The students are so excited to be working, really working and making things, that we cannot help but feel that this will make changes in their lives that we can only guess at, changes which promise the best.

6. PROJECT TITLE: Welding Classroom Youth and Sports Ministry

COMMUNITY NAME: Marrakech

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $10,000

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 28 students per year
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The project provides an education and training for an eventual job.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Three students have graduated and received jobs. 25 students are currently involved in the two-year program and receive an income through contract work.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The classroom and maintenance of tools are provided by the Ministry.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING:ED, I, J, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The same problem exists everywhere. What do you do with the children who have severe behavioral problems in the standard educational system?

One of the solutions in Morocco has been to provide alternate schools with a technical focus for the "street youths". In Marrakech, we visited one of these schools, where a welding shop has recently been set up using SPA funds.

Volunteers have been working with this school for three years now. John Sentz is the volunteer who made the proposal and set up the shop, and he also teaches metalwork, welding, and metal forging.

Before this funding, the welding shop consisted of a forge and a blackboard, hardly an ideal setup for teaching metalwork. SPA funds have provided a complete shop, with all of the hand tools necessary for technical training and a few power tools as well.

The shop was humming when we got there. In fact, the hum was so loud that we had to conduct the volunteer interview outside. The students were making welding tables for use in the workshop, and the work was proceeding apace.

The students are at the school for about three years, and most of them in the past have been trained in woodworking. Since the previous metalwork shop was so limited, only 3 students graduated last year with certificates in metalwork and the woodworking shop was extremely crowded. With the new shop, each group is about equal.

Discipline was a problem for the Volunteer in his first year, but is much less so this year. In part this is due to the greater experience of the

Volunteer, and in part it is due to the kids having a lot to do in the shop, with no one standing around getting in trouble.

The school has a strong program for placing the students in jobs once they have finished the training, and in fact all three students trained in metalwork last year have entered into apprenticeships with local businessmen. Overall, the placement rate for the school is around 40%, a very high number for a country with an unemployment rate like Morocco.

The Director is an excellent administrator, who was praised by everyone we came into contact with. He keeps very detailed records, not only on the children but also on the materials and tools used in the school. In addition, there is a social worker who makes regular visits to the school and the children's homes, and a job counselor who works on placement of the children once they graduate.

All in all, this is a very impressive program, one where the use of the SPA funds promises to have a lasting, long-term effect.

7. PROJECT TITLE: Wagner Apparatus

COMMUNITY NAME: Koutoubia

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $1,626

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 2 children have been treated.
INDIRECTLY: Potentially 30 children could receive treatment and their families would indirectly benefit who are in Cheshire Foundation Home.

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Potentially 4 children per year can be rehabilitated from polio.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 2 children have been successfully operated on.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Community will provide maximum use of the apparatus and assure follow-up therapy for the children.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: H, RC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In the shadow of the 700 year old mosque Koutoubia is the Cheshire Homes, a home for disabled children. The home is a light and airy place which is kept in good order.

Recently, SPA funds were used to purchase a Wagner apparatus, which is used to lengthen one of the legs of the children in the home, many of whom have had polio.

The program is so new that only one child has been treated with the apparatus at this point. This first case is a bit astounding in itself, in that the child's leg was lengthened a total of 11 centimeters, which may be a record for the use of the Wagner apparatus.

The apparatus is used in a local hospital, and is applied in a surgical proceudre by Dr. Kabbaj Karim. Since the children in the home are from poor families, the operations are paid for by the Government of Morocco.

Once all of the children in the Cheshire Homes have been rehabilitated, the apparatus will be used on the other children in the area, with the understanding that the children from the Homes have first priority in its use.

A PCV is involved in the follow-up therapy after the use of the apparatus, to insure that the rehabilitation process is completed.

The Volunteers at the home were very enthusiastic about the apparatus, feeling strongly that it will allow many of the children to leave the home, give them the chance to find employment, and lead productive lives.

8. PROJECT TITLE: Temara Women's Cooperatives for Doll-making and Honey
9. Production

COMMUNITY NAME: Temara

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $10,000
$ 9,765*

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 60 women involved
INDIRECTLY: Their families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The cooperatives established training and provide an income for women in honey or doll production.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 60 women are active in doll-making and honey producing cooperatives.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Land and occasional consultation from local professionals has been provided by the community.

PROBLEMS: Finding markets has made the dolls difficult to sell. Drought has reduced honey production by 2/3 of its original output. Neither project has been able to meet costs.

EVALUATION: Marginally successful in both doll-making and honey production.

CODING: SED, F, I, IRC, W, MLC (Honey)
SED, I, IRC, W, MLC (Dolls)

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Doll-making was in full swing when we arrived at the Cooperatives. 20 or so women were sitting and knitting doll cloths, discussing whatever it is they discuss when they knit and talk in Morocco. The room was clean and well lit, and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves.

We were shown into the office by Mme. Nesma Zhor, the project and cooperative's coordinator. She was quite frank and open about the work that they are doing, showed us the books, and answered all of our questions.

This is one of those projects with both possibilities and pitfalls. First the possibilities.

The honey side of the cooperative can sell all of the honey that they can produce. It is packaged well, in 1 kilo plastic tubs with attractive lables. The doll side of the coop produces very attractive dolls which are made to represent the different ethnic groups of Morocco, both men and women.

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* For statistical purposes, this project is being treated as two projects.

The difficulties, however. The honey production, which was estimated at the beginning of the season to be possibly 2000 kilos, was only 800 kilos due to the poor weather which damaged the blossoms that the bees feed on. If Allah wills it, as they say in Morocco, the weather will be better for the next season.

The doll coop has a problem with the marketing of the dolls. There is not a lot of market locally, and they have no one to market them overseas. Individual women occasionally look for new markets, but there is no one in the coop whose specific job is finding new markets. However, they have succeeded in reducing the cost of the dolls by buying materials in quantity and by enlisting the women to buy bits and pieces of cloth in the local markets.

Organization and recordkeeping are excellent, and the doll and honey storerooms are neat and attractive. However, the administrator's stipends (which were funded in part with SPA/TA monies) will run out soon, and our sense is that they have not really trained anyone to take their places, which could cause great problems in the near future.

The most exciting change has been that, as Mme. Zhor said, the women now have the "cooperative spirit" which is affecting many other areas of the life of the community. They are beginning to help and assist each other in times of illness or trouble, which is new. This change alone could make the project worthwhile.

10. PROJECT TITLE: Thermoform Duplicator for Alaouite Organization

COMMUNITY NAME: Marrakech

COUNTRY: Morocco

AMOUNT: $3,700

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 100 students and 5 teachers
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: To provide a device for duplicating Braille material for students and teachers.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Students now have own texts to work from and a library is planned. Project has been visited and is in consideration for other schools.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The school has donated space, provided maintenance f r equipment and is currently training students to use the duplicator.

PROBLEMS: Difficulty in importing plastic sheets necessary for duplicator.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: ED, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In Marrakech, the Alaouite Organization for the Protection of the Blind in Morocco has a school for the blind. The school consists of four or five buildings, including a dormitory for the students, kitchen, laundry room, and classrooms. The students live and study for up to seven years at the school.

There are, however, no textbooks available for the students in Braille. Because of this lack, the students and teachers have been forced to spend an immense amount of time in each class period preparing the text for the day's lessons. Since the objective of the school is to have the students progress through the curriculum at the same rate as their sighted counterparts, this has been a major burden.

In September of 1983, a Thermoform duplicator (sort of a xerox machine for Braille documents) was purchased for the school using SPA funds.

We spoke with the Director of the school and one of the professors (who is himself blind). They told us of the project's successes so far. The Thermoform duplicator has been used to prepare texts for instruction in French for grades 1 through 6, with more on the way, as well as Braille maps of the school grounds (invaluable for new students) and specialized Braille drawings of the human eye and other pictures. The school has provided bindings for these new texts and documents so that they will be useful for many years.

The blind professor told us that his workload was one-tenth what it had been before having his materials prepared in advance. Both he and the Director felt that having the Thermoform machine was allowing them to keep pace with the

other schools in the area. This is seen by them as critical, since the students can stand a chance of competing in the local job market if they finish their schooling at the same age as sighted students.

Also, the sighted teachers have now become interested in learning Braille and in preparing Braille materials for their students, since they know that they will only have to do each text once.

The only difficulty at present is the problem of importing the special plastic paper which is used in making copies of the Braille masters. However, there have been offers of assistance in the problems with Customs, and it appears possible that the shortage will be resolved.

The school was also recently the site of a Solar Water Heater In-service Training (funded by TA/PASA), which built 3 solar water heaters for the school. These were very successful, and are being used daily for the kitchen, the laundry, and the showers.

This has had a surprising effect on the lives and the morale of the students. Before, the students had to go downtown to the public baths to bathe. The school has no transportation, so all 80 or so blind kinds had to walk to and from the baths, a very lengthy procedure. The workers had to carry all of the laundry and bedding to the laundry as well, so having hot water on the premises makes a very large difference in the amount of time spent on these activities, freeing the students and teachers to spend two or three more hours a week in the classroom. In addition, the students have become interested in personal cleanliness and the kitchen dishes are coming out clean!

The Director is understandably very pleased with these changes, and asked us to convey his thanks to all of the people responsible for the work and money which has made this all possible.

HONDURAS

11. PROJECT TITLE: Industrial Cooperative of Tailors and Seamstresses

COMMUNITY NAME: Tegucigalpa

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $3,700

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 11
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: An increase in capacity to produce work, and 30% profit each time the inventory is turned over. Also, an increase in accounting ability.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Increased capacity, plus $750 in increased profits so far.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: "Machinery, labor, work space, utilities"

PROBLEMS: The fact that it is a grant rather than a loan.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: SED, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

This cooperative, called CISAMOL by its initials in Spanish, was already in existence. The group had the opportunity to acquire a large contract for supplying bedding material to the local hotels, but it lacked the capital necessary to purchase the necessary materials and machinery.

Working with PCV Lloyd Flores, the group got a $3,700 SPA grant to purchase a sewing machine and the materials needed for the project. They got the contract, and the grant has given the group the captial necessary to work continuously, instead of having to stop frequently because all of the capital was tied up in stock.

In addition, having the grant has forced the cooperative to institute an improved system of accounting, which has allowed them to maintain better control over the business and given them the tools necesary for effective planning.

There are several interesting questions to be raised about the grant, however. They regard how SPA and the Peace Corps can intervene most productively in the small business arena.

The net outcome of this project is that a cooperative business enterprise, however socially worthy, has been given a gift. Wouldn't a loan be a more appropriate way of assisting? The cooperative needed working capital and would have been in a position to pay back a loan if it could get one -- which is not easy for small coops in Honduras. A lender would look at some of the roots of the cash flow problem and might even suggest some improvements in the business.

The other question regards the coop's contribution to the project. It is listed as "machinery, labor, work space, utilities and all other needs." This

sounds good, but it is all the things that the business already had, or would naturally be expected to produce in the course of the business. This makes the grant even more of a gift, and does not strengthen the group or improved their abilities.

There are no easy answers to the difficulties of assisting small businesses in a lasting way. Certainly in this instance the money seems to have been used well and to have made a difference in the ability of the cooperative to compete in the local marketplace. But what of other cooperatives of low income persons, watching from the sidelines while the group who managed to get the Washington bucks moves onto the fast track? And what of the effect on the group itself? Tough questions, which are well worth considering.

12. PROJECT TITLE: Fish Pond Project

COMMUNITY NAME: Santa Marta de Real

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $335

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 27
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Increase in food source and profitability.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Fish harvested, value $150.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor, plus cash for digging of the ponds ($490).

PROBLEMS: Theft of fish from the project, diversion of water to rice fields.

EVALUATION: Marginally successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Of all the ways to get protein from a piece of land, fish ponds rate at the top. In terms of both cost per pound of protein and number of pounds of protein produced per acre, raising fish in a pond beats all contenders.

Because of this, many people in less developed parts of the world are looking to fish pond culture to help alleviate the severe protein shortages which are a problem nearly everywhere.

Working with PCV Susan Parke, the Farmers' League of Santa Marta de Real has finished a dream that they started a while ago of having fish ponds for income and for food.

The ponds were dug by bulldozer, and then all of the other work was done by hand by the 15 members of the Farmers' League. The technical side of the project has been very successful, with the fish living happily and flourishing in the ponds. Not all members of the group were highly motivated, however, so there were periods of time when the fish were not properly taken care of.

In addition, theft has been a recurring problem. As the fish continued to be lost to thieves, the interest of the group understandably waned. However, some of the group maintained interest, and stocked another pond which had not previously been used for fish culture.

Despite thefts from this pond as well, 300 fish were harvested in August of 1984, with a net value of $80. In Honduras, this is a goodly amount of money, so that despite the poor harvest, the group was motivated to continue the project.

When we visited, the second harvest had just taken place, netting another $70. The group is interested in continuing the project, and there is more talk of eating the fish rather than selling them.

So, despite setbacks (the ponds are currently dry due to the water being diverted while the canals are being cleaned), the group seems determined to continue their foray into the world of commercial fish production. A good project which has been suntained through difficulties by the efforts of the Volunteer and the people involved.

13. PROJECT TITLE: Laying Hen

COMMUNITY NAME: San Diego

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $1,500

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: Unknown
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Increase in nutrition for school children.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Too soon to tell, first group of chickens just beginning to lay.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor

PROBLEMS: None yet

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, SED, I, IRP, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

A bit of a story about schools and women working together. The schoolteachers in the town of San Diego got together with PCV Patricia Deeflinger and began a project to start a chicken coop. Soon the teachers realized that they did not really have the time to do the work required, so they asked for help from a local women's group with the lovely name of the "Flower of the Countryside Ladies Club."

Working together, they applied for and got a SPA grant of $1,500 to start the project. Materials were bought locally, and 5 men from the community helped them construct the chicken coop. In addition, the group received help in construction and technical assistance from the Ministry of Natural Resources, the government agency involved in animal production.

Currently, the coop is done and contains 200 hens which are beginning egg production. In addition, the women are planning raffles to raise the money to buy 200 more chickens. The plan is to use some of the eggs for the schoolchildren and sell the rest.

Normally, chickens produce about 3 eggs in 4 days, so with the 200 chickens they should get about 150 eggs per day, or 12 1/2 dozen. At the current price of $1.50/dozen, this comes to $18.75 per day, or $131.25 per week. Feed and minor expenses come to about $45 per week, leaving a profit of about $85 per week. By all indications, then, the project could net $2,500 or so per year if all of the eggs were sold. This is encouraging, since the project was started with a grant of $1,500.

The only fly in the ointment is the fact that the chickens should be butchered and sold at the end of every year, since their egg production drops off dramatically during their second season of laying. It remains to be seen whether the group can successfully set aside enough money during the year to meet this recurring expense. The possibility exists, however, that this project could make a large difference in the pocketbooks of the people and in the diet of the children of San Diego.

14. PROJECT TITLE: Goat Raising

COMMUNITY NAME: Catacamas

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $3,400

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 56 women
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Increase in income, plus improved family and child nutrition.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Too soon to tell -- fences are in and the stable construction is started.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor, plus materials for the stable and working with goats when they arrive.

PROBLEMS: None yet

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

For women in the back countryside or the less developed parts of the world, there is little opportunity for either making money or increasing the amount of food for their families. Bound by tradition and proverty, many doors are closed to them.

In come countries, the governments recognize this problem and have taken steps to assist these women. In Honduras, one of the forms this assistance has taken is the creation of FEHMUC, the Honduran Federation of Country Women. Having an organization is only the first part of the game, however; the organization must do something.

Working with FEHMUC, PCV Kate Stratton is involved in introducing goat raising to the women of four communities. Goats are not common in Honduras, and this is new to the people involved. Because of this, a large part of the project involves education and extension work to share the basic information about how to raise, take care of, breed, milk and generally be friends with goats.

The project is just beginning; the fence is up for the stable and grazing area, and the women's husbands have cut the columns for the building of the stables. The women built the fence, and for many of them it was the first time in their lives that they had dug a post-hole. There are other firsts here, including a bus trip for everyone to go see a government goat project, which for some women was the first time that they had been out of the town they were born in.

Now we can look forward to [illegible]at time that their children drink goat milk and eat goat cheese, small [illegible]ges that loom large.

15. PROJECT TITLE: Fashion Show

COMMUNITY NAME: Siguatepeque

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $600

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 30 women
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Increase sales of clothing, provide advertising for the group, give practice in organizing events.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Increased sales, advertising organization practice.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor involved, plus fixing the stage, plus $10 per seamstress contribution.

PROBLEMS: Many of the seamstresses have not paid the organization the money owed from the sale of clothes during the event.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: SED, I, IRC, W, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

This was an interesting project, and one which aroused considerable difference of opinion on whether it should be funded at all. After all, a fashion show?

However, when the dust had settled it was clearly a success and a good investment of SPA funds. This project, done by the Seamstresses' Association of Siguatepeque with the support of PCV Connie Falk, was more than just a fashion show for the people involved. It was also an excellent exercise in marketing, budgeting, and putting on an event to make money.

The total SPA grant ws $600, which was used to purchase cloth to make the fashions that were modelled by local women. Each seamstress who participated was required to submit a budget and the names of her models before she was given money to buy her cloth. She was also responsible to design her clothing, and find a client to buy it after the show. After selling her product, she was to reimburse the Association for the cost of the cloth.

There have been difficulties in getting some of the seamstresses to pay for the cloth; even after selling their product. However, the total of the clothing sales plus the tickets (128 people at $1 each) was a little over $700, so on balance it was a success. In addition, it gave the women some experience in marketing, which is often the most difficult part of having a small business. It's often easy to make something, and hard to sell it; so this training will be very valuable to the women involved. And it was successful marketing and advertising. The sales of all the women involved in the show have increased as a result of it.

What's next? Well, the women are planning to open a sewing academy, using the funds from their treasury and from the fashion show. They organized a shopping trip to the El Salvador border where bargains can be found. This will also create revenue for the Association. New members are being recruited, and the group is alive and well. An unusual use of SPA funds and a good one.

16. PROJECT TITLE: Soil Conservation

COMMUNITY NAME: Santa Cruz

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $7,500

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 54 farmers
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will increase soil conservation, improve agricultural practices, purchase a stock of tools, and provide a revolving loan fund for seed and fertilizer.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: All of the above plus -- see description.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor, plus dues of $10/year for revolving loan fund.

PROBLEMS: Minor only. $50 not repaid to fund, some farmers not using soil conservation techniques on all their land, high cost of commercial fertilizer.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

There are many ways to increase agricultural production -- fertilizers, machinery, improved varieties, all have their place. However, the least visible, most boring and hardest to explain way is also likely the most important -- soil conservation. Making the few inches of topsoil that is the only fertile part of the land takes Nature hundreds of years; it can all be lost to bad farming practices and a single storm.

In the area around Santa Cruz, PCVs Rory Steinke and Carl Crozier have been working with the farmers to improve their farming practices. The SPA funds have been used in an interesting way; part of the money was used to buy tools for a permanent stock that the farmers can all use, and the majority of the funds were lent by the Farmers Cooperative to the individual farmers to purchase seed and fertilizer. In addition, each farmer who received a loan was required to institute soil conservation practices on the part of their land which would be improved by the loan. A roundabout way to get to soil conservation, but one which appears to have worked.

The results of this SPA grant have been very impressive. Taking the average of all of the farmers involved, yields in the first year rose from 4.5 tons of corn per acre to 13.2 ton per acre. Bean production rose as well, though not as dramatically, from 3.4 tons per acre to 3.7 tons per acre.

One of the most impressive parts of the project has been the near total repayment of the loans. Of the $5,270 loaned to the 54 individual farmers in the project, all but $50 has been paid back. This is only 1% of the money not

returned, an unheard of repayment rate (except among the rural poor). In addition, since interest of 5% was charged on the money, there is actually more money in the account than they started with. Astounding.

In addition, there is permanent soil conservation measures instituted by the farmers, measures which may extend the working life of the farms into the indefinite future. The value of these changes is inestimable.

What's next? Well, the current volunteer is working on getting the farmers to extend the soil conservation measures to other plots of land that were not covered by the loan, and getting the farmers to use cheaper organic fertilizers and soil amendments. Integrated pest management (IPM) is also being introduced to keep down the cost of pesticides. So, progress goes on. A most important and exciting project.

17. PROJECT TITLE: Farm Irrigation

COMMUNITY NAME: Yamaranguila

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $2,400

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 17 farmers, plus sharecroppers
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will increase income and food production, and stop soil erosion from ditches.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 25 acres now under irrigation, 2 crops per year being harvested, soil erosion stopped.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor involved in installing the irrigation system.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Changing from a traditional, "slash and burn" type of agriculture to a modern, soil-conservation type of land use is a slow and complex process. Many interlocking habits and patterns are based on the old system, and the changeover is not easy. In many places it is necessary, however, as the population pressures have reduced the amount of untouched land to a fraction of its initial extent.

An example of the beginnings of this change can be seen in the project done by the farmers group "Las Mesas" and PCV Elaine Dalrymple. Working together, they have created an irrigation system for a portion of the 168 acres of land which are jointly owned by the 17 member families in "Las Mesas."

When you slash and burn, the long-term stability and fertility is of no importance. When one piece of land must serve for generations, it is critical. The land belonging to the "Las Mesas" families was being badly eroded, due to its steep nature, by the very ditches which were bringing water to the fields. So using SPA funds and community labor, plastic pipes were laid in and the irrigation of about 35 acres of land was changed over to standpipes and sprinklers.

There have been several beneficial effects of this change, in addition to stopping the serious erosion of the topsoil. One has been that they can now get two crops a year, doubling their income from that part of the land under irrigation. Another has been crop diversification, which has been made possible by the precise control over the amount which the crops receive. The diversification means that they can grow crops in the off seasons, when the market price for the crops is higher. An acre of potatoes at the right time of year, for example, brings in about $1,200 in profits.

Underemployment has also been reduced, with more people working more of the year. Other farmers are also using part of the "Las Mesas" land on a sharecropping basis. Finally, drinking water has been brought into the homes of 8 of the families in the group.

Unquestionably, there is more work to be done in this changeover, work that will take years. However, the process is started here, and started well, in a way that the profits of the change are immediate and visible and are likely strong enough to keep everyone interested and moving. An excellent project with many good implications for long-term effect.

18. PROJECT TITLE: School Garden

COMMUNITY NAME: Nuevos Horizontes

COUNTRY: Honduras

AMOUNT: $400

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: Unknown
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will increase nutrition levels in school, teach children gardening, and make school more self-sufficient.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: All of the above plus -- see description.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: School children and their families did all of the work.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I(indirectly), IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Street kids, borderline delinquents, abused and abandoned children; all societies face this problem, and most deal with it by the institution of boarding or day schools, either government or privately funded. But then comes the second question: what next? How to support and supply and sustain the schools, how to strengthen the bonds that they have with their parents, how to keep them alive.

One of the answers found by the Padres de Familia de Nuevos Horizontes (a national home for children with social problems) and PCV Mike McGee is the institution of a school garden. Working with $400 in SPA funds, they have built a water tank and brought about 1/2 an acre into cultivation, with plans to double this amount.

What are the effects of this small change? Actually, there are a surprising number of them. Gardening has been established as an integral part of the curriculum, which is valuable training for later life. It has created a valuable link between parents and children, since they work together in the garden. It has also established a link between the parents and the school staff, with greatly increased opportunities for interaction. There has been a marked improvement in the diet of the children, many of whom are undernourished when they arrive. It has eased the financial burden of the school; the value of the food produced last year alone was $750, nearly twice the value of the SPA funds. And perhaps most important and least measurable, it has given the children a sense of self-esteem and accomplishment, for they are given responsibility for the garden and take great pride in what they are able to produce.

There is great interest in the project from other schools and institutions in the country, and it is being implemented in other places already. The children and teachers are now planning an egg production project, fruit trees

have been planted, and the spirit goes on. In a way, this SPA grant seems like a fruit tree -- money and work to plant it and nourish it, but then the benefits go on into the future with a life of its own. An excellent example of what SPA can do when it is used well.

SENEGAL

19. PROJECT TITLE: Well and Garden

COMMUNITY NAME: Pane Sader

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $2,140

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 250
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow the village to have a market garden during the dry season.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Well construction and fence construction are completed, planting is beginning.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor and materials valued at $2,110 (47% of project total)

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Imagine a vast plain, nowhere higher than a couple hundred meters above sea level, and you have Senegal. In the West and South, along the Atlantic, there are some trees; in the North and East, very few. Pane Sader is in the middle, where the trees are alone or in clumps of two or three, with maybe fifty meters between clumps, and grass and maybe some brush in between. And of course, the Sun. The village, which boasts a few hundred people, is at the end of 20 kilometers of good dirt road.

A few months ago, a well was dug for the village in order to water a community garden. The well is large and well constructed; the Volunteer, Tina Craig, did an excellent job facilitating the project, which included talking to several masons and finding out their reputations before selecting one to do the well. It is of an interesting design, with a concrete basin on either side to receive the water. From there it is distributed by hose to the other parts of the garden. Three buckets can be used simultaneously in the well. This means it provides water for a fairly large area.

Since this is a brand new garden, and since this is just the beginning of the gardening season for much of West Africa, we did not see the end results. However, the people are hard at work doing the final clearing of the land and removing the roots of the brushy trees that grew where the garden is now. They have built the type of fence common to the area, wood fence posts interlaced with branches of thorn bush.

The people we spoke with in the village were very enthusiastic and justifiably proud of the work that they had done to date. They have seen a change in the attitude of the village toward working together. Both men and women worked on the project, and this seems to have gone well. The village is now planning some other projects, and it appears to have gotten the

cooperative spirit and the ability to make collective decisions in groups or meetings.

Because of the drought and the bad timing of the rains last year, many villages in the area (including Pane Sader) had a disastrous millet and peanut crop. These are usually the main income earners for the farmers, so the garden represents a way for them to make it through the coming dry season with a little food and a little cash. They know this, and are working very hard now to prepare the ground for the seed.

In Moslem countries, when talking about the future, they say "Inshallah", which means "If God wills it" in the sense of "If God doesn't stand in the way". I believe that, Inshallah, Pane Sader will have a good vegetable harvest in the coming years, and that the ability of the village to organize itself for its own benefit will continue to increase. Inshallah.

20. PROJECT TITLE: Millet Machine

COMMUNITY NAME: Bandandar

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $2,404

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 150
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will grind all the millet for the women in the village.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Same

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor and materials valued at $197 (14% of total)

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, W, SLC (indirectly by freeing labor)

21. PROJECT TITLE: Well Repair and Garden

COMMUNITY NAME: Bandandar

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $434

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 350
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow the village to have a market garden during the dry season.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Income from garden increased from $70 to $450 in one year. Profits from the garden have indirectly contributed to increased protection against malaria.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: $80 cash plus labor valued at $128

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very Successful CODING: F, EN, I, IRC, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

This is the story of the people of Bandandar helping themselves, and PCV Paul Degiacomo helping the people, and the SPA funds helping it all work. Bandandar is a village of 350 people, in the dusty, baobab tree speckled plans in Senegal. The women's group in the village had had a garden project the previous two years, but it had been very small because of the lack of water.

(Senegal, like many African nations, has been suffering falling ground water tables during the current drought.) SPA funds were used to deepen the well, assuming enough water for a larger garden.

With Paul's assistance, the funds earned from the larger garden were not all distributed and spent. Instead, some of the profits (along with other funds collected by the village) were used to fund the village's contribution to another SPA project, a millet grinding machine.

Now grinding the millet for the family's food in Senegal is no job for the faint-hearted. You take a heavy, yard long wooden pestle and you pound the grains for four or five or six hours until you are done, most every day of your adult life. This being Africa, of course the women do it. Plus the women's groups garden. Plus all the rest of their work. Plus.

So SPA and the women's garden funded a millet grinder, which freed the women from this task. Now they have more time to work in the garden, and the garden gets bigger and bigger. But in the past, the cows broke down the stick fence around the garden and ate the profits right into their four stomachs per cow.

So a bit more of the garden profits and some money from the millet machine and some village money from who knows where becomes the village contribution to a real live wire fence around the garden.

Net results. The profits from the garden went from about $70 the first year to about $450 this year. The well has water throughout the year, not a lot, but enough to water the garden and provide for the village. The women have been relieved of the labor of grinding the millet. And perhaps most importantly, the village has learned how to organize themselves in a way that we endure.

You know, UNICEF has put a whole bunch of millet grinders into Senegal. Almost all of them are dead in the water. You see, it takes a strong organization to support a machine like this. Look. You have to have fuel. To buy the fuel, you have to collect money from the users. And most of them are your relatives. Then you have to arrange to get the fuel. Also, the machine must be maintained.

This beast has a 2 horsepower diesel engine running it. Someone's got to know how to change the oil, and filter the cruddy diesel, change the V-belts when they die, clean the air filter, and generally keep the machine alive. The grinder also must be greased and maintained. Machinery is work.

Then the money must be counted, and checked, records kept, maintenance schedules set, decisions made about what to do with the money, where to keep it, how to safeguard it. And most difficult, the money must be saved during the lifetime of the machine to replace it when it dies, or the game is over. Leave a millet grinder in a village with no preparation, you tell me what will happen.

But in this case all of the conditions have clearly been met. The institutions and procedures are all in place to support this machinery, and this will have a profound and long-lasting effect on village life. They have learned to work together, to create ways to sustain their moving into and enjoying the benefits of the industrial revolution that we all take so much for granted.

Sure, just give them a machine. What's wrong with them, they can't keep it alive, they must be dumb, maybe they don't like machines. No.

No, the transition is not easy. It takes time, and work, and patience, and a little bit of money, and a lot of give and take, some training and some initiative. America did it over a period of a hundred years or so. The women and men of the village, Peace Corps, Paul Degiacomo, and the SPA funds have provided these elements in two years in Bandandar, and the village will never be the same.

P.S. Care to guess what the other profits from the garden went into? Malaria pills for the kids. Each woman who works in the garden is entitled to a certain number of pills. But they don't just give each woman all the pills in one lump and hope that the kids get them every week. Instead, the procedure supporting this one is that one person is chosen by the women's group to hold the pills, and on a certain day each week the women come round and each one gets their pills and gives them to the kids. Learning, we are all learning...

22. PROJECT TITLE: Garden Fence

COMMUNITY NAME: Fanghat

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $2,474

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 200
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow the village to have a garden for market during the dry season.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The fence is in, and the garden is just being planted for its' first season.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor and materials valued at $1,755 (41% of the total cost)

PROBLEMS: Lack of planning to replace the fence.

EVALUATION: Successful

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

A simple story to tell. If the cows eat your garden, you end up with no food and no money.

Fanghat is in the Casamance region of Senegal, which is unlike most of Senegal in that things actually grow their own, coconuts and trees and shrubs and all that we think of as a landscape. The village of Fanghat decided to take advantage of this and to plant a community garden.

However, cows wander around in the bush there, eating whatever they can lay a lip on. The village decided they'd had enough, and spoke to the Volunteer Sue Horovitz, about how they could get some fencing for the garden. They came up with some cash and lots of labor, and the SPA fund provided the rest.

This is the largest fenced-in garden that we have seen to date. It will be used by both the men's group and the women's group for their collective gardens, with private plots outside the fence.

A minor problem is that they do not have a strong plan for replacing the fence when it eventually rusts out. They talk like they have a plan, but we're not so sure.

At any rate, the garden has the capability of producing much, much more than they have ever gotten in the past. They are obviously hard-working people, and I suspect that when the time gets closer, in five or ten years when the fence is old and tired, they will figure out a way to get another. If nothing else, the children will eat well for some years, and the adults will have more money to buy the necessities of life and they'll learn what a good fence can do. Not the best possible community organization, but the project worked despite that, and may do so in the future.

13. PROJECT TITLE: Millet Grinder

COMMUNITY NAME: Medine Niamar

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $1,920

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 500
INDIRECTLY: 1,600

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will grind all of the millet used by the village.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: As above, plus the machine has also been used extensively for grinding henna.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: $115 cash, plus labor and materials valued at $900 (42% of the total cost)

PROBLEMS: Misaligned belts on machine were wearing out too rapidly -- machine has since been readjusted. Also, the Volunteer is concerned that not enough money has been saved toward the purchase of a new machine when this one wears out.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, W, SLC (indirectly by freeing labor)

14. PROJECT TITLE: Well Repair

COMMUNITY NAME: Medine Niamar

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $1341

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 500
INDIRECTLY: 1,600

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide an improved source of water to village garden.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Some water has been provided and some funds raised by sale of water services.

PROBLEMS: Faulty design of pump purchased. The persons trained in pump repair have migrated from the village to the city.

EVALUATION: Marginally successful. CODING: F, I, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Medine Niamar is a village in the plains of Senegal, 8 or so miles from the pavement along a fairly good dirt road.

The village is divided into 7 "quartiers", which are groups of houses separated by intervening fields and plains. The village as a whole contains between 1,600 and 1,700 people. Two SPA projects have been funded with the village working with Chris Garkovitch, a Volunteer living in one of the quartiers.

The first project was the purchase of a millet grinder. Women in the village traditionally spend about 6 hours per day grinding the millet for the family meals, with a wooden mortar and a three foot wooden pestle. And remember, it's hot out. Hot.

Six hours per day, and there are about a thousand women in the village, maybe half of them pounding, that works out to the amount of labor of a person working full-time for two years. An immense human effort, done daily.

So the millet grinding machine was funded. An interesting village structure was created to support the machine; it is owned and managed by the men's group and the women's group. This is the first time that the two groups have ever done a joint project, and the management is going very well. The machine is well maintained, the diesel motor is clean and full of oil, and records are scrupulously kept.

The village also built the mill house to put the machine in, and paid for the bricks and all the other materials (tin roof, locks for the door, and all), and the salaries for the mason and brick layer. Impressive.

Having the machine cuts the millet preparation time down to just two hours. The women still have more work than you or I could do on a continuous basis, but it is four hours less food preparation time daily. Understandably, they think the millet machine is wonderful. A labor-saving device in the greatest sense.

An unexpected but large side-benefit of the machine has been its use to grind henna, which is grown by the families as a cash crop. The only other grinder in the area is about 3 1/2 miles away, and charges half again as much. This benefits the people two ways; the farmers make more profits, and the machine brings in enough money to pay maintenance costs and put aside a little toward the eventual replacement of the motor. The village has saved about a fifth of the cost of a new machine in the first four months of operation, and since the money is being jealously guarded by both the women's and men's groups, it looks like they will still have the money when it is needed.

Altogether, this has been an immensely successful effort, due in large measure to the Volunteer's insistence that the organization structure be set up and supervised and strong enough to support a project of this size. A good piece of work on everyone's part.

The second SPA funded activity was the repair of a hand pump, creation of a garden, and the training of two villagers in pump maintenance. This project, however, has run into technical difficulties.

The main problem is that the pump involved is of a faulty design. It's one that has had a very poor track record wherever it has been installed. However, the Volunteer didn't know this at the time and it was not caught by the SPA

review process, so it has continually failed. Surprisingly, neither the villagers nor the Volunteer have lost heart during this long and painful process, and all are actively seeking solutions to the difficulty.

Another, smaller problem is that one of the two people who were trained in pump repair has since left the village for the big city. Other people, however, have taken over his work.

And, in between times, the well has provided some water, and a small fund was collected by charging for the water during its time of operation, and the well committee is in place and working. Not altogether bad news.

So, two good projects, one up and running and one in a technical holding pattern. The millet machine is a great example of a true and perhaps lasting difference in people's lives that less than $2,000 can make, and the well may yet provide as large an effect.

25. PROJECT TITLE: Garden Fencing

COMMUNITY NAME: Diakene Ouloff

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $1,623

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 26 women
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide for a market garden during the dry season.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Successful completion of a fence around the women's garden -- built by the women themselves.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor and materials valued at $888 (36% of total cost)

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: F, I, IRC, W, SLC

26. PROJECT TITLE: Dispensary Project

COMMUNITY NAME: Diakene Ouloff

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $4,534

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 2,100
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: To provide a central dispensary building which will be staffed and supplied by the Senegalese government to serve Diakene Ouloff as well as four neighboring villages.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Too early to tell. Building is nearly completed.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor and materials valued at $2,432 (35% of the total cost)

PROBLEMS: Just the usual problems in transporation of materials.

EVALUATION: Too soon to tell CODING: H, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Diakene Ouoloff is a bit of an anomaly -- it is a village of about 400 Wolof people in the midst of the area where the Diola people live, in the

Casamance region of Senegal. The village is a few miles from the pavement, in a region of sandy soil, coconut trees, and low bush.

Velma Troy has been a Volunteer in the village for a year and a half now, and has made most productive use of the time. Among her other accomplishments, two SPA projects have been funded in the village, and both have been successful.

The first was a fence around the women's garden. Because of the rice harvest and the peanut harvest, the planting had just begun in the garden. The fence was well made, and the women were very proud of the work that they had done.

At first, the women had thought of asking the men to help them build the fence; but they decided that if they did that, the men would want to say what would do on in the garden, so they decided to build it by themselves. Velma worked with them, and some of the children, but none of the men. Now the garden is the women's own, and it is their pride and joy. The men don't set foot in it, and they don't know how much money the women make or what they do with it. The men seemed to be at ease with this state of affairs; they felt that if the women had their own money they (the men) wouldn't have to buy them things, so more power to them.

The women worked the garden for three years prior to the fence, and each year the cows broke in, but they persevered. They feel that the fence is the answer to their prayers and the continuation of their efforts.

The second SPA project in the village is the construction of a rather impressive dispensary. The building was about three-quarters done when we visited, a solid building of locally made brick with mortar, lacking only the roof. Shovels and wheelbarrows borrowed from the women's garden were used in the construction. The dispensary will serve the village and four others, for a total of 2,100 people.

Velma's participation in the projects has been a model of how to go about working with funds in a way which can support and strengthen the village and its institutions. She is also an expert at working through the local power structure and at finding other resources in the community and the local city to supplement the village efforts. She cleared the plans with the Ministry of Health to make sure that they would approve of the design of the building, got the local Public Works Department to haul the sand for the mortar, involved an engineer from the PWD in the design, and generally involved the community in all phases of the project.

Let me give you an example. The community is staunchly Moslem and the village across the way, their arch-rivals, are Catholic Animists. When the supplies for the dispensary arrived, she told the folks that if anything turned up missing, she better not hear about it, and they better make up the loss before she counted again, or she would take all of the materials, every piece, and give them to the village across the way. A brilliant stroke, since suddenly everyone in the village had a stake in the project and an interest in making sure that they really used the materials for their intended purpose.

In many other ways, she has drawn in and involved the leaders, the men's and women's groups, outside technical advisors, the medical community, PWD and other local organizations. She plays only a peripheral role in all of this,

forcing the community to take all of the visible parts in the game. Our sense is that the projects that she has helped to build, and more importantly the organizations that support the projects, will flourish long after she has gone.

She also paid, out of her own pocket, for vitamins for one of the chief's wifes to take during her pregnancy and for a few months after. The kid is larger than any baby of its age in the village, and several other women have gotten the idea and done the same with some of their profits from the vegetable garden.

7. PROJECT TITLE: Well Digging

COMMUNITY NAME: Djimande

COUNTRY: Senegal

AMOUNT: $1,065

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 26 women
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow gardening for market during the dry season.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Well repairs are not completed.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor and materials valued at $425 (28% of total cost)

PROBLEMS: Work has been interrupted by the harvest season for their main cash crop.

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The Casamance region of Senegal is much greener and lusher than the rest of the country. Yet there is still a need for water drawn from wells.

SPA funds have been used to pay for some of the materials to be used in the digging and casing of two new wells in the gardens created by women's groups. PCV Eden Epstein lives in the village, and she is working with the people toward the completion of the wells.

The women of Djimande began the gardens a number of years ago. They are watered by bucket out of several narrow hand-dug wells in each garden. Because the wells are not cased, they continually cave in below the water line, which leaves no reservoir space for the water to fill into at night when they are not being pumped. This greatly limits the amount of water available for the plants that the women can grow.

At present, most of the village is involved in the harvesting of their cash crop elsewhere, so work has come to a temporary halt. Both wells have been excavated to a depth of about 2 meters of their eventual 10 meter depth, and one well has been cased around the top and an apron built for it. All materials are on hand, and the men said that the project would be worked on after the harvest.

The village seemed well organized and enthusiastic about the project, both the women and the men. The potential is there for them to double or triple their present production.

Another story where time will tell, though the elements are all in place. Tune in next Spring.

COSTA RICA

28. PROJECT TITLE: Asociacion del Juvante

COMMUNITY NAME: Limon

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT:

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 16 student
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Provide employment for local handicapped people in a workshop which would produce cardboard boxes, simple water pumps and manual corn de-kerneler.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 16 students working and selling about 34,000 C per month of produce.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Provided a building for the workshop.

PROBLEMS: The project was terminated because of the theft of tools and products of the workshop.

EVALUATION: Unsuccessful CODING: SED, I, J, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

There are successful projects, there are unsuccessful projects and there are projects which tear at your heart. This is such a project.

The project gave meaning and skills to the area's handicapped. The goal of the project was to provide employment for local handicapped people (mentally retarded, deaf and dumb and crippled). It was designed to create a workshop to produce cardboard boxes for the exportation of bananas and other produce, a simple water pump, and a manual device for removing corn from the cob. The Instituto Nacional de Aprendizaje provided the building for the workshop and the SPA funds were used to buy the tools, shop and kitchen equipment.

The Association hired an instructor to supervise the workshop. The Association paid his salary (about $315 a month) but they did not establish a legal contract with the person. He was given complete responsibility and very little supervision. He had the responsibility of buying the raw materials and marketing the finished product. The products of the workshop had a very good market, the regional development organization was the prime buyer of the water pumps, local merchants bought the boxes and the farmers bought the device for removing the corn kernels. At the peak of its operation the workshop was selling more than $700 per month in products.

During the second year of the project, Peace Corps volunteer Guy Branch and the promoter from the National Rehabilitation Council became aware of a fraud being perpetrated by the instructor. The instructor began to steal tools from the workshop and to pocket most of the money from the sales of the products. He even manipulated the clock in the shop so the workers would work more hours.

Unfortunately, since the workers were uneducated, handicapped and some mentally retarded and the instructor had won their confidence, they were not able to grasp what was happening and resisted the efforts of the PCV and others to rectify the situation. This situation was communicated to the association and the National Rehabilitation Council and the NRC recommended the firing of the instructor and the reorganizing of the association.

As with many SPA projects which might be judged a failure in some ways, there is a bright side. The effort by the NRC promoter, the Peace Corps Volunteer and the instructor from the workshop drew considerable attention to the plight of the handicapped in that area. Through the efforts of the NRC promoter and a new Peace Corps volunteer, Rebecca Smith, the association has received funding from local and national sources to create a more formal workshop/rehabilitation center and construction has begun.

The handicapped are watching the project with great interest and awaiting the day they can be productive human beings again.

29. PROJECT TITLE: Beekeeping in Agricultural High School

COMMUNITY NAME: Guapiles, Limon

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $ 916.57

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY:
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Educate the students in beekeeping, provide an income for those who leave the school and produce honey independently.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The school has 16 hives producing 25 gallons of honey. Ten farmers have begun honey production at an average of 8 hives a farmer. This represents important new income both for the school and the farmer.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION:

PROBLEMS: A few technical ones which were easily overcome.

EVALUATION: Very successful

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Guapiles lies in the more recently developed area of northeastern Costa Rica. There is a sense of lushness and modernized agriculture about the area. In that setting the Agricultural High School Pococi serves the surrounding area.

Peace Corps volunteer David Levenstein worked with the director of the school to develop and implement the project. The volunteer and a professor installed the five initial hives and brought them to production level. Beekeeping was incorporated into the curriculum of the school where the hives are used as a teaching tool and earn money for the school at the same time.

This project is exciting for several reasons. First, by establishing the hives at the school the project was able to dispel the erroneous belief that the agricultural practices in that area i.e., sprinkler irrigation and fumigation, would not permit beekeeping. Secondly, it provided a practical component of the school's curriculum. One student has even done his thesis on beekeeping. Third, the project project generated so much interest in the community that local farmers asked the school to assist them in establishing their own hives. There are now 10 farmers who have started beekeeping and they have an average of 8 hives each.

The number of hives at the school has grown to sixteen. Last year the hives produced 25 gallons (125 bottles) of honey. The bottles were sold at 50 Colones ($1.05 US) and the school now has the reputation of supplying high quality honey at a very good price. The money goes back into the program. The school director is extremely pleased and very excited about the program.

All in all the project is growing and developing; its impact spreading with each student who leaves with the knowledge of how to keep bees.

30. PROJECT TITLE: Forestry Nursery

COMMUNITY NAME: Las Juntas, Guanacaste

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $210

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 500 students
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide an education in forestry to students and perhaps job potential for 4 or 5 students who work daily.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The nursery is well maintained and plans have been made to expand its tree variety into fruit and ornamental trees. 1,000 seedlings sold first year.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION:

PROBLEMS: The problems were minor and of a technical nature.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: SED, I, J, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Forestry nursery projects have several advantages which contribute to their high success rate:

1. They are very inexpensive.
2. They are highly visible.
3. Their simplicity makes them easy to set up and manage.
4. The technology is easy to transfer to a local person.
5. The product is cheap and generally has a good demand.

The nursery in Las Juntas is no exception. It is well set up and maintained and there are plans for expansion. The fact that the nursery was built on the property of the high school and was incorporated into the curriculum of the school increased its impact and insured its continued use.

As the nursery expands it will produce a wider variety of trees and shrubs including fruit and ornamental trees to meet community demands.

An indication of the success of the project and the value the school places on it is the fact that the school put up the money for materials to build a small warehouse and germination room for the nursery. The money for the labor costs of the construction came from first year tree sale of the nursery.

Despite the fact that the PCV Eric Mahan designed and wrote the proposal for the project, he incorporated enough community participation to insure its success. Because it fills an important need of the community, it should continue to grow and improve.

31. PROJECT TITLE: Egg Production

COMMUNITY NAME: Pi ji je, Guanacaste

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $100 (lion's Club)
$30 (SPA)

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 7 people directing
INDIRECTLY: project and their families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The project has the potential of improving the income and diet of 7 families and providing the community with a greater and inexpensive source of food.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The construction of chicken coops was partially completed. However, there is little enthusiasm to finish construction.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION:

PROBLEMS: Project suffers from little research, inadequate existing knowledge and the lack of a PCV who left the project leaderless not having trained anyone to continue the project.

EVALUATION: Unsuccessful

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Pi ji je sets just off the highway on the coastal plain of Guanacaste. It is a hot, semi-arid area which contains both large and small land holders. The area is characterized by Guanacate and Jacaranda trees and roadside "tiendas" where one can find a beer and escape the midday sun. Pi ji je, like so many agricultural communities has no physical sense of community. The houses of adobe and wood are scattered among the small parcels of land owned by the community members.

The volunteer worked with a local youth leader who was working with 4-H clubs. In exploring the needs of the community, they discovered that eggs were expensive and in short supply. To deal with the problem, they organized a group of eight community members to work on a pilot egg production project. Then they wrote the proposal and received the funding.

Unfortunately, due to a series of personal problems the volunteer left shortly after the money was disbursed. By the time we arrived the structure, although partially completed had an abandoned air about it. The youth leader informed us that construction was about to resume, but there was no great sense of enthusiasm in him.

When we discussed the implementation of the project with him he stated that "someone from MAG" was going to show them how to make concentrate. He had not idea what the costs of such an operation would be nor whether it would be cheaper than processed concentrate. He had little understanding of the care and management of chickens or any plans for dealing with any problems which might appear.

The project may have had potential for success, but the lack of research before the project and lack of leadership in the implementation seem to have doomed it to failure.

32. PROJECT TITLE: Coopesanti Savings and Loan Cooperative

COMMUNITY NAME: Cervantes

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $110

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 350 students
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The coop has potential of providing 900 students, indirectly their families with an education in coops, administration and accounting.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 350 students have opened accounts with the coop and are actively involved in accounting, administration and the coop.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION:

PROBLEMS: Minor problems of an administrative nature.

EVALUATION: Successful

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

This is a good example of one of the SPA program's great strengths, i.e. it can fund projects which are too small to be funded by other institutions. The $110 of the grant were used to buy the forms necesary to do the accounting for the more than 350 students who opened savings accounts with the coop. The coop provided the many hours of administrative work required to fill out the forms and manage the accounting. It also gave classes on cooperativism to the students who participated in the new program.

The savings growth of approximately $.50 per week did not cover the expenses of the coop, but the interest it stimulated in the community and the education of future members of the coop made it worthwhile. Parents began to make small contributions to their children's accounts and express more interest in the coop.

The project was terminated after one year because of a financial crisis in the coop and the lack of support of the school director. Since then the coop has weathered the crisis and the director of the school has been replaced. Interest has been rekindled and there are plans to reinitiate the program.

Despite the lack of any concrete short term indicators for evaluating the project, the project must be judged a success. Education is the life blood of a cooperative and the value of early training in the use and purpose of a coop will surely serve that coop at a later date.

33. PROJECT TITLE: Restaurant Chicheme

COMMUNITY NAME: Nicoya, Guan.

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $3,200.00

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 16 women
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Potentially the project was to create jobs and an income for single mothers.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: A series of problems forced the restaurant to close after one year.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION:

PROBLEMS: The problems were no feasibility study, poor design, little supervision, no training for the women involved and a PCV quitting without training anyone to continue project.

EVALUATION: Unsuccessful

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

This project is a classic example of many of the mistakes that can be made during the course of a project. The project had problems from the very beginning. The group was organized from those people who were to be the beneficiaries of low-cost government housing. The group of 16 women who began working on the restaurant were not a very homogeneous group or a natural community to begin with.

The idea for the restaurant was a good one, but it was presented to the group by the volunteer. They, of course, accepted it, but they were not involved in proposing the solution for their own problem. The volunteer also wrote the proposal and managed the money once the project was funded.

The SPA money was used to buy simple restaurant equipment and furnish working capital to get the restaurant started. An illiteracy rate of 50% among the women, a lack of dedication to the project and poor administrative skills led to a series of problems. The interpersonal problems of the group were never solved nor was the necessary sense of commitment to the project on the part of the women ever achieved.

The restaurant opened in October, 1983 and did reasonably well during the tourist season, but with the arrival of the rainy season business began to slow. The volunteer did not manage the money properly and did not train the women in the administration of a business. In addition, the volunteer quit the Peace Corps and left the group without guidance during a rather critical period.

Several other PCVs attempted to work on the project, but their visits were sporadic and at times their advice conflicting. The restaurant continued to incure losses and was finally closed after one year of operation.

The only bright spot in the whole picture is that the project showed the women that they can do something about their economic situation; it gave them hope. There is a new volunteer working with them and they are planning some new projects.

34. PROJECT TITLE: San Gabriel School Garden/Small Animals

COMMUNITY NAME: San Gabriel

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $950

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: School
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide children with an education in gardening and animal management and subsequently improve their diet in a self-supplying school lunch program.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Not measurable as of yet.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Community provided $700 worth of tools, materials and labor.

PROBLEMS: Minor ones of a technical nature.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: F, I, IRP, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The community's strong interest in its school is demonstrated by this project. The Junta de Educacion and the Patronato Escolar (the two local school committees) thought up the idea for a school garden and small animal project and then presented it to the nearest volunteer. That volunteer was not assigned to that area, but she was so impressed by the community's interest in the project that she took it on.

After discussing the idea with the school committees, the volunteer, Kathy Wismall, gave them the guidelines for writing a proposal. The director of the school wrote the proposal and gave it to the volunteer.

Despite the fact that the evaluators arrived during the school vacation the animals (pigs, chickens and rabbits) were healthy and well cared for. The school had already had one harvest of the garden as well. The produce from the garden was used in the school lunch program.

The volunteer helped set up the garden and supervised the construction of the various animal pens. The SPA funds were used for some of the construction materials and for buying the animals and the vegetable seed. Construction moved apace, the animals were bought when the pens were completed and the project was implemented on schedule.

The goals of the project are twofold. First, the school wanted to be self-sufficient in producing a balanced meal for the students and second, they wanted to teach them the skills of gardening and animal management. The students are very enthusiastic about the project; they even take turns caring for the animals during school vacations.

The two school committees are dynamic groups which have already acquired more funding to expand the small animal project. The school also has about 5 acres on the edge of the community where the committees plan to develop an orchard for the school.

35. PROJECT TITLE: Mastatal

COMMUNITY: Mastatal

COUNTRY: Costa Rica

AMOUNT: $5,016.69

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 165 actually involved in project.
INDIRECTLY: 1,136 direct beneficiaries.

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Seven communities receive year round accessibility and transportation is more efficient and inexpensive.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Bridge is completed, nearby community San Vicinte is planning a similar bridge project because of the success of Mastatal Bridge.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Community provided materials, unskilled labor and $1,320 for the Bridge.

PROBLEMS: An accident caused a delay as broken beams were replaced. This replacement increases costs by $2,560.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR's REPORT:

This is an example of how good a project can be if the community is deeply involved. The idea originated in the community as a response to a problem identified by the community. That factor insured their interest and support.

Projects which produce a structure tend to be seen as successes simply because once the project is completed there is physical evidence of the projects success. There is a danger here. As one volunteer put it, "they tend to become monuments to the volunteer." However, that does not depreciate the value of the project or its impact on those who are affected by it.

The volunteer, Mark Wenner, was invited by the Asociacion de Desarrollo de Mastatal, consisting of 165 members, to discuss issues important to the community. One of those issues was the bridge. The community had been trying to get the bridge constructed for six years. The Asociacion and the volunteer developed a plan to get the construction underway.

The community was the focal point of the project, it supplied the manpower and food for the entire construction crew. The community was there whenever a problem arose and they kept the construction moving.

The impact of the project on the lives of those people was immediately apparent and the enthusiasm they expressed when talking about the bridge indicated just how important it is to them. Besides the obvious benefits of accessibility the community mentioned that many of the school children live on the opposite side of the river from the school. The danger to the children of crossing the river each day had been a concern of the community's for many years. Now the children can cross safely.

There is perhaps a greater benefit left by the project; the stimulation and motivation the Asociacion received in accomplishing such an important a task. They learned the process for getting funding for community projects and currently have eight projects for which they are soliciting funding.

THE GAMBIA

36. PROJECT TITLE: Bessi Young Farmers and School Garden/Orchard

COMMUNITY NAME: Bessi

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $1,350

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 75 children
INDIRECTLY: 125 members of the Young Farmer's club

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: To provide an education and improve farming conditions for 75 children and 125 club members. The project increases the fruit and vegetable supply.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 200 people are active with the project. This project has become the most visible and visited projects in The Gambia.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The club contributed labor and 120 Dalasis from their membership fees which is over 50% of budget.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Bessi is a small village of perhaps 500 people in the Western District of The Gambia. It is about 1 mile off of the paved road, in an agricultural area of mixed rhun palm trees, other trees, and brush.

This year, with the assistance of PCV Rich Marx, SPA funds were used to put in a well and provide wire for a garden fence, in order to create a community garden next to the school. The fence and well are done now, and the planting of the garden has just begun.

This is likely the SPA project which has received the most attention in The Gambia. School teachers, officials, Radio Gambia, many folks are interested in and aware of the project.

The interest is justified. The garden is situated next to the local primary school, and serves both as a community garden and a teaching garden for the school. The well is very professionally made, concrete cased and durable, looking like it will last for a century. They were just finished clearing the half of the garden that has not been planted when we visited. The school teacher, Daniel Mendy, has been a major force behind the project along with a local agricultural extension agent.

The Young Farmers Club, which has both men and women members, is the group who actually built the garden. Now that the garden is built, many of the people who originally declined membership in the Club want to get in, and the members are trying to decide how to choose new members from among all of the applicants.

A part of the garden is reserved for the school kids, and Daniel has planted this area with seed for later transplanting. There are also a number of trees, both mango and cashew, which are soon to be transplanted to the garden. All in all, yes, this is a project which is deserving of the attention which it has received.

37. PROJECT TITLE: Latrikunda Kumba Njamay Fishing

COMMUNITY NAME: Latrikunda Mampatokoto

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $5,600

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 7 will receive a greater income.
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Four jobs will be created, however 40 or more will benefit through the surplus in the fish market and apprenticeships within the project.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Project not completed.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Fishermen will provide fish on a daily basis to the hospital/clinic in exchange for a contribution.

PROBLEMS: Disputes over net prices blocked any further action on the project. The project is frozen as the price dispute is considered.

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Latrikunda is a coastal village south of the capital city of Banjul. A SPA grant was given to a group of fishermen in the community, to allow them to purchase a small boat, motor, and nets to allow them to establish a fishing business.

This is a project with great promise, and one large problem. The promise is the possibility of fish for the village, income for the fishermen, and an agreement to train about 10 local people per year in the mysteries and madness of commercial fishing.

Here's the problem, though. The fishermen went around getting quotes from a couple of supplies for their nets. They were quoted prices of about $1,500 for a gill net for Kobo, one of the local commercial species. So when the Gambian Fisheries Department offered to give them a Kobo net, they jumped at the chance.

Then the Department said they would only loan them the net. OK. Then they said it was a short-term loan, and they had to buy the net in three months. Then they said they would just sell them the net. Still OK, though, since the Department said they would sell them the net for about $150.

The trouble really started when the Department delivered the net. The fishermen told them it was the wrong mesh size, but the Department assured them that it would work, and where is the local fisherman in The Gambia who would

argue with the Fisheries Department? So they tried it, without results; the mesh size was wrong. Now the Department refuses to take the nets back in exchange or return the money, and there the matter stands.

There seems to be no easy way out of this one. It turns out that the Department doesn't even have the right nets, and even if the money is returned, it will not be enough to pay for the right nets. Because of this impasse, and considering the amount of time and money which has gone into the project, the Peace Corps is considering granting the funds for the correct nets. The floats, float rope, sinkers and sinker rope could be taken off of the wrong nets and used for the new. This would reduce the price of the new nets to about $400.

Lessons to be learned? First, an old adage says that if something seems too good to be true, it probably is; so Volunteers and staff need to be on the lookout for these situations. In addition, outside technical advice should have been sought to determine the proper size of the mesh in the first place. If the staff and volunteers do not have the proper experience in this area, they need to seek it out. In any case, the problem may yet be solved and the promises remain, all of the rest of the project is in place, and the boat is being lovingly cared for. The fishermen want to go fishing, and it may be that they will fulfill their dreams. Wait and see. How boring. Wait and see.

38. PROJECT TITLE: Bakau Carpenter's Cooperative

COMMUNITY NAME: Bakau

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $3,650

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 21 people and the school
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: The project provides temporary construction jobs, three to four carpenters could receive an income and 17 children are provided with an education or an apprenticeship.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 21 people are working as carpenters and students.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Temporary construction jobs are provided, local school and embassy have contracted work from carpenters.

PROBLEMS: Cash flow causes community problems.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: SED, I J, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Bakau is a town a few miles from the capital city of Banjul. Along the beach there are a row of tourist hotels and nice houses, and the real world starts on the other side of the street. Several months ago, SPA funds were used to help build a workshop and provide some tools for the starting of a cooperative carpentry business in the real part of Bakau.

This project is the most successful of any of the small businesses that we have seen funded by SPA. The business is up and flourishing, with jobs in progress nearly all the time and enough money coming in to support the coop members.

Originally there were to have been seven members in the coop, but three dropped out during the period of approving the project and obtaining the funds. We spoke with three of the four coop members, who were very pleased with how the business is progressing. (The Volunteer who is involved with the project is David Gerratt.)

One interesting aspect of the project was the nature of the community contribution. Part of this was to be 40 benches and tables which were to be made and given to the local primary school before the start of the new school year. This sounds suspiciously like someone's promise to gladly pay you Tuesday for a hamburger today, so we were pleased to learn that the carpenters kept their agreement and made and delivered the benches in September.

There has been a lot of interest generated by the project, both from local people and leaders such as the Alcalo (Mayor) and the Imam (religious leader).

In addition, two teenagers are receiving regular apprentice training, and a class of 15 or so 7 or 8 year-olds come in once a week to help around the shop and learn some of the fundamentals of woodwork; so the community benefits and is involved as well.

The Peace Corps Office in Banjul has been buying office furniture from the coop, not because they were funded by SPA, but because their workmanship is good and their prices are the lowest in the area.

Businesses are hard to start even in the U.S., so the cooperative members and the volunteer deserve credit for creating a productive, successful business in The Gambia. Congratulations to everyone for a difficult project well done.

39. PROJECT TITLE: Ba-Nyiaka Gisoff-Litt/Orchard

COMMUNITY NAME: Ba-Nyiaka

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $1,275

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: An estimated 20 in Gossoff-Litt.
INDIRECTLY: The village, an estimated 400 people served.

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: There were no new jobs created, however a protected orchard will increase fruit supply.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Project is in progress.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The labor and fencing posts estimated 3,000 Dalasis. The fruit and planting trees are valued at 3,750 Dalasis.

PROBLEMS: Ethnic rivalries have slowed progress.

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, SLC (indirectly)

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Ba-Nyiaka is not a village in the limelight. It is at the end of about 10 miles of passable dirt road, in the perennial flat countryside of The Gambia.

USAID had contributed about 3,000 trees to the village, but they had no place to put them where they would be safe from the goats. Now goats eat tin cans even in the U.S. and the Gambian goats make them pale in comparison.

So SPA funds were used to buy the materials to fence around the individual trees. Since there are two ethnic groups, Diola and Mandinka, in the village, cooperation has not been smooth. There are, however, indications that the groups are beginning to work together to achieve a common goal.

Another interesting aspect of the project is that while the Volunteer, Rich Marx, was away on vacation, the villagers decided to fence in the entire area where the trees are rather than fencing in each individual tree. Whether this was a mistake or not remains to be seen, as the fence was only partially completed when we visited. The Volunteer commented that when he returned from vacation, he could have asked the villagers to tear out what they had done and follow the original plan. However, he felt that one of the strengths of the SPA funds is that they are small enough to allow for experimentation without too large a danger, so he let them continue with their plan of one fence.

The fence is well made, and will enclose an area of perhaps 5 or 6 hectares when it is done. Fencing the entire area will allow the villagers to plant gardens within the area instead of just trees, so perhaps this is the better plan. The jury is still out on this project, but it does illustrate the flexibility of the funding and may yet prove very successful.

40. PROJECT TITLE: Gunjur Women's Community Garden

COMMUNITY NAME: Gunjur

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $330

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 16 women and their families
INDIRECTLY: An estimated 80 people served.

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Would be an increase in family incomes and provide a greater source of vegetables at the markets.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Women earned $70 to $120 from one growing season. Surrounding villages has shown an interest in duplicating the project.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Village provided the labor and fence repairs. The village contributed to the cost of seven redug wells. Total the village contribution values 493 Dalasis.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Gunjur is a small town of several thousand people, about 10 kilometers south of Banjul, the capital. It is about 6 kilometers off of the paved road, and seems to be fairly prosperous.

SPA funds were used to improve a community garden which is worked by the Women's Cooperative Society. The society is made up of 6 young men and 10 women. The society asked the Volunteer, Nancy Shillis, for assistance in fencing the garden, since cattle and goats have been a recurring problem, and in purchasing some hoes and well bags (used in watering the garden). The Cooperative, for their part, redug 7 of the 12 wells in the garden, and bought seeds for the next planting.

The garden has been very successful. Depending on the amount of area cultivated, the women earned from $70 to $120, which is very good money in The Gambia. When we visited, they were just in the process of beginning the planting for the second season. A lot of work had already gone into ground preparation, and some of the beds had already sprouted.

The garden has been successful in another way, in that there has been interest from other groups who have seen the power that people can have when they work together toward a common goal. The people in the Coop are already planning an expansion of the garden with some of their profits, and there is every indication that the effects will be long-lasting, both in terms of income and in terms of better nutrition for the participants. A good project.

41. PROJECT TITLE: Republishing Historical Narratives

COMMUNITY NAME: Banjul

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $2,175.90

NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED DIRECTLY: 2 Griots initially
INDIRECTLY: Potentially all members in The Gambia Traditional Griot Society which are approximately 75 members.

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Should all active members of the Griot Society participate in the project. 75 could receive an income.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Two Griots are receiving a small income from book sales (estimated profit of 5 Dalasis a book). There has been a revitalization of culture and heritage among the villagers.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Participating Griots contribute labor and talent.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very Successful CODING: SED, I, IRC, MLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

One of the tragedies of modern West Afica is the dying out of the old stories and traditions. For centuries, these have been handed down from father to son by a class of oral historians called "griots". They tell stories of warriors and kings, of magic and mystery; and in a land where local history books are rare, they keep the tales and traditions of vanished kingdoms and ancient empires, retell hunter's tales, and are the storehouse of the dreams of the people.

Most of the griots are old men now. In the past they were usually supported, like artists everywhere, by wealthy patrons; but this custom is dying out as well. Because the griots are no longer able to earn much of a living, they are understandably unwilling to see their sons continue in the same line of work; so the history is dying with the old men.

Recently, in an effort to reverse this trend, a SPA project was funded in cooperation with the Traditional Griot's Society, to begin to publish some of this material. Four stories had been published previously by the Oral History and Antiquities Department of the Gambian Government. Working with PCV Delores Beasley, SPA funds were used to pay part of the cost of republishing two of these narratives, with the funds to be partially repaid through the sale of the booklets.

The booklets are in print now, and about one quarter of the funds which are to be repaid have already been collected. In addition, the Traditional Griot's Society has become a much more dynamic institution. They are already planning

to write down and publish some more of their stories. The income from future stories will be divided between the Society and the individual who writes down the story, with the individual getting three quarters of the profits. Given this incentive, the individual griots have already begun arranging some of their material for publication.

This is a very exciting project. It has the possibility of preserving the ancient tales, and at the same time providing a long-term source of income for the old men, and encouragement for them to train their children to take their place. Time is short on this one, for when any of the old men dies, hundreds of stories may be lost forever; but SPA funds may provide a way for the children of tomorrow to know about the deeds and delights of the past, and to see their own connection with the life of their ancestors.

42. PROJECT TITLE: Tujereng Abattoir (Slaughterhouse)

COMMUNITY NAME: Tujereng

COUNTRY: The Gambia

AMOUNT: $500

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: More than 2,000
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Created 15 temporary construction jobs. Once finished, the project provided sanitary conditions for butchering.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Upkeep in the slaughterhouse is consistant and thorough.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The village supplied labor and materials such as sand, gravel, fence posts and beams which the estimated value is $795. The village donated a 20 by 40 yard plot of land.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: SED, I, J, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Tujering is a small town on the coast of The Gambia, a half-hour's drive south of the capital city of Banjul. It is a fishing and farming community, surrounded by fields and near to the ocean.

For many years the cattle and other animals of the area were slaughtered in an open field near the center of the village. Because there was no way to clean the area, it was a breeding ground for flies and disease, with the meat often becoming dirty and contaminated.

About a year ago, the village approached Paige Perry, the Volunteer living in the town, to see if she could assist them in cleaning up this health hazard. The village put up the land, sand, gravel, wood and the labor to construct the abbatoir; and the SPA funds provided about $500, mostly for concrete for the floor and tin for the roof.

The abbatoir is finished and in use now. We visited unannounced, and found it to be spotlessly clean. They still need (and have plans to make) a cover for the pit that drains the floor. However, there were no flies or insects visible, no oder, and no sanitation problems that we could see. The village butcher has the responsibility for keeping the place clean, and he is doing his part well. Other than a problem with the concrete in the posts cracking is several spots, there were no technical problems in the construction, and the structure will serve the village with a minimum of upkeep for many years. As Tujering is a center for meat sales for the surrounding villages, many people will be affected by this change. It is an outcome that is impossible to measure, unfortunately, but a very real one nonetheless.

ECUADOR

43. PROJECT TITLE: Rabbit and Guinea Pig Raising

COMMUNITY NAME: Imbabuela

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $600

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 150
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will improve the standard of nutrition by introducing new methods of small animal husbandry.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: New cage building techniques have been successful, and rabbits have been introduced to the area for the first time.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The community contributed materials valued at $36 plus all labor.

PROBLEMS: The volunteer will be leaving before the completion of the project, which could be a problem.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: SED, F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Protein. We take it for granted, and perhaps overindulge in it; but for most people in the world it is a rarity, something they may get in an occasional meal. Usually, though, they just eat whatever the local starch might be.

For the Quechua Indians of the Ecuadorian Andes, the staple is potatoes. Three times a day, seven days a week, it's potato soup.

In an effort to provide better nutrition for their families, the people of the community of Imbabuela have been working with PCV Carla Lee Larson on improving the small animal raising practices.

Traditionally, guinea pigs (which are native to the area) are raised for food by the Indians. However, poor raising practices have kept the production from reaching its potential levels. In particular, the traditional cages have been subject to rat predation, resulting in reduced lifespans for the guinea pigs.

Using SPA funds, a project was started to improve the quality of the cages used to house the guinea pigs. The project has since been expanded, at the desire of one of the community members, to include the production of rabbits. This is an agricultural area, and there is plenty of leafy feed for the little hoppers. In fact, a decision was made to begin with developing rabbit cages and growing rabbits.

The project appears to be quite successful. People have in fact been quite successful in raising the rabbits, and this has given them pride and confidence in their own abilities.

The second phase of the project is due to start soon, which will be building the cages for the guinea pigs. It will be interesting to see how well this comes off, since by then the Volunteer will have finished her service and left. As usual, the real test does not occur until the community must do it themselves. Time tells all.

44. PROJECT TITLE: Community Education Center

COMMUNITY NAME: Quito

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $570

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 30 women
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will find employment for the women who are to be trained by the Center.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Thirty women are being trained for jobs.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: $10,000 including cash from other funding sources.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Too early to tell

CODING: SED, J, IRP, W, SED (the women will be going into business)

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Quito, the capital of Ecuador, sits at about 9,000 feet of elevation, and is at the bottom of a valley with mountains on all sides. In common with many capital cities in the developing world, the unemployment problem is quite severe. This is especially true among young, poorly educated women.

In an effort to make a dent in this situation, PCV Rosa Brambilla de Fuller has been working with a local organization to train young women to care for children in either a day-care or private situation.

She is working with SEGESVOL, which stands for the General Secretariat of Voluntary Service. This is an Ecuadorian organization founded 12 years ago, which gives technical assistance to other organizations. SEGESVOL, along with another organization known as the Family Fund, identified the need to train women in this field.

One of the more interesting aspects of this project is the varity of funding sources. In addition to the SPA funds, there is money from Partners of the Americas (Kentucy/Quito Committee), the Red Cross, and AID. This was encouraging, for it indicates the growing ability of third-world organizations to locate and obtain outside funding for worthwhile projects. In fact, the SPA contribution is only about 5% of the total project.

The project has received a large amount of publicity from all branches of the media, and there is a great amount of interest from the general public. There also appears to be an excellent possibility that all of the women who are currently in training will find jobs at the end of the course.

The people from SEGESVOL plan to expand this type of training to other cities in Ecuador as well. Because of their history and the amount of time that they have been working together, we see no reason why they should have anything but success.

45. PROJECT TITLE: Improved Cattle Feed

COMMUNITY NAME: Tasinteo

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $816

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 100
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will build a tank to store molasses to increase milk production, and to start a cattle registry so farmers can improve their herds.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: None to date

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: $1,000 ($300 for the land, $400 for the masons, $300 for molasses purchase)

PROBLEMS: Frictions between the two ethnic groups involved.

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, IRP, I, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In Ecuador, as in a number of parts of the developing world, there is a great need for milk and milk products. Most of the cows on the planet, however do not eat as well as cows in the U.S., and so their milk production per cow is usually very low by our standards.

In an effort to improve the milk production, the Cattlemen's Association for Improving Tasinteo has been working with PCV Jose Postel to develop improved feeds for the local dairy cattle.

The main thrust of this project has been the building of a large (6,000 gallon) tank to hold the molasses which will be used to improve the cattle feed. In addition, the Association plans to start a cattle registry to measure weight gain, milk production, and reproduction -- in order to improve the herds by culling the low-producing animals.

One interesting aspect of the program is that it involves two groups who traditionally have not worked together -- Indios (the indigenous Indians) and Mestizos (people of mixed European heritage). This is an ambitious undertaking, since there is a certain amount of bad feeling between the groups.

On the other hand, how will the two groups ever get together unless they start somewhere; and what better place to start than a project which could truly benefit both groups?

The project is just started, so no outcomes are known. The Volunteer involved has extended for another year in order to see the project through to the end. It makes us want to be able to twist the clock into the future to see the outcome; but for now, all we have are hard working people and the chance for a working relationship between old rivals. Stay tuned.

46. PROJECT TITLE: Artesan Training Center

COMMUNITY NAME: Cuatro Esquinas

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $1,890

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 24
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide a source of income for unemployed youth in the area.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The 24 people involved are all making a small amount of money from the project.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: An individual from the community donated the house where the looms are located, and the retail outlet as well.

PROBLEMS: Group still needs help in leadership development. Also, the relationship with the individual who donated the housing appears tenuous. There are also difficulties with the marketing of the products, although these may be alleviated soon.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: SED, I, J, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Cuatro Esquinas (Four Corners) is a small town about 5 kilometers from Otavalo, in the highlands of Ecuador. Weaving has historically been a source of income (and pride) for the people of Otavalo, but some of the skills are starting to be lost.

Last year, a group of young people from Cuatro Esquinas asked PCV Patricia Pianko for assistance in setting up a soccer club. This club has now grown into a weaving cooperative, which makes and sells woven goods in the local market.

SPA funds bought looms, wool and materials for wiring the workshop for electricity. With the tools and supplies, the 24 men and 4 women in the club have now been trained, and have begun production.

In common with a depressing number of small handicraft businesses, the club is experiencing some marketing difficulties. They feel, however, that the main problem is the location of their sales outlet, a fairly isolated store. They plan to open another store on the main highway, in order to improve their sales.

This project has been done in conjunction with two volunteers. The second one, PCV Kurt Garrison, was brought in when the other Volunteer finished her service. Because of distance and other factors, he has not been as heavily involved with the group as was Patricia Pianko.

Given the difficulties with creating a small business in an economically depressed area, we feel that this has been a reasonably successful project. There are still problems of leadership and direction to overcome, but the workers seem motivated, and they have at least a chance of lasting success. The rest lies in their hands.

47. PROJECT TITLE: Agricultural Products Store

COMMUNITY NAME: Pinguili

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $980

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 17
INDIRECTLY: Entire town

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide an inexpensive source of quality agricultural products.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: A store has been built which does provide such a source.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Construction and maintenance valued at $150.

PROBLEMS: Small markup on their prices means a slim profit.

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: SED, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In the rural countryside of Ecuador, it is often difficult to buy products for use on the farm. If they can be found at all, they are often highly overpriced, and may be adulterated or otherwise in bad shape by the time they reach the eventual purchaser.

Last year, some of the farmers in Pinguili came to PCV Lorena Sanchez wanting to start a group to pool money in order to buy agricultural products for their farms. After extensive discussions with the Volunteer, they decided to form a small business with the aim of providing reasonably priced goods for the farmers of the area.

SPA funds were granted to buy the original stock for the store. A system of rotating responsibility was developed where each person in the group takes care of the store for about a month at a time. (Originally there were 23 members, but this fell to a low of 11 at one time. Now that the group is successful, 6 more people have joined.)

The store puts a 5% markup on all of the goods sold. It has acquired a reputation for delivering good, honest merchandise at a price which is lower than the other stores in the area.

The store has been operating for more than a year now, and all proceeds from the store have been reinvested in store inventory. Because of the rotating responsibility system, all of the participants are receiving training in small business practices and skills.

The group now plans to expand store inventory to include basic foodstuffs, and to build their own building and move out of the leased building they occupy now.

People come from other villages to shop in Pinguili, and there is a high sense of pride throughout the community about what they have accomplished. An excellent project.

48. PROJECT TITLE: Small Animal Production Extension Center

COMMUNITY NAME: Rancho Ronald (Santo Domingo/Pinchincha)

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $5,590

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: Could reach hundreds of persons a year.
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Could increase food production and nutrition levels by introducing improved husbandry practices and better breeds of small animals.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Pens for rabbits, guinea pigs, and goats have been built, the stock acquired, and breeding begun.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Transportation, materials, hand labor, land, and one worker.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The raising of small animals in Ecuador is in many ways an industry in its infancy. There is a great need for both information and breeding stock in order to get the population involved in the production process.

Recently, SPA funds were used by PCV Kim Langer in conjunction with "Rancho Ronald", a farm owned by the National 4-F (4-H) Foundation and administered by the Ecuadorian Ministry of Agriculture, to begin a small animal extension project. The funds were used for building pens for rabbits, guinea pigs and goats, for animal feed and veterinary supplies and for breeding stock.

Since this is an extension center, the education aspects of the project are most important. The animals and pens are used in the courses taught at the center, courses about raising and caring for small animals in the Ecuadorian situation. In addition, the animals serve as a nucleus of breeding stock, with their offspring being sold to interested farmers who attend the courses.

Because of the strong institutions supporting it, this project appears to hold potential for both long term durability and broad scale effects. There has been a lot of interest from all over the country, and some four or five people a week come by to find out more about the project. All in all, a project well worth the effort.

49. PROJECT TITLE: Food and Sewing Goods Store

COMMUNITY NAME: Santo Domingo

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $1,800

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: Unknown
INDIRECTLY: 300-400

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide employment for the members of the club, and to provide reasonably priced goods for the community.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Same

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTIONS 4-F club donated the building, and the club members contributed $120.

PROBLEMS: Small profit margins have meant small profits. The business stays afloat, but is not progressing.

EVALUATION: Marginally successful CODING: SED, I, J, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Businesses anywhere in the world are difficult to start. In the developing world, it is even more difficult. In addition to the problems faced by businesses everywhere, there are usually many complications of transportation, communication, capital, and cooperation which make the task much harder.

In mid-1984, SPA funds in Ecuador were used to assist in the startup of a store which is run and owned by the 12 people in the local chapter of the 4-F Club, which is like the 4-H club in the U.S.

The store is still in operation, so in many senses it must be counted as a success; but it has some problems which are worth a look in order to understand why so many small businesses fail.

One of the main problems in this situation is that there is an innate contradiction in trying to run a store as a club: you want to make a profit and yet keep prices low for your members. In the U.S., this is usually addressed by having a membership list, and giving rebates to the members at the end of the year based on the amount that they spent in the store during the year. This has not been done here, and since everyone in the community seems to be a "member", perhaps it cannot be done here. And so they are continually faced with a profit squeeze. They only mark up their products 3% over their costs, and so there's just no money for security or expansion.

In addition, the local Ministry of Agriculture donates the use of a truck to do the shopping runs. Now this is great, but what will happen if the truck is withdrawn? Dependence on this type of assistance is debilitating in the long run, and should be accepted only when it is necessary on a short-time basis.

Finally, one employee of the store absconded with 25% of the SPA funds.

Considering these problems, it is perhaps surprising and a testament to the participants that the store exists at all. It is hoped that some of these problems can be solved by the group, since the project has potential, but at present it is only a qualified success.

50. PROJECT TITLE: Potato Silo

COMMUNITY NAME: Colta

COUNTRY: Ecuador

AMOUNT: $1,810

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 4,750
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: To increase potato production by up to 100%.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Silos have been built in 55 communities, and yields have increased, but it is unclear by how much since the unseasonably bad weather caused by "El Nino" has disrupted farming over the entire area.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor plus approximately 20% of the material costs.

PROBLEMS: Bad, very wet weather and floods

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Despite the fact that potatoes have been a traditional crop in the Andes for many centuries, the traditional way of storing seed potatoes for the next season doesn't work very well. They are usually stored in baskets in the home, and they fall prey there to a variety of rot, fungi, and diseases.

In 1983, about $1,800 in SPA monies was granted to the Colta Evangelic Association to begin a campaign for better potato storage. The money was used to mount a campaign to build outdoor wooden storage houses to keep the potatoes healthy throughout the winter.

The net outcome of the project has been quite impressive -- 62 silos have been built in a total of 55 communities. This amounts to about $30 per silo, a very good use of the funds. The silos have been successful in increasing productivity by 15-20%, due to the increased disease resistance of the potatoes. Potatoes are kept where they are exposed to fresh air and a little light, they develop toxins in their skins which greatly increase disease resistance. In addition, new varieties have been introduced which are greater yielding than the traditional strains.

The project has been strongly supported by the local communities, each of which put up $20 toward the materials and labor involved. The project has also benefitted from the presence of local agricultural extension agents who spoke Quechua, the language of the Indians in the communities. This project is an excellent exmaple of what can happen when the resources of the country, the communities, local agencies, and the SPA funds are all used for a common goal.

TOGO

51. PROJECT TITLE: Women's Weaving Cooperative

COMMUNITY NAME: Dapaong

COUNTRY: Togo

AMOUNT: $4,676

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 17
INDIRECTLY: Families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow the women involved to earn $15-25 per month from the sales of the woven products.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The workshop building which will house the looms has been built, and weaving will begin soon.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor for the construction of the workshop.

PROBLEMS: Marketing may be a problem, as it is now in the parent cooperative.

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: SED, I, J, IRP, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Dapaong is the northernmost large city in Togo, almost up to the border of what was Upper Volta a few years ago but is now Burkina Faso. It is in a hilly, dry section of the country, and is a city of perhaps 20,000 people.

Several years ago, a Catholic priest set up a weaving workshop with some of the women from his parish. In operation for several years now, the workshop produces both cloth and finished items (napkins, shirts, etc.) for sale in the workshop and the local marketplace.

In addition, the workshop had trained some women from a neighboring village to weave, and they had begun to set up a workshop themselves. When an additional village became interested, the coop approached a Volunteer, Margie Peronto, for assistance.

This second village is both further away and poorer than the first village; SPA funds were used to build a small workshop and provide some locally-built looms for the women to work with.

The women from the second village, 17 in all, have now been trained in weaving, and one has been trained to manage the weaving workshop. The looms were set up in the main workshop in Dapaong for the training, and, now that the building is finished, they will soon be moved to the new workshop in the village.

It is very difficult to guess the future of this project. Some women in the area are making their living weaving, but the difficulty, as in so many artesanal businesses, is the market. If an outlet can be found or created, the business will flourish; if not...

Come back at the end of 1986 on this one. Possibilities.

52. PROJECT TITLE: Improved Charcoal Stoves

COMMUNITY NAME: Lome

COUNTRY: Togo

AMOUNT: $3,000

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY:
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Establishment of a small business with 4 employees, spreading of improved stove technology in Togo.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: None

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Theoretically, 40 hours administrative work/month, 60 hours production work/month, tools and transportation.

PROBLEMS: All types. Because all of the people involved have left the country, it is difficult to determine which of the problems led to failure of the project. Monies were spent in ways that were not authorized by the budget (not diverted to peoples pockets, however, just to other business purposes) and the business never got off of the ground.

EVALUATION: Total Failure CODING: SED, EN, MLC

EVALUATOR's REPORT:

In Lome, the captial city of Togo, the main streets are paved. Once off of the main streets, the roadway is either dirt or, nearer the beach, sand.

On a wide, sandy street in Lome, there is a building with some stoves, some tools, and not too much action going on most of the time. This was a SPA project that didn't quite make it.

Both of the Volunteers involved, as well as their supervisor, have left; so piecing the story together is a little difficult. As near as we could figure out, it must have been a case of the silent slide, with none of the people involved really seeing what was going on until it was too late. A major contributing factor must have been the bookkeeping system, which was woefully inadequate for a small business of this type.

The original budget was far from complete and detailed as well, merely spelling out broad categories of expenditures. Then, these categories were not followed at all in the way that the funds ended up being spent. Plus, no one caught the fact that the in-country contribution for each of 6 stovemakers, was three times what a Peace Corps staff person makes. A few people were sleeping on this one, and now there is an empty building on a sandy street, and even the people are gone so not too many lessons can be learned, except to know that the SPA funds are not immune to the development monument syndrome. We all have to stay awake.

53. PROJECT TITLE: Solar Wood Drying Kiln

COMMUNITY NAME: Notse

COUNTRY: Togo

AMOUNT: $6,000

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY:
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will increase the drying time for the wood.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: The dryer has cut drying time from 3 months down to 6 weeks, with further reductions possible. It also gives better quality wood, with less splitting and warping, and it allows drying during the rainy season.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Furnished all transportation for the materials and equipment, plus 1 month's administrative work; 1 1/2 month's mason's work, 1 1/2 months carpenters work, as well as the use of the machinery of the Center for Fabrication.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: EN, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Notse is a town of medium size, about two hours by good paved road from the capital, Lome. It is in an area of rolling hills, which are covered with elephant grass, frequent trees, and occasional teak plantations.

SPA funds were used in Notse. In conjunction with a local woodworking cooperative, which constructed a solar wood-drying kiln, now in daily use.

The idea was originated by a PCV who has since gone home, and has been carried to completion by another Volunteer, Horace Greeley III (known locally as "Three"). The plans were drawn up by the original Volunteer, working with a woman volunteer with a Civil Engineering degree. The cooperative provided money for transportation of materials, as well as all the labor and the use of the wood shop for construction.

The kiln and collector are well designed and built. The kiln itself is a wooden structure about 8 meters by 5 meters, perhaps 4 meters high. The heat is provided by a glass-covered collector about 1 meter high, 12 meters long, and 5 meters wide, with concrete block walls and a bottom of road gravel to collect and store the heat.

The kiln has allowed the drying time for the teak wood used by the cooperative to be cut from 3 months to about three weeks. In addition, the wood produced is of a much higher quality, generally free from the splitting and

warping which are common with the wood which is air-dried outside. The kiln allows the cooperative to continue to dry wood during the rainy season.

The project has generated considerable interest, both among other craftsmen and also at the governmental level. A representative of the Ministry of Water and Forests was slated to pay a call a few days after we saw the project.

As far as is known, this is the first solar wood-dryer in all of Togo. Given how well it works, and the time savings in the wood drying process, it appears to have great potential for replicability both in Togo and worldwide. The cost is somewhat high (about $6,000), but it could be considerably reduced by changing some of the construction techniques used. One nice touch was the use of sawdust from the woodworking shop as insulation for the walls of the kiln. 21 carpenters and 13 apprentices are benefitting from the kiln, and there are large possibilities for use in any country which has forest industries. An interesting, imaginative and valuable use of the SPA funds.

54. PROJECT TITLE: Improved Grain Storage

COMMUNITY NAME: Bugu

COUNTRY: Togo

AMOUNT: $50

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 40
INDIRECTLY: Their families

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Could offset the effects of the famine during the dry season.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Two villages served already, with 3 more on the way. Several people in the villages have utilized the grain stored to feed their families during the time of the famine.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Bricks and thatch for the huts built to protect the granary jugs.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful CODING: F, IRC, W, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Flatlands and some rolling low hills, the far north of Togo is a land of trees and grass now, for the rains are not too long gone. The fields are full of life. But toward the end of the dry season, "le famine", the time of no food, comes to Bugu and all of the other small villages in this section of the country. Grass withers and dies, and "le famine" walks the land.

This is an interesting story of how far $50 and the work of a Volunteer can go. In Bugu, Volunteer Dan Mapel has been working with the villagers to avert the effects of "le famine". He got $50 from SPA funds for improving grain storage. The funds have been used, $10 per village, to pay for cement and a local mason to seal and strengthen the traditional grain storage pots. These are large pots, as high as a person's chest. They are traditionally used to store grains. The village contribution has been to build a round mud brick hut with a thatched roof to protect the grain from rain and to protect the storage jars from damage, theft and abuse.

During harvest time, the farmers sell their cotton and other cash crops, so this is the time when they have some money to spend. It is also the time when the millet is the cheapest. Utilizing a system that is used elsewhere in Arica, the women's group in Bugu, who have built the storage facility, are buying grain now and storing it against "le famine".

Last year was the first year that they tried the system. The eight women in the group each purchased millet and stored it in the jar; each which holds about 1,500 pounds of grain. During "le famine", only four of the women ran out of food. When they ran out, they could borrow food from the store, but they must replace it the next year, 11 measure for 10 used. Since there was more

millet than was needed by the women, some of the men in the village whose families were out of food borrowed millet also, 12 measure to be returned for 10 used. No one went hungry.

This year, the grain has been repaid with the "interest". The head of the women's group stated that they feel that "le famine" will be worse this year, so each member of the group is putting in additional food. In addition, two other villages in the area have gotten the idea and are preparing grain stores of their own. All this was done for $50.

Two villages have now built these storage units, with the Volunteer working with three more now. There are 8 women in each group, 2 villages, easily 5 people in each woman's family; so the direct beneficiaries are 80 people. The cost is 25 cents per person. This doesn't count the ripple effect to the two other villages already or the three where the volunteer is working now.

It's an updated version of the loaves and the fishes, storing food for 80 people through the dry season at a cost of 25 cents each. The smallest and yet one of the most cost-effective grants that we have seen so far.

55. PROJECT TITLE: Three Bridge
56.
57. COMMUNITY NAME: Bassar/Bafilo

COUNTRY: Togo

AMOUNT: $6,715*
$5,648
$9,626

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 40,000
INDIRECTLY: Unknown

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow easy access during all times of the year between Bassar (pop. 25,000) and Bafilo (pop. 15,000) for the purpose of transporting farm produce.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: One bridge is completed, one nearly so, and the third is just started.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Labor, sand gravel, transport of materials.

PROBLEMS: Only the usual construction difficulties of transport and timing.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: F, IRC, SLC (Bridge 1)
F, IRC, SLC (Bridge 2)
F, IRP, SLC (Bridge 3)

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

The farther north that you go in Togo, the dryer the landscape becomes. From tropical jungle, it fades slowly into a hilly countryside of low trees, brush, and short grass. Bassar and Bafilo are in the area where the effects of the drought and general dryness are clearly evident.

The road from Bassar to Bafilo is a good dirt road linking Bassar (about 25,000 people) to Bafilo (about 15,000). It is usable in the dry season by heavy trucks carrying farm produce and dry goods; but in the rainy season only small cars and motorbikes can use the route, because of the three weak wooden bridges which cross streams, along the route.

Working with Volunteer Kirk Soderberg and using SPA funds, the people of the villages along the route and the Prefecture of Bassar have constructed two new concrete bridges along the road, and work is about to begin on the third.

We saw the second bridge just after the new roadway had been poured. It is strong and well constructed, easily able to handle the 10-ton trucks which use the road in the dry season. Kirk has done an excellent job of involving the villages in the work, as well as drawing on the knowledge and resources of the

* For the purposes of preparing the statistical summaries on SPA projects; the Bassar/Bafilo road has been treated as three separate projects. the first two projects are evaluated as successful and the third bridge is "too early to tell."

local governmental organizations. He has been able to get engineering advice and transportation from the local Public Works Department, for example; and the bridge we saw reflected the time, effort, and care which have gone into the project on everyone's part.

Final impact assessment of this project was not possible, since the third bridge remained to be done. Even when completed, the impact will be difficult to measure. However, a large number of people in the two towns will have an all-weather road to take produce to markets and goods back home; so that about 40,000 people will benefit directly or indirectly, making this the SPA project with the broadest impact we have seen.

58. PROJECT TITLE: Community Gardens

COMMUNITY NAME: 7 Communities in Plateaux Region

COUNTRY: Togo

AMOUNT: $2,500

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: varies around 1,000
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will allow the villages to have community market gardens for increased food supply as well as cash income.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: Difficult to measure, as the villagers were reticent about the amounts of food and cash which have come out of their gardens. However, the garden visited was flourishing and the people seemed quite satisfied with the project.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Land, labor, water, some seeds, organic fertilizer.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: F, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In the Plateau Region of Togo, the land is not far enough north to have been severely affected by the drought. The vegetation is fairly lush, with tall grass, brush and trees.

SPA funds have been used for a project involving the creation of seven separate gardens in the Plateau Region. Working with a Volunteer, Alene McMahon, the funds have been used for tools, seeds, fencing and transport. The communities' contributions have been land, labor, and the seeds for the traditional crops.

We visited one garden, about 6 km off on a dirt road from Atakpame. The garden is in a lovely setting, created (with great effort) by the local community hacking and clearing out a space in the middle of some quite dense bush and undergrowth.

In contrast to the other gardens which we have visited, this garden has adequate water. It has gotten rain, and in addition is watered by a ditch from a nearby stream. There was a large stand of tomatoes already bearin green fruit. A new area has recently been cleared as well, and tilled and sown. There was also a small nursery garden, filled with new plants for transplanting. The community had done an impressive amount of work.

Adjacent to the garden, two fish ponds have been constructed by another Volunteer (not using SPA funds). The fish are nearly ready for harvest. The community numbers about 150 people, so the effect of this large garden and the

fish production will have a considerable impact, both on their pocketbooks and on their stomachs. In addition, a cash reserve is being set aside from the garden profits, to pay for future expansion or other needs.

The community estimated that the garden would bring in about $600 this year, a large amount of cash for a village of this size. Are they just saying this to please us? Don't know, but they seemed pleased by what they have made already and their prospects. An encouraging project in many respects. We only visited one of seven; but, if the other gardens are as successful, the project will have a widespread effect.

THAILAND

59. PROJECT TITLE: Mushroom House

COMMUNITY NAME: Rajmunee Rangsarit School

COUNTRY: Thailand

AMOUNT: $338

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: none to date
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: All 726 students will have the opportunity to learn the techniques and skills of mushroom farming.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: None to date

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: The students contributed all the labor, and the school put up $90 in cash.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, SLC

EVALUATOR's REPORT:

Why grow mushrooms, you may ask? The answer is simple -- money. In Thailand, there is a very good market for mushrooms. In addition, they can be grown with relatively simple equipment and technology, and the crop matures very fast.

Because of these possibilities, PCV Sally Olsonoski has been working with the Rajmunee Rangsarit School to begin setting up mushroom cultivation as a small enterprise. They are renovating an existing building for the actual growing and with the monsoon winds and the heavy local rainfall, they figure that they can grow mushrooms year round. In addition to growing the mushrooms at school, each of the students will be trained and given the opportunity to grow the mushrooms at home, using spores supplied by the school.

The numbers look good. Just from selling the spore culture, the school could make up to $7,000 per year. Now this is an optomistic prediction, but even a quarter of that would represent a large amount of money for the school. In addition, the students and their families who were growing the mushrooms from the spores will have a chance to make good money as well. In fact, some care may have to be exercised in order not to flood the local market.

Any profits made will be divided in three -- one third for maintenance of the program, one third for scholarships for students, one third for educational field trips and for new programs.

This is another one of those projects where it sure looks like it will take off and go but we won't know for a while.

PROJECT TITLE: Village Water Supply

COMMUNITY NAME: Thung Kha

COUNTRY: Thailand

AMOUNT: $3,178

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 83 families
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will provide a clean, reliable water source for both domestic and agricultural use.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: 83 families in 2 villages have piped water to their houses.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: $3,318 cash plus 600 person-days of labor. The Thai government also gave $2,136 to the project.

PROBLEMS: None

EVALUATION: Very successful

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

You know, we take water pretty much for granted. We walk into any restaurant, hotel, or home in the U.S. and we just assume that we can drink the water with no problems. In most of the world, however, this would be an invitation to any one of number of unpleasant illnesses and parasites.

As a general indicator of the purity of water, the "coliform count" is often used. This is a count of the number of intestinal bacteria that are found in a certain amount of water. In Thung Kha, the water was so bad that they couldn't even count on the number of bacteria in the water. Bad.

So the village got together with PCV Scott Torpie, got a grant of SPA funds, and installed a village water system, including an elevated tank to provide presure for distribution. This project has been extremely successful from start to finish. The goals, which were all achieved, were to provide 70 liters per person per day of clean water and to accomodate the system for an eventual 30% increase in capacity.

Each home has a meter to measure the amount of water used, and the price is determined by consumption. In addition to the changes in the sanitation, the villagers are also able to pursue small scale agriculture and animal husbandry. (Plants and animals need water also!) This is a potential source of a considerable income for the farmers, and it has all been made possible by water.

One very interesting aspect of the project is the local and governmental support it has gotten. The project first brought water to 65 homes. The other 18 homes in the village which were not yet included raised about $1,000 to get

themselves hooked up to the system, which is now supplying all 83 homes. In addition, the idea has spread to schools and other communities. Now that the project idea has been proven, the Thai government has agreed to fund similar projects in other communities, with the villages putting up 30% of the cost and the government, 70%. A deservedly good outcome for a fine piece of work.

61. PROJECT TITLE: Chicken Crossbreeding

COMMUNITY NAME: Kuhatai

COUNTRY: Thailand

AMOUNT: $182

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: None to date
INDIRECTLY:

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Will improve the breed of chickens raised in the area and increase the income potential of each flock.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: None to date

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: All labor and materials for chicken house plus purchase of feed.

PROBLEMS: Difficulty in gathering Rhode Island Reds to breed them.

EVALUATION: Too early to tell CODING: F, I, IRP, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

Chickens and eggs form one of the protein sources most widely used in the developing world. These chickens, however, are not what most people think of when they think chickens -- Frank Perdue impressed by the small, wiry birdlets that pass for chickens in most parts of the planet.

Working with local 4-H clubs in two villages, PCV Lucy Joyce and club members are working on improving the breed of chickens grown by the villagers. The main problem with the country chickens is that they are small, and also that they have a fairly low survival rate. So the SPA monies have been used in part to purchase some Rhode Island Reds to crossbreed with the local birds, to try to improve their production and their survival.

Now this project has just begun, so there is no outcome data yet. According to the people in the project, however, there is a good chance for the people to increase the number of chicks that can be sold from 2 to 10 per hen. If this occurs, then each hen will bring in about $100 per year more than the country hens, a significant difference.

We fear that these figures are optimistic, however, for a very curious reason. In contrast to the situation with other domestic animals, many commercially valuable breeds of chickens (Leghorns, Rhode Island Reds, etc) do not breed true. The chicks can turn out quite inferior to the parent stock. Only what is called the "grandparent stock" breeds true, and this stock is never sold by the companies that own it. The grandparent stock is kept in lockups that make Fort Knox look wide open, and never, never released to the market.

None of this is to say that the project will improve the breed of chickens in Thailand, since they are "country birds" and most any cross breeding might help. However, it may not help as much as is hoped.

62. PROJECT TITLE: Bicycle Powered Pump

COMMUNITY NAME: Ban Saiwai

COUNTRY: Thailand

AMOUNT: $364

NUMBER OF PERSONS SERVED DIRECTLY: 1
INDIRECTLY: Family

IMPACT -- POTENTIAL: Has the possibility of easing the watering burden by an unknown amount wherever it is used.

IMPACT -- REALIZED: One pump is being used now, and when it is purchased by the user, the funds will be released to start the cycle again.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND CONTRIBUTION: Final user has to pay back the price of the pump. District Agricultural Office gave $45 worth of transportation costs.

PROBLEMS: Plans changed in midstream.

EVALUATION: Successful CODING: EN, SED, I, IRC, SLC

EVALUATOR'S REPORT:

In most places in the world, in some diabolical permutation of Murphy's Law, the water always seems to be downhill from where it is needed. Different cultures have solved this in a myriad of ways, some simple, some complex. Often the basic rope and bucket is the method of choice, because it's cheap. It's also slow.

In an effort to speed this process up and allow the irrigation of more land, the 4-H club and PCV Lucy Joyce used SPA funds to test and use a bicycle powered pump for irrigation.

The project has gone through one incarnation and is different now than the original plan. Originally, the club thought that it would buy the pump when it was ready, and use working funds available for another pump, to demonstrate and sell.

For various reasons this has not worked out. However, one of the boys in the club became very interested in the project, and has been using the pump to water his own land. He now plans to buy the pump. With this money, the club plans to buy another pump for demonstration and sale.

The boy who is using the pump reports that he can water his garden in about 1/3 of the time that it takes him to water using the rope and bucket method. He gets one of the little kids to hold the garden end of the hose, and he starts pedaling. Boring, but more effective in moving the amount of water needed. He feels that the quality of the watering is improved as well, since the water can be spread around more evenly and placed exactly where it is needed.

So, despite changes in plans, the project goes on and has been successful. A good example of adaptation to changing circumstances.

D. CONCLUSIONS

After observing these SPA projects in the field and reviewing the data collected regarding them, the following conclusions and observations are indicated.

1. SPA projects have a very high success rate. Forty-three of sixty-two projects were rated as successful. Only five of sixty-two projects were evaluated as unsuccessful -- with the others (14) being "too early to tell." Of those that were not "too early to tell" (48) and whose success or failure was evaluated, 89.6% were judged to be a success (see Table 1).

As the Africa evaluation team wrote when they returned to the United States:

> This is one of the most successful programs that either of us have ever seen, in terms of the general impact which the relatively small amount of funds have achieved. We feel that this is due to the volunteers involved, who have generally handled the issues and the funds with great care. We have seen a wide diversity of types of projects funded by SPA, both in terms of project size and type, in the four countries we visited.
>
> The projects are perceived by the communities, local groups, and villages involved as being very successful. That is to say, water comes from the wells, food from the gardens, the buildings for the dispensaries have been built, the money has gone where it should without lining anyone's pockets, and most everyone is satisfied, on the local level, that the projects have done what they set out to do.

2. It seems that projects succeed or fail regardless of their size. Numerous efforts were made to determine whether very small grants ($500 or under) had a greater success rate than larger projects. This may be the case to a small but not very convincing degree. Of the twelve projects under $500 reviewed in the evaluation, 42% were rated very successful; 25% as successful and 8% as marginal -- a total of 75%. Projects in the $500 to $1,000 range were also successful in 75% of the cases. In the $1,000 to $2,500 range, project success occurred at a rate of 72%. Only in projects over $2,500 did the success rate drop somewhat, to 62% (see Table 2).

3. There is a very clear correlation, however between project success and the extent of community participation in a SPA project. In those projects judged to be a "very successful", 73% had the benefit of substantial community participation. Sixty-three percent of "successful projects" also had substantial community participation. In "Marginally successful" or unsuccessful projects, there was substantial community participation in only 40% of the cases (see Table 3).

4. This seems to be especially true of cash contributions. There is a broad difference in the type of contributions which communities supply. As the community's commitment to the project increases, so does its participation. The range of contribution to a project generally goes from; labor, use of a building, materials, land and finally to cash. If a poor community is willing to put cash up front, it is a good indication that it believes the project will work, and that it is willing to contribute the extra effort to ensure that its hard earned savings are not lost. Cash contributions are not easy to make for poor communities and they are not -- and should not -- be required. However, the fact that a community is prepared to provide cash to a project says a great deal. Fifty percent of the projects rated as very successful had cash contributions. Only one of five marginally successful projects -- and, again, one of the unsuccessful projects had cash contributions.

Comments from the evaluators constantly re-enforced the importance of community participation. One evaluator was distressed to hear volunteers talk of "my" projects. Another wrote:

> Every bit of information I gathered pointed to the fact that the most important factor in the success of a project was the amount of community involvement throughout the entire project from proposed writing through implementation.

The Africa evaluation team said it just as strongly:

> The less the volunteers do, the more the group does, the stronger the group becomes. In this regard, we suggest that the volunteer involve someone from the group in every stage of the process. It is particularly important for the volunteer to push very strongly for someone in the group to fill out the forms, or, if no one in the group can write, for the group to find someone who can. As long as we hold the forms, we hold the secrets and the mystery; but if the group can do the writing for itself, there is no limit to what they can accomplish. Also, someone from the group should be involved in the purchasing of the materials, so that if replacements or repairs are needed, the group knows where they can be found.
>
> The size of the community contribution to the project is an excellent indication of their interest level. An appropriate size for this contribution seems to be 25%, and we suggest that this be made a flexible guideline. Among other effects, this will limit the size of the project to a size that the community can afford, and will tend to discourage projects that are not truly supported by the community in general. If the community is truly poor and very interested, consider allowing them to make the community contributions at the end of the project, out of the profits generated.

A final statistic illustrates the importance of community involvement very well. Of the nineteen SPA projects evaluated which saw cash contributions to the project from the community, eleven were very successful; two were successful and one was marginally successful. Only one was rated unsuccessful and four were judged to be "too early to tell". Clearly the commitment on the part of the community of some cash to the project enhances the chances of ultimate success.

5. Women figure as chief protagonists and beneficiaries in a relatively high number of projects. 18. They benefit as part of the overall community in practically all projects but 29% of the cases evaluated could actually be considered "women in development projects".

6. Six projects reviewed in the evaluation would have to be considered outside the SPA guidelines. While five of these six projects were successful

ones (one was "too early to tell"), it is important that OTAPS discourage actively the use of SPA funds in sectors for which it is not intended or work to include those sectors which the field feels should be included.

It is not conducive to good relations with the field -- nor is it good management -- to have guidelines which are ignored.

7. Several SPA projects experiencing problems could have benefitted from technical advice and review. There were cases of the wrong nets; wrong locations for fish ponds, poor choice of breeds and bad designs for pumps being chosen. The Peace Corps staff in each country must assure that they get the best possible technical assistance for volunteers whether it be locally, at AID, other development institutions or through SPA/TA.

8. Three of the five unsuccessful projects were in the Small Enterprise Development Sector. While fifteen of the twenty-one projects in this sector (71%) are successful, the lower success rate among these projects illustrates what was repeated several times in the evaluators' reports -- the difficulty factor. It is never easy to start a new business, especially in a poor community in a developing country; and the task should never be taken lightly but re-enforced with the best possible technical assistance in all aspects of planning and running a business.

9. The high number of "too early to tell" evaluations -- even in the case of completed projects, illustrates the need for some kind of simple follow-up system to track success and failure of projects even after the volunteer has left the community.

10. A high preponderance of projects are in the Food Production area. A total of thirty-four focused principally on agriculture. Of these twenty-two were considered to be successful. There were ten "too early to tell", giving a success rate of 92% for food productions projects.

V. SMALL PROJECT ASSISTANCE/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SPA/TA)

Page

A. Types of SPA/TA 245

1. Program Consultation. 245
2. In-Service Training 247
3. Other Assistance. 248

B. SPA/TA Activity Criteria. 249

C. SPA/TA Activity Approval Process. 249

D. SPA/TA Evaluation Methodology 251

E. Evaluation of General Use of SPA/TA Funds By Peace Corps Country Directors and Their Staffs. 252

1. Relationship Between SPA/TA and the Generation of SPA Projects. 252
2. Impact on Peace Corps Programs. 252
   (a) New Programs. 253
   (b) On-Going Programs 253
3. Programming and Training Conferences. 255
   (a) Usefulness to SPA Administration. . . . 256
   (b) Overall Staff Performance 256
4. Origin of SPA/TA Requedsts. 257
5. Awareness of the SPA/TA as a Funding Source for Technical Assistance. 258
6. Use of SPA/TA Funds for Hiring Local Experts. . . 258
7. Questions of Timing 258
8. Timeliness of OTAPS Response. 259
9. Is the SPA/TA Worth the Staff Effort? 260
10. Problems and Recommendations Perceived by PC/Staff. 260

F. Evaluation of Individual SPA/TA Activities by Local Peace Corps Field Staff 262

1. Summary of SPA/TA Activity Evaluation 264
2. SPA/TA Projects 265

G. Conclusions and Recommendations of Creative Associates/ Benchmarks, Inc. 287

V. SMALL PROJECT ASSISTANCE/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (SPA/TA)

The SPA/TA PASA was created by AID and Peace Corps in conjunction with the SPA program and in order to ensure that the maximum benefit be derived from the SPA fund in the support of small, village-based projects. The AID Office of Rural and Institutional Development, Science and Technology Bureau (S&T/RD), provided $395,000 to the Peace Corps' Office of Training and Program Support (OTAPS), for the delivery of programming and technical assistance in support of the SPA program in the thirty-four participating countries. The purpose of this assistance was to stimulate and support the development of small projects in the field.

A. TYPES OF SPA/TA

Technical assistance is provided to the field in three ways: through program consultations, through the provision of in-service training, and through other forms of assistance including regional programming conferences. All three types are reviewed in this evaluation.

1. Program Consultation

By the end of fiscal year 1984, 20 program consultations had been provided in 17 different countries. They are described in short activity descriptions prepared by Creative Associates/Benchmarks, Inc. as part of this evaluation (see Appendix A). The asterisk next to the projects in the list below indicate that information was received on these projects as part of the evaluation.

Country	Program Area	Cost of Assistance
Benin	Agriculture	$ 9,488
Burkina Faso	*Fish Culture	3,500
	*Cookstoves	23,934

Country	Program Area	Cost of Assistance
Cameroon	*Freshwater Capture Fisheries	4,058
Costa Rica	*Aquaculture	4,433
	*Agro-Forestry	2,748
Ecuador	*Fish Culture	2,099
Ghana	Beekeeping	6,814
Guatemala	*Bio-Energy	1,985
Honduras	*Small Enterprise Development	6,623
Kenya	Cooperatives	5,383
Lesotho	Dam Construction	9,887
Liberia	*Fish Culture	2,000
Malawi	SPA Program Management	Not reported
Mali	Aquaculture/Freshwater Capture Fisheries	5,256
	Water Resources Management	8,332
Morocco	Freshwater Capture Fisheries	4,124
Niger	*Fish Culture	3,648
Sierra Leone	Marine Fisheries	5,500
Tunisia	Fisheries	4,709

Projects consultations involve the services of technical consultants or Sector Specialists from OTAPS, who are sent to the field to assist Peace Corps staff overseas -- as well as volunteers -- in the selection of community projects. As will be discussed in this section of the report, the consultancies that have occurred have usually been related to broader Peace Corps' efforts as well as the development or support of SPA projects.

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* Projects reviewed in this report

2. In-Service Training

At the end of FY'84, SPA/TA funds had financed twenty-four In-Service Training programs (ISTs) held in 17 countries.* Seven countries have made use of both program consultations and technical trainers. Countries using SPA/TA funds for ISTs were the following:

Country	In-Service Training Technical Area	Amount
Belize	**Food Preservation	$ 8,646
Cameroon	**Agriculture Marketing	6,250
Dominican Republic	Integrated Rural Development	13,500
	Agro-Forestry	1,500
	Agro-Forestry	1,500
Ecuador	**Small Enterprise Development	1,000
	**Beekeeping	800
Guatemala	**Beekeeping	800
Haiti	**Agro-Forestry (IST IN Dominican Republic)	200
Honduras	**Gardening	9,396
	**Pest Control	9,700
Jamaica	**Cookstoves	2,550
	**Renewable Energy Technologies	16,808
Kenya	Crop Drying	13,000
Lesotho	Dam Construction	16,884
Mali	Water Resources Management	12,317
Nepal	**Small Animal Husbandry	3,700
Paraguay	Food Preservation	13,807
	Beekeeping	4,000
	Pest Control (IST in Honduras)	1,200
Philippines	Agricultural Marketing	4,272

* Funds went for trainers, materials, translators, logistics coordinators, and room and board.

** Projects reviewed in this report.

Country	Technical Area	Amount
Togo	Wood Stoves	$ 1,487
Western Samoa	Vegetable Gardening	7,670
Yemen	**Photovoltaic Workshop	26,674

ISTs are held periodically to upgrade the technical skills of volunteers. In most countries a general IST is given to all volunteers once they have been in the country between six to ten months. At this time, volunteers usually receive instruction in language, cross-cultural aspects of their service, as well as technical subjects. In some cases, the SPA/TA ISTs concentrate solely on technical matters. SPA/TA funds have been used to provide support for both technical trainers and participant costs. In many cases, ISTs include not only volunteers but also the volunteer's host country counterparts. Regular Peace Corps funds may not be used for the training of host country nationals. Often by this time in a volunteer's service a good working relationship has been developed between the volunteer and the counterpart; and it is an ideal time to attend a training together. Fifteen ISTs are evaluated in this report.

3. Other Assistance

In addition to the program consultations and in-service training, the SPA/TA PASA has funded other activities in support of the SPA program. Three Regional Conferences were held in FY'83 (Quito, Ecuador, Manila, Philippines and Mbabane, Swaziland). They were attended by APCDs and SPA Coordinators from each of the three Regions. SPA/TA funds have been used to send volunteers to technical conferences sponsored by other agencies involved in international

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** Deed

development work, and to SPA/TA training programs held in other countries. Funds were used to support the participation of the OTAPS Fisheries Sector Specialist, two consultants and two APCDs at a Regional Fisheries Programming Conference held in Gabon. SPA/TA funds were also used to provide a local business and marketing consultant ($8,283) and diesel repair materials ($8,000) in Morocco and for small enterprise training materials in Senegal ($6,700).

B. SPA/TA ACTIVITY CRITERIA

An SPA/TA request may originate from Peace Corps field staff (at the suggestion of APCDs, volunteers, community members, or the Country Director), the staff at Peace Corps/Washington, or the AID Office of Rural and Institutional Development.

The funding of SPA/TA activities has followed the basic criteria which governs the approval of SPA projects. Activities must be geared to support efforts in the areas of food, energy, competitive enterprise development, and/or income-generating activities.

C. SPA/TA ACTIVITY APPROVAL PROCESS

Requests from the field are submitted to the SPA Coordinator at OTAPS. Requests are reviewed once a quarter, by an Advisory Group Committee comprised of sector specialists from OTAPS and Programming and Training Officers from the Peace Corps regions. The Committee approves approximately $400,000 per year for SPA/TA.

The following criteria are taken into consideration when grants are considered by the Committee.

1. The need for TA must be welldescribed.
2. Must be relevant to the SPA program.

3. The Level of Previous Assistance to the Requesting Country.

4. Regional Distribution of TA assistance.

5. In-Country Support and Contribution of TA assistance.

The SPA/TA Advisory Group Committee prides itself on its ability to respond quickly to country requests. It sees itself as existing to respond to those technical assistance needs which were not anticipated either in the country management plan or in the OTAPS annual projections of TA needs. As one can see from the subsequent evaluation sheets, OTAPS and the Committee have been successful overall in achieving this deal. A few Peace Corps Country Directors would like OTAPS to be even more responsive, flexible, unplanned and quick.

The evaluators observed the preceedings of one SPA/TA Advisory Group Committee meeting.

While the SPA/TA activities are highly successful in the field (see following section), there are several steps which could be taken to improve the deliberative process of the Committee.

First, it was not apparent that the members of the Advisory Group had come to the meeting prepared to make decisions or recommendations regarding SPA/TA. Whether they had not received the material in time or had just not read it was not clear, but their participation in the meeting was not very active. Secondly, it did not seem that the Committee felt it had any real power or that it could recommend strongly against projects if it so decided. Thirdly, there was confusion about the length of the meeting. Some had not scheduled sufficient time for it. Lastly, the committee seemed to be overly representative of OTAPS since all OTAPS sector specialists are members.

The Advisory Group could be an important way of assuring the SPA/TA funds are used with the greatest effectiveness. The Group should have a stable membership which is well prepared for each meeting and which participants actively in approving or disapproving requests for SPA/TA funds.

D. SPA/TA EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

One component of the interviews conducted by the survey team, in each of the eight countries, visited, was devoted to SPA/TA. A four question section of the Volunteer Questionnaire was directed towards the topic of the SPA/TA. Included in the survey for all Peace Corps staff members, was an eighteen question section, dealing exclusively with the SPA/TA PASA.

Upon the return to Washington of the survey teams, it was decided that the responses received to the SPA/TA section of the questionnaire did not provide sufficient data from which to draw conclusions.

Usually, neither the volunteers nor the staff were sufficiently knowledgeable about the TA activity to comment on it. Creative Associates/ Benchmarks worked with the SPA Coordinator at the Peace Corps and developed an additional survey instrument which was sent to all Peace Corps posts which had received SPA/TA assistance. The survey instruments consisted of a two-page cover letter (see Appendix H) sent to the Peace Corps Director (PCD) in every country where a SPA/TA activity had been completed (28 countries). PCDs were requested to complete an eleven question form dealing with all SPA/TA activities in their country (with input from their APCDs and other staff members, see Appendix H.) In addition, an eight question form covering each individual SPA/TA activity in the 28 countries was sent to each post (see Appendix H) to be filled out by the APCD most familiar with the activity. Responses from 13 countries, representing all three regions, were received. Twelve Peace Corps Director forms were completed and evaluations were received of 22 SPA/TA individual activities. Thus the sampling represented in the information below is 43% (12 of 28) of the Peace Corps Directors involved and 50% (22 of 44) of the total SPA/TA activities inquired about.

E. EVALUATION OF GENERAL USE OF SPA/TA FUNDS BY PEACE CORPS COUNTRY DIRECTORS AND THEIR STAFFS

Peace Corps Country Directors were encouraged to review the SPA/TA activities carried out in their country with the assistance of their staffs. Their comments dealt with basic areas of interest and concern. These areas and the PCD's views are described below.

1. Relationship Between SPA/TA and the Generation of SPA Project

In half of the countries where SPA/TA consultations have taken place, new SPA projects were generated. An impressive variety of projects has resulted, including: a tilapia production station; three other fishculture related projects; a tree nursery; a community based agroforestry project; the construction of special bee hives for the Africanized bee (in Central America); 4-H club projects; an artesan products export project; a bakery; a revolving loan fund; a project to improve meals in a hospital; and five projects which used photovoltaic energy for lighting, irrigation, potable water, and sanitation.

There were also indirect benefits for SPA projects mentioned. In one country, concepts from a consultancy on integrated pest management were incorporated into several other agriculture projects. In another country, information gained about fishculture was used to make decisions about SPA projects.

2. Impact on Peace Corps Programs

Seventy-five percent of the PCDs said that the activities conducted under the SPA/TA had an effect on new programming trends in their country. All but one PCD stated that the SPA/TA had been useful to ongoing program management in

their country. None of the PCDs cited any negative effects of the SPA/TA activities either on new program initiatives, or on their ongoing activities.

a. New Programs

In three countries, new programs in fisheries have been begun as a result of the technical assistance. These have included projects in both inland and marine fisheries. In one country the consultant recommended that the fisheries program be reduced in size. He facilitated an agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Peace Corps which made the scale of the program more reasonable and manageable.

A third of the PCDs reported new program initiatives in the area of Small Enterprise Development (SED) as a result of SPA/TA. These have included: the promotion of crafts sales by artisans, a revolving loan program, and an agricultural marketing project. In one country SED Is now a component in six additional programs due to SPA/TA.

In Yemen three PCVs will be assigned to 24 electrification projects developed as a consequence of SPA technical assistance. The AID Mission in the country has agreed in principle to fund the projects.

In Haiti consultations have been especially useful to this country's new Peace Corps program. In the words of the Peace Corps Director:

> The two projects -- community agroforestry and marine fisheries -- are the first programming initiatives undertaken by Peace Corps/Haiti. They are the most important programming activities in Peace Corps/Haiti's short history and are both made possible by the SPA/TA.

b. On-going Programs

SPA/TA has had a beneficial effect on programs already in place. In Costa Rica, a SPA/TA consultancy is credited with being useful as a tool in evaluation of ongoing efforts:

> Peace Corps/Costa Rica has only had two visits from SPA/TA consultants. Both of these visits were extremely useful in helping Peace Corps/Costa Rica to re-evaluate and refocus ongoing programs.

Another PCD reinforced this opinion:

> The results (of the SPA/TA activity) were beneficial in reevaluating our involvement in this program area.

Several PCDs repeatedly emphasized the need for more of this technical support. With the use of SPA funds, volunteers are now becoming more and more involved in new technical projects. Often the technical skills required are ones that the volunteer may not possess, or for which he or she received no training. In Yemen, Peace Corps volunteer engineers learned, via a SPA/TA activity, about a new photovoltaic water pump which they are now planning to put to use. As stated by one PCD: "With increasing technical demands in our overall program, SPA/TA provides an essential and agile resource."

Among other benefits to ongoing programs are improved relationships with local government officials. This results from joint workshops and training programs with host country counterparts which are supported through SPA/TA. Three out of four PCDs characterized the inclusion of host country nationals in training events as being very important. The comments of the following three PCDs reflects the responses received:

> It is presently one of the few avenues of technical training Peace Corps/Jamaica can offer its PCVs and host country counterparts/colleagues (who otherwise wouldn't be eligible for, nor could afford such technical training).

> Through use of the SPA/TA funds we can bring counterparts to IST which we find to be of invaluable assistance. We have found that not only is the technical competence of both the counterpart and the PCV enhanced but also their interpersonal relationship is greatly improved.

> Very Important. We always like to include HCNs in our technical ISTs as they provide the very necessary Jamaican perspective and reality. It increases our credibility with Host Country Agencies and allows us to realize Peace Corps' main objective, i.e., transfer of skills to host country nationals.

SPA/TA activities are useful to good relationships with the host country agencies in another way, namely they provide a means of responding to requests of the government. By including host country individuals in technical training opportunities and responding to their requests, the visibility and credibility of the Peace Corps is enhanced.

The effect that a SPA/TA training event has on a Peace Corps program does not end when the consultant leaves the country. A seminar given in the Cameroons in 1983 was used as a prototype to train 19 additional volunteers the following year (without the need for another SPA/TA consultant).

Summing up, one PCD described the usefulness of the SPA activity by saying: "Any activity which adds to the capability of volunteers to contribute to the communities in which they serve is useful." Another commented on the results of a SPA/TA consultancy in his country as follows:

> Our morale among the fisheries volunteers has increased. They see a much more concentrated, planned and progammed sector. They have a feeling that there is a true goal in mind.
>
> The Government is more serious about supporting the volunteers. They realize that Peace Corps is serious and dedicated to income generating and providing more protein through the fisheries program.
>
> Production by the fisheries volunteers has increased. They are able to work more closely together to assist each other when required.

3. Programming and Training Conferences

SPA/TA funds were used to provide support for three programming and training conferences during 1983. In January, one was held for the Inter-America Region in Quito, Ecuador: In March, one was held for the Africa Region in Mbabane, Swaziland: and in May for the NANEAP Region in Manila. Country Directors were asked how useful these conferences had been to their administration of the SPA program and their staff's overall performance.

a. Usefulness of SPA Administration

Fifty percent of the Directors said that the Regional Conferences were useful, in this regard and that, as a result of having a member of their staff attend, procedures in their countries had been changed and improved for the administration of SPA funds. The sharing of experiences in administering the SPA program was a benefit derived from the conferences. Also, staff members appreciated meeting OTAPS staff members, exchanging ideas, and learning more about the SPA.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents said that their staff members were not able to gain information which improved their administration of the SPA program, since they had already arrived at efficient and successful means of handling it. One participant added that, by sharing his country's experience with other countries and receiving their feedback, he was able to validate that his staff was managing the SPA fund very well.

Of the remaining respondents, only one felt that the conference was not helpful to SPA administration (although it was useful in other ways). The others did not have staff members present in the conferences.

b. Overall Staff Performance

Country Directors were especially emphatic about the benefit of exchanging information with other country teams at training conferences. Below are some representative comments:

> The conference was very useful overall in terms of programming and training. It was extremely valuable to meet our colleagues from other countries, to hear about their programs, and to share experiences. There were many opportunities, structured and informal, for this type of exchange.
>
> Most definitely, as has been stated elsewhere, the opportunity to meet and exchange information with the collective field and Washington Peace Corps family is invaluable. Comparing techniques, experiences, and policy perspectives should be done on a regular basis.

> Such conferences are the most effective and inexpensive tool for promoting exchange of information and ideas between Washington and field staff, and between staff of the various countries represented.

The opportunity to exchange information (particularly between field staff members from different countries), is seen as a most effective means of improving the skills of staff members. Participants in the conferences came away with ideas for improving current programs and for launching new ones. One Country Director recommended that subregional conferences might be even more beneficial. Another requested sector specific conferences in the future. There was no doubt that this use if SPA/TA funds is highly valued by Peace Corps field staff.

4. Origin of SPA/TA Requests

Responses to the question on how SPA/TA requests originate could be divided into four categories, each of which was answered by exactly 25% of the PCDs responding to the question:

1. The requests were made by staff members utilizing the input of volunteers and host country nations.
2. The decision to request assistance was made by the Director.
3. Consultancy services were offered to the field by OTAPS.
4. There was no formalized procedure, since there had not been much experience with the use of SPA/TA funds.

Confusion about the proper system for making requests was expressed a number of times by different PCDs. However, since all of the Directors .pa responding to the questionnaire had experience with at least one SPA/TA in their country (and often two or three separate SPA/TA activities). Apparently a means to tap the funds was found in each case. Nonetheless, there is a need for more frequent and explicit tions to the field on the availability of SPA/TA funds.

5. Awareness of the SPA/TA PASA as a Funding Source for Technical Assistance

All of the Peace Corps Directors (PCDs) interviewed were aware of the fact that the SPA/TA PASA had made the technical assistance consultations possible, although there was some confusion in a few cases. In one country, the SPA/TA activity in question preceeded the initiation of the SPA program in that country, so the connection with the SPA program in general was not evident. The PCDs in two African countries did not realize beforehand that a trip made to their countries by the OTAPS Fisheries Sector Specialist was an SPA/TA sponsored activity.

6. Use of SPA/TA Funds for Hiring Local Experts

All of the PCDs were aware that SPA/TA funds could be used to hire local and regional experts. Several had just recently been made aware of this possibility (after international experts had already visited their countries). Twenty-five percent were unclear about how to identify local or regional experts and requested clarification from OTAPS on this matter. Also further guidelines and information was requested from OTAPS concerning aspects of the use of consultants. Directors asked whether SPA/TA activities were limited strictly to the four major sector areas of the SPA. Also, they wanted to know which technical consultants were available for use in which regions.

Beyond the general need for clarification of these matters, however, the Directors had few questions. One can only conclude that the potential of using the SPA/TA resources for the meeting of the technical needs locally, is not yet fully appreciated or understood.

7. Questions of Timing

SPA/TA funds, like SPA grants to communities, are designed to allow for quick response to the need for technical assistance. The present system

requires that countries make requests for technical assistance one quarter in advance of the proposed implementation date. Country Directors were asked to comment on the importance of this quick response mechanism.

The strongest response to this question came from a PCD who thought that a three month advance notice was too long of a time to wait for approval and funding of a SPA/TA activity. He stated:

> In our view, having to make requests one quarter in advance is not "quick response". Nor, is it reasonable to expect needs to arise on a regular quarterly schedule. It should be remembered that many requests will arise out of the activities of volunteers already in their second year of service, which is to say they may have insufficient time left to implement anything which takes three months or more to set up. TA should be set up in such a way that requests can be received at any time, processed and met on a truly rapid basis, say 30 days, at least in many cases.

All of the other PCDs (except three who had no comment on the question) expressed the views that "quick response" to technical assistance requests was, "important", "necesary", "seemed to work very well", and was "appreciated". The short tenure of both volunteers and staff members in the country where they serve was given as a reason for needing a quick response to technical assistance requests. Another reason mentioned was that, with changing host country Ministery priorities, a technical assistance program must be carried out quickly, before other priorities over-shadow the current appreciation of the need.

8. <u>Timeliness of OTAPS Response</u>

Seventy-five percent of the Country Directors were very satisfied with the timeliness and quality of response provided by OTAPS on the SPA/TA program. One PCD went so far as to say that he wished that "every office in PC/W responded so quickly". Others felt that they did not have enough experience to make a valid comment on the question, or that there was room for improvement. The slow

response time from two consultants was cited as a weakness by a PCD in a country where three SPA/TA activities had been completed. One other difficulty mentioned was that one final report from a consultant at OTAPS took a very long time to complete. This was blamed on a lack of secretarial support in the OTAPS office.

9. Is SPA/TA Worth the Staff Effort?

One PCD gave a "qualified yes" to this question, stating:

> The activities which have been carried out here have probably not produced results commensurate with the costs thereof, but we feel that properly organized and focused activities could be very valuable indeed, and worth whatever administrative responsibilities are required.

All other PCDs stated unequivocally that the results of SPA/TA activities justified the additional staff effort. One PCD said: "A tremendous effort was involved in mounting the two-week workshops. We do feel the efforts wre justified."

10. Problems and Recommendations Perceived by PC/Staff

In three countries, the PCDs said that they had no problems with the SPA/TA consultancies and that they were satisfied with their professionalism and competence. In others, problems did arise.

In one country the consultant was provided with country specific information prior to his/her arrival; but, during the course of the seminar, the information given was never adapted to the local environment. This points up the most frequently mentioned need to improve the program: better communications between the field staff, OTAPS, and the technical consultants before the SPA/TA activity begins.

Better communications between all parties involved in conducting an SPA/TA activity was mentioned by over 50% of the Peace Corps Directors as the best means of improving the program. The comments of two PCDs capture the sense of these observations and are worth repeating here in full:

> Consultants, as technical resources, or as trainers can be most useful when they meet needs identified at the community level, and when their activities are specifically designed to meet those needs. Prepackaged programs often miss the mark. Further, in order to take full advantage of the services offered, field staff must have done considerable preparatory work, and must ensure that there is some project framework into which the consultants' inputs fit. There must also be follow-up for a considerable period to ensure that the inputs are being utilized, and project growth encouraged.
>
> Through close and effective discussion and contact with the local in-country Peace Corps staff problems can be minimized. When such is done the various activities have a much greater chance of success. I have seen this principle work in both the Philippines and Fiji and hold to it. Without such contact misperceptions of problems and needs occur which can negate the utility and effectiveness of the SPA/TAs in question.

Other recommendations (most of which had to do with communications) for improving the program included:

1. OTAPS should send out consultants to give assistance in the administration of SPA funds, since up to this time many countries have been unable to administer SPA grants in a timely manner.

2. A summary report of SPA projects carried out world-wide was sent out to all countries by the SPA Coordinator in OTAPS. This was regarded as useful. A similar report, with a one paragraph summary of all SPA/TA projects world-wide would be equally beneficial.

3. More dialogue should take place between the field and Washington.

4. Quarterly cables or even more frequent soliciting requests, and reminding the field staff of request deadlines should be sent out.

5. Cables and memos from individual sector desks at OTAPS with information on courses and workshops would be appreciated.

6. When a technical consultancy is to be given somewhere in the world, a cable should be sent to nearby countries asking if they would be interested in the technical services.

7. PC/Washington should make available a list of technical consultants who can be used for SPA/TA activities.

8. Twenty-five percent of the PCDs requested that OTAPS provide more and better information on the background and qualifications of their consultants. Also, information should be supplied to the consultant concerning specific needs and circumstances existing in the country.

9. Two PCDs requested that country staff members participate in the actual identification and selection of consultants.

10. Both in French speaking and Spanish speaking countries it is seen as essential to have bilingual instructors/consultants. There have been cases where the maximum gain was not realized from the SPA/TA activity because of problems in translating materials.

11. It was suggested by one Director that consultants be hired by the Peace Corps on a full time basis, rather than signing a new contract for each consultancy that was provided. It was felt that this would help to reduce the paperwork burden.

12. SPA/TA funds should be used to pay for travel of staff and volunteers to neighboring countries to learn first hand about SPA projects and programs similar to their own.

13. PCDs emphasized the importance of the logistical work done in-country prior to the SPA/TA activity. One PCD suggested that there should be a Logistics Coordinator hired in sufficient time to prepare for any In-Service Training (IST).

14. A pre-IST questionnaire should be sent to all participants so that the consultants will have a better idea of needs and interests of participants when they arrive in the country.

15. One PCD suggested that SPA/TA provide funds and personnel for technical training at Pre-Service Training programs (PSTs are training programs held when volunteers first arrive in country).

F. EVALUATION OF INDIVIDUAL SPA/TA ACTIVITIES BY LOCAL PEACE CORPS FIELD STAFF

In every country where SPA/TA activities were completed for the fiscal years 1983 and 1984, Peace Corps Directors were requested to assign to the most appropriate person on their staff the task of analyzing the SPA/TA activities held in their country. Enclosed with each questionnaire was a brief description of the activity (see Appendix A). Program consultancies represent the use of $114, 521 of the SPA/TA funds. Of the 20 program consultations conducted with SP/TA funds, 10 responses were received. ISTs account for $177,661 of the SPA funds used. Detailed activity evaluations were received on 12 of the 24 In-

Service Training programs conducted (at least in part) with SPA/TA funds. These 22 responses represent 50% of all Program Consultations and In-Service Training activities held world-wide during these two fiscal years. In addition, information was sought on 3 other activities which did not fit into the categories of Program Consultation or In-Service Training. These three activities accounted for the use of $22,983, and are not covered in this report since no detailed information was received from the Peace Corps posts.

Information received from the field is condensed on the following 22 summary sheets for SPA/TA activities. All of the information contained on these forms was contributed by the country staff members themselves. The amounts spent on each activity was compiled from information made available to Creative Associates/Benchamrks, Inc. from the OTAPS office in Washington.

It should be stressed that the evaluation of the success or failure of each activity is determined by the comments of the staff members in the field -- as is all other information related to the impact the activity had on Peace Corps programs in each country.

Summary of SPA/TA Activity Evaluation

Sector	Program Consultation	In-Service Training	Total
Agriculture	0	7	7
Fisheries	6	0	6
Renewable Energy	2	3	5
Small Enterprise Development	1	1	2
Forestry	1	1	1
TOTAL	10	12	22

Rating			
Highly Successful	4	7	11
Successful	3	3	6
Moderately Successful	0	1	1
Unsuccessfull	3	1	4
TOTAL	10	12	22

Worth the Extra Work			
Yes	7	12	19
No	3	0	3
TOTAL	10	12	22

Origin of Request for SPA/TA Assistance

Recommended from Washington:	5
Peace Corps staff:	15
Peace Corps Volunteer:	1
Host Country Ministry (W/PCV)	1

Relationship to SPA

Generated projects:	5
Led to SPA proposals:	7
Provided PCV with technical skills:	4
No direct relationship:	6

Impact on Peace Corps

Enhanced volunteer skills and training:	7
Improved existing program:	7
Generated new programs:	4
No impact at this time:	4

COUNTRY: Burkina Faso DATE: 5/10-20/84 SECTOR: Fisheries TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: The OTAPS Fisheries Sector Specialist evaluated the fishculture program.

AMOUNT: $3,500

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: In-country request for program review.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: A new project activity was recommended.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Positive.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Host country ministry officials were not directly involved in the Program Consultation. A report on the evaluation will be made available to the appropriate ministry personnel.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Improved current program.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Additional funds should have been made available to translate the evaluation report into French.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Successful.

COUNTRY: Burkina Faso DATE: March, 1981 SECTOR: Renewable Energy TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: The activity was geared toward research rather than technical assistance. Much information was gathered from PCVs and other sources, but technical assistance to PCVs was not the focus.

AMOUNT: $23,934

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Visit suggested by OTAPS.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: Very little technical information was transferred to volunteers.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Volunteers appreciated an opportunity to share their work experiences and knowledge.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Not very favorable. The consultants did not speak French, so all conversations involved a translator. Because of communication problems, government officials questioned effectiveness of consultants.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: At this time Peace Corps/Burkina Faso has phased out of full time participation in woodstove programming.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- French speaking consultants are helpful.
- Notification of consultants arrival should be given well in advance in order to prepare and schedule meetings with HCN officials.
- Additional information from OTAPS regarding ETA would be useful.
- Clarify procedure and responsibility for receiving SPA/TA.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: No.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Unsuccessful.

COUNTRY: Cameroon DATE: 4/11-27/83 SECTOR: Fisheries TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: One consultant from the U.S. assessed the feasibility of inland capture fisheries program in four target areas. A follow-up was conducted in 1984.

AMOUNT: $4,058.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Request to the Peace Corps by the local ministry. PC/Cameroon asked Washington for programming assistance.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: No direct relevance.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Overwhelmingly favorable.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Excellent. Host country officials have a lot of respect for the consultant.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: A whole new fisheries program was generated.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Better organization and coordination among Washington offices when coordinating visits of consultants.

OTHER COMMENTS: The capture fisheries program would not have existed without SPA/TA.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Costa Rica DATE: 3/15-29/83 SECTOR: Fisheries TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Program Consultation for PC/Costa Rica which produced a report on fisheries extension services in Costa Rica.

AMOUNT: $4,433.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Generated in-country by a request from the Country Director.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: The consultant's input influenced the PC/Costa Rica's decision to use SPA funds towards the construction of a tilapia production station.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable. The PCVs respected the consultant's opinions.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: No new programs were initiated. However, the existing program was reinforced by the visit.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: The consultant was unable to speak Spanish, so it was necessary for him to have a bilingual companion at all times.

OTHER COMMENTS: The consultancy was of great value to the aquaculture program. Extensive contacts with PCVs and HC officials were made. The visit was well organized and planned. The consultancy allowed for the review and refocus of the aquaculture program.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Costa Rica DATE: 7/24 - 8/6/81 SECTOR: Agro Forestry TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: A forestry expert assessed the effectiveness of previous forestry technical training and identified modifications needed for future forestry programming.

AMOUNT: $2,740.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The initial consultation was requested by the Country Directors. A second follow up visit was suggested by PC/Washington.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: Confirmed the value of the SPA's support of forestry projects.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable. Provided an opportunity to consult with an expert.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Difficult to judge; the consultant made most of his visits to Host Country agencies unaccompanied by PC/Costa Rica staff.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Existing programs were strengthened. A decision was made to continue the community based forestry extension program.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:
- It would have been more effective if there had been better communication between PC/Costa Rica and the consultant prior to his arrival.
- Little advanced notice was given, so it was not planned as well as possible.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes, the advice and review of the forestry program was helpful.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Successful.

COUNTRY: Ecuador DATE: 2/16 - 4/11/81 SECTOR: Fisheries TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: One consultant provided specific technical training in areas not covered by PST or that volunteers had a weak understanding of. Five separate zones of the country were visited.

AMOUNT: $2,099.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Generated in-country, due to a lack of a specific direction in the programming.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: Tied to three SPA funded fish culture projects, and five other small projects funded by AID.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Extremely postive.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Equally positive. The consultant is recognized and respected as an expert.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: It is now realized that a technical expert should be the program manager (APCD).

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: An additional consultant was recommended since the project was too ambitious to be carried out by one consultant.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

DATE: [illegible] 14/84 SECTOR: Renewable Energy TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: One consultant was requested to assist PC/Guatemala develop programs related to the use of bio-energy.

AMOUNT: $1,000.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Generated in-country due to the necessity of receiving outside technical assessment to evaluate the biogas digester and suggest new ideas.

RELATIONSHIP TO HFA PROGRAM: None.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Not very favorable. PCVs felt the consultant did not have sufficient practical experience in biogas digesters despite his good academic background.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Not very favorable. The communication was in English, not Spanish.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: None.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:
- Send someone with sufficient practical experience.
- Send someone who communicates adequately in Spanish.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: No.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Unsuccessful.

COUNTRY: Honduras **DATE:** 4/11 - 30/83 **SECTOR:** Small Enterprise Development **TYPE:** Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: The consultant travelled extensively for two weeks, visiting PCVs and assessing the quality of artisan products. He also participated in IST workshops where he discussed crafts production and problems of marketing and small business management.

AMOUNT: $6,603

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Suggested by Peace Corps/Washington.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: The visit of the consultant pre-dated the implementation of the SPA program in this country. The major result of this consultancy was the hiring of the consultant directly by AID to give assistance to the AID to Artisans (ATA) project.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Very positive reception by the volunteers. The consultants observations, based on many years of experience, were very valuable and constructive.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Artisan producers reacted very positively to the assistance provided by the consultant.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Volunteers have been assigned to work directly with the Aid to Artisans project, and other volunteers have received continuing assistance from ATA.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: No suggestions given. The consultant did an excellent job in two weeks.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Successful.

COUNTRY: Liberia **DATE:** 5/10 - 6/20/84 **SECTOR:** Fisheries **TYPE:** Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Project evaluation of fish culture and feasibility study for marine and inland capture fisheries made by the OTAPH Fisheries Sector Specialist.

AMOUNT: $2,000 in conjunction with travels.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: In-country staff members wanted a specialist to analyze the potential of proposed projects in various parts of the country prior to making commitments for the country's six year plan.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: The consultant gave excellent technical advice to two current SPA projects, making them more effective.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable. Almost all of the volunteers were very appreciative and felt that the visit improved their competancy.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable. The consultant met with Ministry Officials prior to his trip throughout the country. They urged him to made recommendations before left and were very receptive to his ideas and suggestions. As a result of his verbal report the Ministry agreed to consolidate the fisheries program.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Generated new program area: marine fisheries.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Written report was a concern of the local Ministry and should have been submitted more quickly.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Niger DATE: 8/25 - 9/8/83 SECTOR: Fisheries TYPE: Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Provided technical backstopping to PCVs involved in fishery project on Niger River.

AMOUNT: $3,648.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The consultant was sent by PC/Washington without notification and without the request of PC/Niger.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: None.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Lukewarm.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: None.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Send advance notification of the consultants arrival.

OTHER COMMENTS: The Peace Corps staff did not know that the consultant was on a Peace Corps contract until the last day of his visit in the country.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: No.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Unsuccessful.

COUNTRY: Belize **DATE:** 8/6 - 10/83 **SECTOR:** Agriculture **TYPE:** IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Two trainers from the U.S. presented a training in basic food preservation techniques. Areas covered included: solar food dryers, preparation of mat, fish, fruits and vegetables for drying, and the construction of haybox cookers and evaporative coolers.

AMOUNT: $8,646

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The consultancy was designed in Washington (OTAPS) and the field was asked whether they would accept it.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: No known connection between the training given and any SPA project, nor have any SPA projects resulted from the activity.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Some PCVs found the skills learned very useful, but the bulk of the participants have not done much with them.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: The host country nationals seemed to be satisfied with the experience of the training program, but not real impact can be noted.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Several volunteers have utilized some of the concepts and skills learned, and a few have added activities to their programs based on skills. However, the impact is not measurable. It is not clear that all of the concepts introduced were appropriate to Belize.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: The consultancy could have been more effective if it had been designed around the needs felt and perceived by those requesting it. The universal feeling among veteran volunteers who have attended this and other such programs is that they are interesting and useful, but that there are other needs of greater priority which could be met with the same or lesser expenditure.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Despite the above cited shortcomings the reply of the staff was yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Unsuccessful.

COUNTRY: Cameroon **DATE:** 8/83 **SECTOR:** Agriculture **TYPE:** IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Two consultants from OTAPS delivered a training on agricultural marketing and cooperatives to both volunteers and their counterparts.

AMOUNT: $6,280.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: PC/Cameroon responded to a cable from OTAPS informing them that an agricultural marketing seminar had been developed.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: No direct relationship to the SPA program.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Favorable. Many of the volunteers found the seminar useful for their work.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable. PC/Cameroon is still receiving feedback from the counterparts and suggestions have been made to present such trainings more often.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: The seminar helped both volunteers and their counterparts to perform their jobs. From this initial IST an in-house training program was developed.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Country specific information was sent to the consultants but it was not put to use, particulary during the early stages of the IST. The consultants did modify their presentations as the IST progressed, and this was cited as being positive.

OTHER COMMENTS:
- The market survey conducted by the participants was rated as an excellent experience. Also, the opportunity for participants to make presentations was listed as a high point of the IST.
- The country staff felt that the participation of one specialist was unnecessary.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Success.

COUNTRY: Ecuador **DATE:** 3/5 - 16/84 **SECTOR:** Small Enterprise Development **TYPE:** IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: The SPA/TA fund paid for the participant costs and the rental of a conference site for an IST devoted to Small Enterprise Development. Thirteen volunteers participated.

AMOUNT: $1,000.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The need for a technical IST was identified in-country. The idea was to incorporate Small Enterprise Development into other Peace Corps programs (i.e., 4-H, Agricultural Extension, Forestry and Special Education).

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: This IST led directly to several SPA projects, and the potential for developing more. The Volunteer Project Assistance Committee (VPAC) was a direct result of this IST.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Volunteers gave the IST mixed reviews, especially concerning some some of the technical components of the IST. Nevertheless, volunteers have found the information gained to be useful.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: No host country nationals were present.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Inter-program integration. Concepts of small business management now can be applied in other sectors.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Peace Corps staff requested more content and less process in the training program.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Definitely.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Ecuador **DATE:** 2/20 - 25/84 & 2 weeks in July. **SECTOR:** Agriculture **TYPE:** IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Ten PCVs and ten host country counterparts were trained in general beekeeping, including an introductory course on Africanized bee.

AMOUNT: $800.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The request was generated in-country because of the immediate need for technical assistance. It was noted that it is extremely difficult to recruit volunteers trained in beekeeping.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: There are several projects projects are being developed by PCVs who attended.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: A more formalized beekeeping component has been incorporated into the 4-H program in Ecuador.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: No suggestions made.

OTHER COMMENTS: Several volunteers and host country nationals commended the competence of the trainer who presented the IST.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Definitely.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Guatemala DATE: 2/13 - 17/84 SECTOR: Agriculture TYPE: IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: The Chief of the National Beekeeping Program in Panama conducted a technical training for 27 host country national and 3 volunteer participants.

AMOUNT: $800.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The request was generated in-country. The Africanized bee is fast approaching Guatemala and the magnitude of the potential problem is still unknown. A technical orientation was needed from someone who had experience in the field.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: The IST was very relevant to SPA activities. SPA funds have been used to help local groups purchase materials and hives to manage properly the Africanized bee.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Volunteers were very satisifed with the training that they received.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: The host country nationals reacted even more positively than the volunteers saying that they seldom receive such technical training opportunities. Many of the participants expressed their desire for more courses of longer duration.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Training could lead to creation of profitable samll business enterprises, especially in honey production and hive management, which could form the basis of Peace Corps programs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: The IST could have been improved if additional funds were available for reproduction of written materials. The participants stated that another full week of instruction would have been valuable.

OTHER COMMENTS: The presentation of the course in Spanish was a benefit both to the volunteers and to the host country nationals.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes, most definitely.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Haiti DATE: 2/11 - 20/84 7/17 - 21/84 SECTOR: Agro-forestry TYPE: IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: A volunteer was sent from Haiti to attend an agro-forestry IST in the Dominican Republic. Five months later the volunteer was again sent to the Dominic Republic for follow-up study.

AMOUNT: $200.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The request was generated in-country. Due to the relatively small size of the budget in Haiti, it would not have otherwise been possible to provide a technical in-service training for the volunteer.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: This SPA/TA activity led to the development of a new community-based agro-forestry project.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Highly favorable.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: No host country participants were involved.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: The volunteer used the knowledge gained for activities in his program area.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: No suggestions mentioned.

OTHER COMMENTS: Sending a volunteer to another country with a similar agro-forestry ecology was mentioned as a successful means of providing technical assistance.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Success.

COUNTRY: Honduras **DATE:** 7/11 - 18/83 **SECTOR:** Agriculture **TYPE:** IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Sixteen volunteers and eight host country nationals attended a course on home gardening for nutritional improvement. SPA/TA funded the participants' costs and travel of two trainers provided by OTAPS.

AMOUNT: $9,396.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Volunteers, particularly non-agriculture volunteers, requested additional training in gardening as a secondary activity. OTAPS developed the home gardening for nutrition model and offered it to countries that requested it.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: The training provided volunteers and coworkers with skills and knowledge to increase food production. The number of actual projects which resulted from direct participation in the workshop were few. Hopefully more home gardening projects will take place over time.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: PCVs felt that the workshop was helpful but were critical of the facts that: the workshop was conducted in English; the information seemed too basic for the Hondurans who attended (and who had their own gardens); and the geographical location of the course was inappropriate.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Host country nationals felt that the training was an excellent opportunity to improve communications with the volunteers.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: A large number of volunteers have been introduced to the basic concepts of gardening. New models for teaching teaching about gardening and nutrition have been included in both PST and ISTs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

- Instructors should be bi-lingual.
- Shorter duration of the training.
- A better selection of volunteers and host country nationals should have been done.
- More emphasis should have been placed on the problems of gardening.

OTHER COMMENTS:

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: "In the long run, yes."

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Moderate success.

COUNTRY: Honduras DATE: 5/27-6/1/84 Second phase at later date. SECTOR: Agriculture TYPE: IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: The SPA/TA funded the participants costs for volunteers (including 3 volunteers from Paraguay) and host country nationals to participate in a workshop on Integrated Pest Management. OTAPS provided the services of the Ag Section Specialist.

AMOUNT: $9,700.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: This technical assistance was requested from in-country because of the widespread misuse of pesticides and inadequate pest control practices presently being used.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: Some of the volunteers that participated in the workshop have SPA projects where the Integrated Pest Control methods learned have been put to use.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: "Very positive. They all agreed taht the workshop was going to be very useful in their work." Volunteers were asked if a third component of the workshop should be offered, and they all answered; "yes!".

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Also very positive. They recognized the need for this type of training and showed great enthusiasm during the two parts of the workshop.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Integrated Pest Management has been incorporated into the agriculture extension and pest management programs. Concepts learned have been utilized in other training programs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: The SPA funds were insufficient and additional funds had to be raised from Partners of the Americas, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Staff felt that it would have been better if all of the funds had been provided by the SPA/TA.

OTHER COMMENTS: Success of the workshop in large part was attributed to its responsiveness to the needs of participants. Other beneficial factors included: use of local experts, participatns involved in planning and organizing the workshop; and on-going evaluations. Honduras participants resolved to help make top officials of the Ministry of Agriculture more aware of the problem and solutions of pesticide misuse.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: "Yes, it took a lot of additional work, but definitely it was worthwhile."

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Jamaica DATE: 5/28-6/2/84 SECTOR: Renewable Energy TYPE: IST and Program Consultation

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: A one week program consultation was carried out to test the performance of traditional stoves. This information was put to use to improve the design of stoves. Following the Program Consultation, an IST was held for volunteers and their counterparts.

AMOUNT: $2,550.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The consultant was in Jamaica on other business. An APCD, the PTO and a volunteer involved met with the consultant; and, from these discussions, a request was sent to OTAPS for the consultant's services.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: At least two SPA projects were generated as a result of this SPA/TA (a bakery project and a ceramic kilm project). Other technical skills were given to volunteers for use in future projects.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: The response from the volunteers was very positive and enthusiastic.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: The host country national participants reacted very positively to the workshop. The workshop improved use of fuel and food technologies which have been put into use in schools, homes and government agencies.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: The skills gained by volunteers at the IST have significantly enhanced the work they do on their primary assignments. In addition, a solar energy technician has been requested to provide training for the spring of 1985.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: A logistics coordinator should be hired prior to the IST to prepare the conference site and purchase needed materials.

OTHER COMMENTS: A food fair/open house held in connection with the IST was a good method of disseminating information and an excellent public relations event for the Peace Corps.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Jamaica DATE: 8/20 - 31/84 SECTOR: Renewable Energy TYPE: IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Two consultants from the U.S. conducted a workshop on new technologies in solar dryers and fueless cookers to 14 volunteers and 14 host country national participants.

AMOUNT: $16,808

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: Volunteers and host country agencies requested the technical assistance because of the high fuel costs in Jamaica.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: Several SPA proposals were made as a result of the workshop. Many volunteers were also made aware of the SPA fund through this SPA/TA activity. Since the technologies that were taught are inexpensive, several volunteers have been able to work on projects that required no outside funding.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Very positive. PCVs are promoting fireless cookers and come solar dryers throughout Jamaica -- at schools, 4-H clubs, youth clubs and nutrition clinics.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Very positive. The Ministry of Mining and Energy is now promoting fuel efficient cookstoves throughout Jamaica.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: Three volunteers in appropriate technology and alternative energy have been requested and will begin service in June, 1985.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Accommodations at the training site could have been improved. Staff training in arranging personal services contracts as part of ISTs.

OTHER COMMENTS: This activity was cited as a good cross-cultural exchange between volunteers and host country national counterparts.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: "Yes, the administrative responsibilities were minimal."

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

COUNTRY: Nepal DATE: 2/20 - 3/2/84 SECTOR: Agriculture TYPE: IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: Workshop in small animal husbandry. Because of a last minute problem the instructor from the U.S. did not attend. The workshop was held anyway, with the SPA/TA funding the participants' costs.

AMOUNT: $3,700.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The staff did not believe that there were any qualified persons locally to do the training. Lack of local experts and budget restraints led PC/Nepal to request SPA/TA funds.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: The SPA program has only recently been implemented in this country. Of the four projects that have been approved, two of them were related to information gained from this IST.

PCV REACTION TO T/A: PCVs were very positive. Approximately 15 topics were covered in 10 days and volunteers are now more aware of the needs and potential for small projects at their respective posts.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: There were no host country participants.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: The staff did not believe that there was any direct impact at this time.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: "It might have been better if the consultant had come."

OTHER COMMENTS: Because the consultant was unable to attend, the conference was modified and redesigned. The Peace Corps staff discovered that they were able to fill the bulk of their needs with local experts.

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Success.

COUNTRY: Yemen **DATE:** 7/23 - 8/1/84 **SECTOR:** Renewable Energy **TYPE:** IST

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY: A comprehensive workshop on photovoltaics was given to PCVs (predominantly architects and engineers) and host country nationals by three consultants from the U.S. (including the OTAPS Energy Sector Specialist).

AMOUNT: $26,674.

ORIGIN OF FUNDING REQUEST: The in-country staff responded to an OTAPS cable offering an IST on renewable energy. Prior to that the country had identified possible projects in this area.

RELATIONSHIP TO SPA PROGRAM: "Very relevant. It provides a technology that can be mastered and utilized by a single volunteer. In our case it has already resulted in one completed Photovoltaic project, three in progress and one proposed."

PCV REACTION TO T/A: Enthusiastic.

HOST COUNTRY REACTION TO T/A: Also enthusiastic reaction from several ministries including the ministries of Electricity, Minerals and Natural Resources, Agriculture, Public Works, Municipalities, and the University.

IMPACT ON PEACE CORPS PROGRAM: A totally new Peace Corps program has been created using photovoltaic technology. The Peace Corps staff in this country has submitted a proposal to AID for a major collaborative photovoltaic project.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT: Additional time should have been alotted to prepare in Arabic lists of key technical terms, handouts, diagrams and charts.

OTHER COMMENTS: "The trainers were very professional and thorough in their planning and presentation. The PCVs had a firm grasp of photovoltaic technology and possible applications to Yemen by the end of the workshop. This was demonstrated by the quality of their final projects."

WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT: Yes.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE: Highly successful.

G. CONCLUSIONS OF CREATIVE ASSOCIATES/BENCHMARKS, INC.

Gauging from the responses from Country Directors and field staff personal the technical assistance that has been provided by the SPA/TA has been highly successful. Seventy-seven percent of the SPA/TA activities were rated as either successful or highly successful. Eighty-six percent of the SPA/TA activities were said to be "worth the extra effort", (i.e., although the activity may not have been a success, some residual benefits were derived from the activity).

The main forms of technical assistance have been Program Consultations (20), and In-Service Training programs (24). The ISTs appear to have a greater success rate than the Program Consultations. Thirty percent of the Program Consultations (based on the sample of 50% of the activities that took place), were rated as unsuccessful. Less than 10% of the ISTs were unsuccessful.

Good communications seem to help ensure the success of a technical assistance acitvity. Over and over members of the field staff requested better communications between Washington and themselves concerning the SPA/TA program. The need for better communications can clearly be seen by the fact that of the five activities listed as either unsuccessful or only moderately successful, four of these were activities conceived in Washington and offered to the field. Technical activities with the highest success rate were those that were conceived and designed by the in-country staff.

The regional Programming Conferences were rated generally as successful. The Country Directors gave the conferences high marks, based on the improved performance of their APCDs after attending the conferences (very few PCDs attended). Again, these conferences were seen as another means of improved communications. An exchange of ideas took place among staff regarding the SPA program. Much interaction also took place between PC/Washington staff and members of the field staff. All of this was considered beneficial to management of the SPA program in individual countries.

Like the SPA program itself, SPA/TA can be characterized as a small, fast and effective mechanism for improving Peace Corps programs. In nearly every country where SPA/TA activities took place there were direct benefits realized; new projects or proposals generated, improved skills of volunteers or the improvement of existing programs.

It seems that smaller SPA/TA activities have a higher success rate. The average SPA/TA project was $6,027 for program consultations and $7,403 for ISTs. The average size of those activities ranked as either highly successful or successful was $5,525. Half of these activities required less then $3,000 of SPA/TA funds. The average cost of activities rated as unsuccessful, or only moderately successful, was $9,522.

Recommendations

1. SPA/TA funds should be continued to be used to sponsor both Program consultations and In-Service Training programs as a means of supporting the SPA program.

2. With the constant turn over which takes place with the Peace Corps field staff, and the turn over of volunteers themselves, SPA/TA funds should be a important part of a continuous education process.

3. The Program Consultations and ISTs are cost efficient ways of assisting country programs. Program Consultancies and ISTs are likely to influence large number of volunteers, (either volunteers directly related to a SPA project, or likely to become involved with a SPA project). Consequently they should continue.

4. Activities should be designed in-country as much as possible and include the participants themselves in the planning. These are more likely to be successful than programs conceived in Washington and offered to the field.

5. Field staff should be encouraged to seek out and make use of local resource persons if at all possible.

6. Communications from PC/Washington to the field concerning the availability of SPA/TA funds, and the mechanism used to tap into this resource, must be increased since the application and approval process is still not clear to some staff members. Again, the field staff is in constant flux and increased and repetitive communications are required.

7. This evaluation endorses the following suggestion made by field staff:

   -- A summary of all SPA/TA activities (with amount approved for each) should be published and distributed world-wide;

   -- Frequent cables should be sent to the field informing field staff of the availability of funds and deadlines for application and approval.

   -- OTAPS sector specialists should keep the field better informed of activities, conferences, seminars, training programs, and workshops related to their field of expertise. These specialists often know of other organizations sponsoring an activity that either staff members or volunteers would benefit from attending. (In these cases only travel costs would be incurred, and not all of the administrative costs included in sponsoring the activity.)

8. The field should be involved in the selection of the consultant that is sent to the field. Often mail systems are slow and it may be impractical to send a consultant's resume to the field and wait for a response, but telephone systems and telegrams are usually reliable at most posts. A simple telephone call between an APCD and a consultant may be all it takes to ensure that the SPA/TA activity will be a success.

9. The OTAPS office should inform the field of the travel plans of consultants. Often an activity that is occurring in a neighboring country may also be useful to staff members and volunteers nearby.

10. Although most SPA/TA activities are directed at improving the skills and knowledge of volunteers involved with SPA projects, an even better use of SPA/Ta funds would be made to conduct a series of activities aimed at improving and sharing knowledge about individual SPA projects. Volunteers should be sent to neighboring countries to collect information directly related to the SPA project they are working on. If a group of volunteers in Mali required information on the construction of wells, it may be more cost effective to send them to Burkina Faso to study well construction, than bringing a consultant from the United States. Any activity that gives volunteers practical, hands-on experience, should be encouraged.

11. Regional Programming Conferences should be continued. Serious consideration should be given to holding sub-regional conferences on a regular basis. In addition to inviting APCDs, the attendance of

select volunteers invovled with SPA projects may be beneficial. Sub-regional conferences would facilitate the exchange of more specific information than regional conferences, (countries in the Sahel have more problems that are similar than those facing the countries in east Africa). Four conferences in Africa, 3 in NANEAP and 2 in the Inter-America region each year would be the ideal.

12. Peace Corps/AID cooperation in the SPA/TA can and should be increased. To date, little use of AID technical experts has been made related by the SPA program. AID Missions have a much larger pool of experts available. SPA/TA funds could be used to pay AID consultants already in country to assist the Peace Corps.

13. There should be more coordination between AID and the Peace Corps in SPA/TA activities. Some technicians sent overseas for the SPA/TA fund could be of use to AID while in-country, and could also help identify areas for greater AID cooperation with the Peace Corps.

14. SPA/TA funds be used more to provide information to country teams in the proper management of the SPA program in general. Such information should include technical assistance in:

    -- Review and approval of projects.
    -- Disbursement and accounting.
    -- Guidelines to volunteers on project development (including model projects).
    -- Monitoring SPA projects.
    -- Evaluating systems for in-country SPA programs.
    -- Follow-up on SPA projects after the volunteer leaves (6 months, 1 year, 2 years).

- -- Training volunteers to use SPA funds appropriately and effectively.
- -- Communicating about SPA projects (inter-country, within regions, world-wide).
- -- Managing the host country input to SPA projects.
- -- Training volunteers to avoid risks (especially the damaging of the Peace Corps immage or the community development aspect of volunteer service).

Only one of the 20 program consultations provided in FY'83 and '84 dealt with the actual administration of SPA program. As is reflected in the body of the report on the SPA program itself, there remains room for the improvement for the administration of this new funding source for small projects. A concerted effort should be made to compile the information on the SPA program gathered to date, and communicate what has been learned to the field, using SPA/TA funds as a funding vehicle.

15. The Advisory Group could be an important way of assuring the SPA/TA funds are used with the greatest effectiveness. The Group should have a stable membership which is well prepared for each meeting and which participates actively in approving or disapproving requests for SPA/TA funds.

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creative associates, inc.

SMALL PROJECTS ASSISTANCE (SPA)

A Joint Project of AID and the Peace Corps #PC-384-1010

An Evaluation Conducted in Cooperation with Benchmarks, Inc.

Volume II: Appendices

April 15, 1985

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APPENDICES

A. EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS FOR PROJECTS AND IN-COUNTRY MANAGEMENT EVALUATION
   1. Protocol for Interviews
   2. SPA Projects Selected
   3. Briefing Agenda
   4. SPA -- Capital City Log
   5. SPA -- Volunteer and Community Log
   6. Peace Corps Questionnaire
   7. AID Questionnaire
   8. Volunteer Questionnaire
   9. Community Questionnaire
   10. Volunteer Opinion Survey

B. DIGEST OF AID AND PEACE CORPS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRES

C. REPORT ON TRIP TO THAILAND

D. AID STAFF MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

E. PEACE CORPS STAFF MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

F. PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS INTERVIEWED

G. SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEER OPINION SURVEY

H. EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS FOR THE SPA/TA
   1. Program Consultations
   2. In-Service Training Programs
   3. SPA/TA Cover Letter to the Field
   4. Questionnaire for Peace Corps Directors on SPA/TA
   5. Questionnaire for Individual SPA/TA Activities

APPENDIX A

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

1.) Protocol for Interviews in Capital City Related to The Small Projects Assistance Fund.

2.) SPA Projects Selected.

3.) Briefing Agenda.

4.) SPA Program Evaluation -- Capital City Log.

5.) Volunteer and Community Questionnaire Log.

6.) Revised Peace Corps Questionnaire.

7.) Revised AID Questionnaire.

8.) Revised Volunteer Questionnaire.

9.) Revised Community Questionnaire.

10.) Volunteer Opinion Survey (For SPA and non-SPA PCVs).

PROTOCOL FOR INTERVIEWS IN CAPITAL CITY RELATED TO THE SMALL PROJECT ASSISTANCE FUND

The purpose of the Creative Associates/Benchmarks interviews at the level of the host country capital is basically three-fold:

(1) to develop information related to the impact of the SPA program, and the impact of the technical assistance provided through the use of SPA/TA funds, on both AID and the Peace Corps in that country.

(2) to solicit recommendations the study will make to improve the administration and use of SPA funds.

(3) to document the SPA program in selected countries.

Evaluators should assure those being interviewed that this is not an evaluation of any individual or of any Peace Corps or AID country team in its use of the SPA. Rather, we are attempting to document the SPA experience in order to assess the global impact of the program; improve its programming and management, and answer certain basic policy questions on its future.

It should be kept in mind that the Peace Corps has more of a management responsibility for SPA funds than the AID mission. Essentially, SPA funds are small contracts between AID and the Peace Corps at the country level. Evaluators should seek out more Peace Corps than AID personnel for interviews.

Interviews should include:

Essential

Peace Corps	AID
Peace Corps Director	AID Mission Director or Deputy Director
SPA Coordinator	Head of Program Office
Administrative Officer	Technical person responsible for SPA
One APCD	Administrative Officer/ Comptroller
PTO	

Important but not Essential

Peace Corps	AID
All other APCDs	Sector specialists
Volunteer involved with SPA administration	

If recommended by Peace Corps staff, appropriate host country agency personnel should be interviewed in each country -- selected from different agencies. In addition and if appropriate, as recommended by the Peace Corps Director, a courtesy visit should be paid to the Ambassador.

This protocol serves as a guide for interviews. All questions appearing without an asterisk on the questionnaire form are "probe" questions. All asterisked questions are opinion questions and must be asked of all those interviewed. Responses will be recorded on a grid, provided for tabulation purposes. After interviews have been accomplished, all questions must be answered by the team on one reporting form and prepared by both evaluators.

SPA EVALUATION

SPA PROJECTS SELECTED

Each evaluation team will evaluate approximately eight SPA projects in each country visited. The Peace Corps field staff in some cases have already set up the itinerary and selected projects to be visited and evaluated by the visiting teams. The team should not feel bound to this preselection, but should select projects according to the following criteria in consultation with the Peace Corps. In cases where there are more than eight projects the sites visited should include a mix of:

1) high (above $2500); medium ($1000-$2499); and low (less than ($1000) cost activities;

2) a mix of the various types of activities financed (food, energy, competitive enterprise development, income generating activities);

3) sites where the PCV is still working vs. sites where the PCV has completed service.

4) sites where income or job generation data is likely to be found.

5) sites which are accessible or which do not require an inordinate amount of time to reach (should not exceed 1 project per day).

6) sites both with completed project and on-going projects. If in the vicinity of a community with a completed project where no PCV remains, drop by for a visit, if feasible.

Assistance provided by the Peace Corps field staff and PCVs in selecting SPA projects in advance of the team's arrival will be appreciated. A list of selected projects should include for each project: its cost, its beginning and completion dates, its sector, and whether or not a PCV is present at the site.

BRIEFING AGENDA
November 6-9, 1984

TUESDAY

1. Introductions, goals and expectations for the week, get acquainted.
2. Overview of the SPA program and its forerunners.

   Lunch at Benchmarks.
3. An overview of the study design, its purpose and the process and timelines for conducting the study.
4. Instrument review, critique, revision, discussion.
5. Review and evaluation of the day.

WEDNESDAY

1. Warm-up and overview of the day.
2. Instrument review, critique, revision, discussion.
3. Final instructions for preparation of the package of protocols and instruments.

   Lunch - on your own.
4. At 2:00 pm -- a panel of Peace Corps staff familiar with SPA.

THURSDAY

1. Paperwork, money, travel, and other details.
2. The final report -- brainstorming the end product of the study.
3. Meyers-Briggs and introduction to team building.

   Lunch - on your own.
4. Travel to Peace Corps to meet Desk Officers and review country files.

Cocktail Party at Tom Scanlon's with special guests

FRIDAY

1. Overview of SPA technical assistance.
2. Team building with the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator; role definitions.

   Lunch - on your own.
3. "Dress Rehearsal" and overview of final report.

BON VOYAGE

SPA PROGRAM EVALUATION
CAPITAL CITY LOG

Completed by: _____

1. **Country:**

2. **Dates in Country:**

3. **Organizations/Institutions Visited:**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

4. **Interviews with Peace Corps Officials:**

	Date	Person	Position	FSN/FSR
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				

5. **Interviews with AID Officials:**

	Date	Person	Position	FSN/FSR
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				

6. **Other Capital-level Interviews:**

	Date	Person	Position	FSN/FSR
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				

7. **Documents Reviewed:**

SPA PROGRAM EVALUATION
VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE LOG

Completed by: _____

1. **Country:**

2. **Project Title** or one-line description:

3. **Date of Visit:**

4. **Interviews:**

	Name (Not essential)	Role/Title* (PCV/SPA, PCV/Not SPA, community person)
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

5. **Other Data Sources:** (e.g., documents)

_____

*Number of PCVs who did not know about SPA _____ and therefore, not included in list of interviewees.

REVISED

PEACE CORPS QUESTIONNAIRE

I. ADMINISTRATION OF SPA

KDQ 1. Describe the organizations structure (set-up) of the SPA program and how it works.

NKDQ 1a. Are you aware of how the SPA program is set-up?

2. Is the program guidance on SPA sent from Peace Corps/Washington adequate? Should there be more guidance?

3. In seeking clarification, have you received it in a timely manner?

4. What kind of orientation and training is given to PC staff about the SPA? How could this be improved?

5. What kind of orientation and training is given to PCVs about the SPA? What kind should be given?

305

KDQ 6. What kind of materials, if any, exist for SPA training and orientation activities?

7. What kind of supervision of SPA projects is provided by Peace Corps staff?

8. Specifically, does the PC staff make site visits to SPA projects?

9. What problems exists in the management of the SPA?

10. How much time do you devote to the administration of the SPA program (hours per week)?

KDQ 11. What issues arose in the negotiations of the SPA Program Country Agreement during FY 83 and during FY 84?

12. What issues exist between AID and the Peace Corps related to the SPA?

13. What role, if any, does the host country have in the SPA Program?

Funding and Disbursement Issues

*14. Is the current funding level, $40,000 per country, adequate, too little, or too much?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Adequate																
Too little																
Too much																

What would be an appropriate amount? How should individual country levels be determined?

KDQ (Administration person) 15. What accounting and vouchering procedures are used for the SPA funds including the points of transfer from AID to PC, disbursement from Peace Corps to the individual SPA project, and the processing of receipts and expenditures for the Project? Who receives the checks for SPA projects? Once a project is approved, what is the average time it takes AID or the Peace Corps to disburse funds? Please describe all PCV reporting procedures on SPA projects?

16. Should the checks be written to the volunteers or the community?

II. SPA PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

KDQ 1. What is the SPA project approval process -- including all criteria (Washington and host country originated)?

NKDQ 1a. Are you aware of the SPA project approval process -- including criteria?

2. What role do you play in the process?

3. What, if any, is the role of the Peace Corps staff in identifying activities for SPA projects?

4. Should the amount of remaining service for a PCV be a factor in the approval process?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

Explain:

5. At what point in a PCVs service should he/she be eligible to apply for a SPA grant?

Explain:

6. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the present process for approving projects?

7. Should the approval criteria be modified in any way?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

If yes, how?

12

8. Should other sectors be included in the SPA fund?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

If yes, which ones?

9. What are the reasons some proposals do not get approved?

10. What kinds of projects do you feel have been especially successful or unsuccessful?

KDQ 11. What is the average time it takes for a SPA proposal to be approved?

KDQ 12. What happens to a SPA project if a PCV leaves (terminates, completes service) before the SPA project has been completed? Give examples.

III. EVALUATION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES:

KDQ 1. What monitoring procedures for SPA projects are followed by the PC? Is this information shared with the volunteers?

NKDQ 1a. What kind of monitoring and reporting procedures should then be for SPA projects?

KDQ 2. What internal evaluation procedures for SPA projects are followed by PC staff?

NKDQ 2a. What kind of evaluation procedures should there be for SPA projects?

KDQ 3. What reporting procedures to AID are followed by Peace Corps Staff?

KDQ 4. What reporting procedures to Peace Corps/Washington are followed by the Peace Corps country team?

5. Given that Peace Corps and AID/Washington have great interest in being well-informed about individual SPA projects, can you suggest ways of providing the information that are not burdensome to the Peace Corps country staff?

6. Has information gathered from SPA evaluations and reports been used by AID or the Peace Corps to improve their programs?

7. Does Peace Corps share information about SPA projects with other Peace Corps countries? How?

KDQ 8. What kind of follow-up, if any, occurs after a SPA project has been completed?

NKDQ 8a. What kind of follow-up, if any, should be done by the Peace Corps after a SPA project has been completed and the volunteer has left the community?

IV. IMPACT OF SPA ON THE PEACE CORPS

1. What is your involvement with the SPA fund?

2. What are the advantages of the SPA to the Peace Corps?

3. What are the disadvantages?

*4. Are there more advantages or disadvantages?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Advantages																
Disadvantages																

*5. In your opinion, has the SPA program altered the volunteer's role in the community?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

If yes, how?

*6. Do you think that the SPA has increased or decreased the role of the PCV as a motivator in enabling the community to help itself:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Increased																
Decreased																

If increased, how?

If decreased, how?

*7. Has the SPA fund meant that volunteers have been more or less effective in their communities?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
More effective																
Less effective																

Explain.

*8. Has the SPA program contributed to the Peace Corps country management plan (CMP) goals?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

If yes, how?

If no, why?

9. Have SPA projects generated new collaborative efforts between AID and the Peace Corps? Describe.

10. How would you characterize AID's involvement in the SPA?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Cooperative																
Indifferent																
Antagonistic																

Explain.

11. What do you think AID's role should be in the SPA?

KDQ 12. What other fast funding mechanisms are available to PCVs?

23

*13. In light of the existence of funds such as the PC Partnership Program, the Special Development Activities Fund in Latin America, the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund in Africa, and the Accelerated Impact Program in Asia, is the SPA really necessary?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

If yes, what are its unique characteristics?

14. Are SPA project funds used to support primary project activities and goals or to support secondary goals and activities?

REVISED AID QUESTIONNAIRE

I. ADMINISTRATION OF SPA

KDQ 1. Describe the organizational structure (set-up) of the SPA program and how it works.

NKDQ 1.a Are you aware of how the SPA program is set up?

2. Should there be any change?

3. What should be the role of AID in this process?

25

4. Does AID Staff make site visits to SPA Projects? Should they? Who?

5. What problems have you encountered in the management of the SPA?

6. How much time you devote to the administration of the SPA program (hours per week)?

10

7. Does AID participate in the project approval process?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Don't know																

8. What issues arose in the negotiations of the SPA Program Country Agreement during FY 83 and during FY 84?

9. What other issues exist between AID and the PC related to the SPA?

10. What role, if any, does the host country have in the SPA Program? Should it have a role?

Funding and Disbursement Issues

* 11. Is the current funding level, $40,000 per country, adequate, too little, or too much?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Adequate																
Too little																
Too much																

What would be an appropriate amount? Please explain why. How should individual country level be set?

KDQ 12. What accounting and vouchering procedures are used for the SPA funds including the points of transfer from AID to PC, disbursement from Peace Corps to the individual SPA project, and the processing of receipts and expenditures for the project?

13. Is the program guidance from Washington adequate?

14. If you sought clarification of program guidance, did you get it in a timely fashion?

KDQ 15. Who receives the checks for SPA projects?

15.a Should the checks be written to the volunteer or to the community?

II. SPA PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

KDQ 1. What are the approval criteria for SPA projects?

NKDQ 1.a Are you aware of the approval criteria for SPA projects?

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2. Should the approval criteria be modified given AID's interests and priorities?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

Explain:

KDQ 3. What is your role, if any, in the SPA project approval process?

4. Should other sectors be included in the SPA fund?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

If Yes, which ones?

KDQ 5. What are the reasons some proposals do not get approved?

6. Are you familiar with any SPA projects which you feel to be especially successful or unsuccessful?

KDQ 7. What is the average time it takes for a SPA proposal to be approved? Once a proposal is approved, what is the average time it takes AID to disburse funds?

III. EVALUATION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES:

1. What reporting does AID receive from PC regarding the SPA? What kind of reporting should AID receive from PC?

2. Has information gathered from SPA evaluations and reports been used by AID to improve its programs?

IV. IMPACT OF SPA ON AID

*1. Has the SPA enabled AID to get resources to the community level at a reasonable cost?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

If yes, how?

If no, why not?

*2. Does the SPA assist AID to meet its goals of responding to basic human needs in developing countries?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Explain.

*3. Have any SPA projects led to other AID or joint AID/PC initiatives?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Explain.

*4. Is the SPA "more trouble than its worth"?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Why?

5. How would you characterize the advantages of using AID funds, through the Peace Corps?

6. How would you characterize the disadvantages of using AID funds, through the Peace Corps?

7. Do you have any recommendations or suggestions to make for the SPA program.

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REVISED

VOLUNTEER QUESTIONNAIRE

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

1. Name of PCV: _____
2. Project Name: _____
3. Community/Group: _____
4. General description of project (Thumbnail sketch of project):

5. Approval date:
6. Date funds received:
7. Start date/end date: (According to plan)
8. Total funding (including in-kind):

a. SPA:

b. Community/group contribution:

c. Other source of funds:

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

1. What were the planned objectives of the SPA project?

2. With regard to planned objectives, did you put in quantifiable or measurable terms when you started the project?

3. What was the money used for?

4. Did the SPA project involve the creation of a new organization? If not, had the community/group worked together on other projects?

5. Was any other funding source considered?

6. Describe the relationship between you and the community or group in the development and implementation of the project? (Who wrote the proposal? Will you be able to "see the project through to the end?")

7. What kind of support was given to the project by local authorities?

Page 4 deleted

III. IMPACT EVALUATION

1. What actually happened? Describe in quantitative terms the impact and/or the results of the project, especially with regard to jobs or income generation?

2. Does the project have the potential for replicability or is it an isolated occurrence? Why?

3. Has further interest in this type of project been generated? Please describe.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE AND DISBURSEMENT ISSUES

1. Describe your experience with the SPA approval process.

2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approval process (including timing?)

3. Did you encounter any problems in receiving the funds or accounting for them?

4. What kind of training or information did you receive about the SPA program? What kind should you receive?

5. What kind of supervision, and/or assistance, if any, was given to you during the implementation of the project by PC/field staff and/or AID mission?

6. In general, what recommendations do you have regarding the SPA program?

V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. What technical assistance (including in-service training), did you receive relevant to your project? Was it adequate?

   (Here mention SPA/TA activities - After the answer to the above)

2. Did you participate in any of the above SPA/TA activities. If so, please describe their usefulness?

3. Did TA lead to any new SPA projects?

4. Did host country nationals benefit in any way from SPA/TA?

NOTE TO EVALUATOR

Using a journalistic approach, please write an appreciation of the project or of any element of the project (individuals, technologies, impacts or impressions). This is optional.

REVISED COMMUNITY QUESTIONAIRE

NAME OF COMMUNITY/GROUP: _____

NAME OF VOLUNTEER: _____

NAME AND/OR POSITION OF COMMUNITY PERSONS INTERVIEWER: _____

_____

1. Tell me about your community or group organization.

2. Tell me about the project.

3. Did everyone work on project or just a few?

4. Had you ever tried this before? Why didn't it work?

5. Did you go elsewhere for assistance? What happened?

6. How did the volunteer help you?

7. What was accomplished (outcomes)? (Probe for both intended and unintended outcomes, positive and negative)

8. Has this project idea caught on?

9. What other plans do you have?

10. Are you working together better now?

V. OBSERVATION

1. Undoubtedly, the evaluators will have a chance to observe project impacts or to get impact data from sources other than expected interview subjects. Please list project impacts and the "measure" you used to identify the impact.

B. VOLUNTEER OPINION SURVEY
(For SPA and non-SPA PCVs)

1. What are the advantages of the SPA to you?

2. What are the disadvantages to you?

*3. Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Why?

*4. It has been said that the SPA program has a negative effect on the community's ability to achieve self-help. Do you agree?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Explain.

*5. Does the SPA help or hinder the Peace Corps development work in the community?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Help																
Hinder																
Don't know																

Explain.

6. It has been said that volunteers who use SPA are perceived as grantspeople and this has a negative impact on the volunteer's role and effectiveness. Do you agree?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Explain.

7. What are the risks involved with the use of the SPA program?

8. What should volunteers do to avoid these risks?

9. Did you receive an orientation to the SPA program -- and to these risks -- in your Peace Corps training program? Should you?

10. The SPA is a joint PC/AID program. Did you know this?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																

361

11. Do you favor further PC/AID collaboration?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

Please explain.

12. Should the SPA program continue?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	TOTAL
Yes																
No																
Undecided																

How would you change it?

APPENDIX B

DIGEST OF AID AND PEACE CORPS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONNAIRES

PEACE CORPS

Peace Corps Question I. 2

What kind and how much guidance does PC/field want from PC/Washington for the SPA program?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"No more guidance, please."
"It's fine now."
"It's been adequate." (3 responses)
"The less, the better."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"It's good to have flexibility."
"Adequate."
"We need more instructions about what Washington needs."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"It's been good."
"No more than at present, but give examples."
"In general it is clear."
"Simplify them."
"Adequate." (2 responses)

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"I don't think there's much reason to involve Washington...that's the best part about it."
"No more than at present."
"It's adequate." (2 responses)
"Less - often Washington doesn't understand the culture."

Programming/Training Officers
"Summaries have been useful. Send us a demonstration project, give us some energy project ideas."
"It's adequate and flexible and this is great."
"No more, please."

Peace Corps Question I. 3

In seeking clarification, have you received it in a timely manner?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"No."
"Prompt replies, no complaints."
"I have been very satisfied."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Yes."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Yes, usually over the phone."
"It was very rapid."
"Quick replies."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"No, very lengthy, often 3 months."
"No." (3 responses)

Programming/Training Officers

"Yes, definitely."
"Yes."

Peace Corps Question I. 4

What kind of orientation and training is given to Peace Corps staff about the SPA

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"I got a small session in Washington, and an APCD briefs the new staff."
"An adequate briefing during training."
"I can't remember."
"On the job training. I fear more training might complicate the process."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"None." (3 responses)

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Briefed by my predecessor. I want an information packet."
"None. We could use training in evaluation and analysis of projects."
"None." (2 responses)
"Briefed and given files by my predecessor." (2 responses)
"Learned by doing. We could use training with case studies."
"Other APCD's trained me."
"APCD's go on retreat and receive training during that time."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"1 hour in Washington, then at the APCD conference; the conference helped people be consistent."
"SPA must be presented in context of the philosophy of the organization."
"Adequate training in PC/Washington."
"None." (4 responses)
"1 hour in Washington."
"Got orientation at APCD conference. I could use more training."
"1 hour in Washington. I could use more training in in-country procedures."
"Just a memorandum."
"None. I have worked for the Peace Corps for 12 years and received no training. I would like training in supervision of projects."
"It was discussed in staff meetings."

Programming/Training Officers

"None, but someone came in November 1983 to advise us."
"Trained by the APCD's."
"We [illegible] with [illegible]"

Peace Corps Question 1.5

What kind of training is given Volunteers about the SPA? What kind should be given?

The same general practice has evolved in all the countries. The Volunteers are introduced to SPA in the Pre-Service Training along with all of the other funding sources. Then the subject is covered in more depth during the In-Service Training, and Volunteers who are interested in actually doing a project usually receive some more information from the SPA coordinator. Often information is included in the Volunteer Handbook or published in the Volunteer newsletter.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"Before money is authorized the Volunteer should attend orientation in the office."
"I like it the way it is."
"The Volunteers get a full briefing, but in Pre-Service Training it goes over their heads."
"Our training seems adequate given the current funding level."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"What's given is enough." (3 responses)
"Most of the training should be done during IST."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Perhaps a brief explanation of SPA when a person applies."
"It can always improve."
"The Volunteers could use more training."

Programming/Training Officers

Peace Corps Question I. 6

What kind of training materials, if any, exist for SPA training?

One country uses old projects and proposals.

One country has a package of general funding information.

One country gives SPA program and reporting instructions, and there is information in the local Peace Corps handbook.

One country uses past IAA's and ACN's, plus sample forms needed for all the steps in the process.

One country has a handout sheet on funding information.

One country has just prepared a full handbook for Volunteers who are doing small projects of any kind.

One country has "not much", but is preparing some visual aids.

Peace Corps Question I. 7

What kind of supervision of SPA projects is provided by Peace Corps staff?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"The APCD's supervise the projects."
"We work with direct communication and trust in the Volunteer."
"The APCD's are the point persons who supervise and visit."
"We monitor reports ."
"The committee is kind of a supervisor."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Don't know."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Management supervision is provided when problems arise."
"The tendency is to expect the APCD's to supervise.
"We supervise in special situations or where the Volunteer requested help or advice."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"We try to involve the agencies in site visits and supervision."
"It ties in with regular oversight. Also, the Volunteers have oversight committees."
"We do project analysis and review the budget."
"Supervision is a weak link."
" We need another APCD or a third year Volunteer to supervise funded projects."

Programming/Training Officers

"Maybe half the APCD's provide supervision through the entire process. Other than that, it's basically trouble shooting."

Peace Corps Question I. 6

Does the staff make site visits?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"We visit once each quarter, minimum."
"The APCD's and I all make visits."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"Don't know."
"People visit as part of routine trips."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Site visits are provided when problems arise."
"If possible, we visit the site before approval."
"The APCD's make site visits, as do Volunteer Coordinators."
"We visit SPA as part of our regular visits, but we are starting to do more."
"APCD's visit as part of their regular schedule."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"I visit the sites." (4 responses)
"We try to involve the agencies in site visits and supervision."
"I visit regularly if the Volunteer has problems or doubts."
"I visit the sites of all funded projects."
"I visit twice a month, more if it is necessary."
"Site visits are made quarterly."
"We visit as part of regular 4-6 month visits."
"We visit quarterly, but time is a problem."

Programming/Training Officers
"The APCD's go."

Peace Corps Question I. 9

What problems exist in the management of SPA?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Inadequate reporting. We need a uniform reporting system for all of our programs. Also followup."
"It's a burden in terms of paperwork."
"None" (2 responses)
"Time for the receipt of the funds"
"Human resources -- we need an APCD for Funded Projects."
"The money dries up early in the year."
"Delays in processing of documents."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Coordination of information on projects."
"Instructions on preparing monthly balances are not clear."
"No real problems."
"Getting Volunteers to understand that there is some red tape involved."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Time prevents close supervision and management."
"Getting invoices. Budget preparation. Changes of personnel in the agencies. Volunteers don't know how to write proposals."
"Exchange rate fluctuation." (2 responses)
"Getting invoices. Agencies don't comply with their parts. Poor budgets."
"We've had upset Volunteers when their projects were turned down."
"The process takes too much time."
"Getting the money takes too long."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Documentation, non-compliance by beneficiaries"
"The time it takes to get the money." (3 responses)
"Who is responsible for what, if something happens."
"It takes a lot of time."
"Changes in the costs or wrong extimation of the costs."
"I don't like having money in Volunteer's accounts."
"Startup was rough -- we had to reinvent the wheel "

Programming/Training Officers

"Lack of involvement by APCD's. Also, lack of feasibility training."
"How to transfer the funds to the Volunteers."

Peace Corps Question I. 10

How much time do you devote to administraion of the SPA program?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"1 hour per week."
"1/2 hour per week."
"20 minutes for each new project."
"1/2 day per week."
"2 hours per week." (2 responses)
"2-4 hours per week."
"Very little."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"4-6 hours per week."
"1 hour a week, plus 4 hours for the cashier."
"1-2 hours per week, now that it all works systematically."
"1 hour a week."
"2 hours per month"

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"3-4 days a week now, but I'll distribute the administration to the APCD's"
"3-4 hours a week."
"4-6 hours per week."
"6 hours a week."
"Depends on the time of year -- on average, 1/2 day per week."
"1/2 day per week, but I want to find ways to streamline the process."
"1-2 days per week. We could use a half-time person for this."
"1-2 days per week."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"None."
"Very little." (4 responses)
"1-2 hours a week." (2 responses)
"1 day per week" (2 responses)
"1/2 day per week."
"5 hours per week."
"3 hours per week."
"2 days per week, not including paperwork."

Programming/Training Officers

"2 hours per week."
"10 hours per week."

Peace Corps Question 1.11

What issues arose in the negotiation of the SPA Program Country Agreements during FY'83 and FY'84?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"We disagreed on whether the money was AID's or PC's, how many levels of review were needed, the size of grants, the size of the committee, what form the approval document should take, and how to measure the impact of the projects. Also, the Ambassador reserved the right to approve proposals before funding."
"The procedures for handling the money, which we worked out together."
"Initially AID wanted to see fudning of large project. It was resolved through discussion."
"None."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"We insisted on double signatures for the checks."

SPA Coordinators (Usually APCD's)
"Who had principal approval authority."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"No real issues, just uncertainty about which way to proceed."

Programming/Training Officers
"We never had an issue we couldn't resolve."
"Did the Ambassador have approval over the SPA."

Peace Corps Question 1.12

What issues exist between AID and the Peace Corps related to SPA?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"None."
"There have been long and difficult discussions by the Approval Committee, with a bias toward inaction on AID's part, that have made it a slow and cumbersome process. Also, AID is reluctant to fund projects under $1000"
"Issues of approval authority."
"Delays in processing of documents."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"AID philosophy is so different, but there are no problems."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"How to transfer the funds from AID to Peace Corps."
"We have a controversy about what kind of fish to farm."
"None -- they are very receptive to our ideas."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Liquidation -- Peace corps closed '83, but AID is behind."
"None."
"We want to be separate from AID and the Embassy's criteria."
"Just small things."

Programming/Training Officers

Peace Corps Question 1.13

What role, if any, does the host country have in the SPA program?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Local officials must sign spplications, commit to host country contributions, and concur on all expenditures of funds."
"None." (4 responses)
"The Ministry of Social Development is made aware of the projects."
"The government feels it's important to be informed of projects. We get approval of local and regional authorities for all projects."
"We get approval from the regional and village officials."
"Peace Corps reports to the government 4 times a year about SPA. The government sponsors small projects through the Peace Corps, so they are very involved and supportive."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Almost none, and shouldn't"
"Host country people have given technical training for SPA projects."
"At a local level, the appropriate authority and the village chief sign off."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"None." (3 responses)
"The agencies have to give technical assistance and generally do."
"Local agencies contribute with materials and transportation."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"None."
"We ask for an agency OK"
"If it's a large project like a bridge the government may get involved."
"It depends on the agency -- some are more supportive than others."
"The government sits down with AID and the Peace Corps -- they have to approve any foreign assistance."
"Agencies are involved in 20% of our projects."

Programming/Training Officers

"None."
"Minimal"

Peace Corps Question 1.14

Is the current funding level, $40,000 per country, adequate, too little, or too much?
20 "Adequate", 19 "Too little", 1 "Too much", 4 "Not sure".

How should the level be determined?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"We could use $70,000 -- we have the track record."
"Based on the number of Volunteers, the community interests, and the quality of the Volunteers."
"Number of Volunteers."
"Raise it by $20,000 per year to $100,000 -- we have an incredible capacity to absorb and make use of good projects."
"The average proposal is $1,500-$2,000 per Volunteer, with around 50 Volunteers requesting funds. $75,000 -- $100,000."
"I can see an increase to $60,000"
"Due to the small size of the country, I feel $40,000 is a little too much."
"I feel we could use $60,000"
"Due to the small size of the country, I feel $40,000 is a little too much."
"I feel we could use $60,000 now that the number of rural development Volunteers is going up."
"Due to the small size of this country, feel it's a little too much since can lead to pressure to spend."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"It would be good to have more, but not until we know the projects are a success."
"Given the amount of staff, $40,000 is enough." (3 responses)
"I'd like to see more, but not until we look at results to date."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Consider the resources available and the resources needed."
"Number of Volunteers and the resoruces available."
"Projects generate more projects. It's a large country, 160 Volunteers. We could use $50,000."
"It may be too little as more Volunteers become interested."
"$40,000 was adequate in the beginning, but more can be used well."

Peace Corps Question 1.14 (continued)

How should the level be determined?

WHO SAID WHAT (continued)

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Number of Volunteers, and type of projects."
"I'm concerned that too much money will ruin the people-to-people nature of the Peace Corps."
"Let the country determine the level."
"It should be at least double."
"Number of Volunteers."
"We may need more in the future."

Programming/Training Officers
"Each country should determine."
"Indexed to the number of Volunteers." (2 responses)

Peace Corps Question I. 15

What accounting and vouchering procedures are used for the SPA?

In one country, a form 1034 goes to AID once the project is approved. The payee on the 1034 is a local community representative, and a Volunteer signs the check and opens a 2-signature bank account. At the end of the project, all receipts must be balanced out within 4-6 weeks.

In one country, Volunteers prepare a detailed budget including signed price quotations from the suppliers. Volunteers can sign for a check or the vendor can go direct to AID. AID reconciles the books.

In one country, funds go to a local currency bank account. Peace Corps reconciles this bank account monthly. Form 1034s are submitted for batched groups of IAA's. Peace Corps issues vouchers and checks for the individual projects. The Volunteer submits interim reports monthly, and a final report with vouchers and receipts.

In one country, funds go to a local bank account in the name of the Peace Corps Director. Checks for individual projects are given to the Volunteer or the community group, and receipts are cleared at the end of the project.

In one country, AID gets a check from Paris and gives it directly to the Volunteer. Receipts are cleared with AID at the end of the project.

In one country, AID gives checks to the Volunteers, who deposit them in personal accounts. The Volunteer has the responsibility to return the receipts at the end of the project.

Thailand and Honduras data not found

Peace Corps Question I. 16

Should the checks be written to the Volunteer or the community?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"The Volunteer"
"The community" (2 responses)

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"The Volunteer"
"The community"

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"The community" (3 responses)
"It goes into a joint checking account."
"The check is written to the community, and the Volunteer picks it up."
"But there is a risk..."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"The Volunteer" (5 responses)
"To the community is a risk."
"The community"
"The fact that the money arrives in the name of the community has an emotional effect that is important."

Programming/Training Officers
"The Volunteer"
"The community"

Peace Corps Question II. 2

What role do you play in the approval process?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"I send cover memos over to AID."
"Chairman of the approval committee."
"Final project approval." (4 responses)
"Equal member of approval committee with Aid Representative, the "Director of the Country Mission, and the Ambassador or Embassy Economic Officer."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"None." (5 responses)

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Member of the approval committee."
"Chair the committee and keep the files."
"Organize the approval meetings."
"All steps up to recommending proposal to approval committee."
"Recommend approval to the Peace Corps Director. I don't think an approval committee is necessary."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"I approve individual projects" (4 responses.)
"I'm unofficial SPA coordinator."
"Review individual proposals."
"None." (2 responses)
"Review proposals and sit on approval committee." (2 responses)
"Participate in the approval meetings."
"Technical review, proposal development." (3 responses)

Programming/Training Officers
"Approve or disapprove projects based on the recommendations of the approval committee."
"I sit on the approval committee."
"Chair the approval committee."

Peace Corps Question II. 3

What, if any, is the role of the Peace Corps staff in identifying activities for SPA projects?

In no countries is there direct programming of projects by the Peace Corps. In one country, an APCD said "There are occasions when, based on the knowledge of the APCD's concerning factors at a Volunteers site, we might suggest areas which might be appropriate for SPA."

Peace Corps Question II. 4 & 5

Should the amount of remaining service for a Volunteer be a factor in the approval process?

38"Yes", 3 "No", 3 "Undecided". The issue in all cases mentioning "Yes" was that the project be finished prior to the Volunteer leaving. Many people responding "Yes" indicated that it was a flexible guideline.

At what point in a Volunteers service should they be eligible for a SPA grant?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Between 3 and 6 months, depending on maturity, ability, and background -- but remain flexible."
"Any time."
"Six months."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Eight months to a year."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Three to six months."
"Six months, but it is flexible."
"Five to six months."
"Six months."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Six months - I've seen Trainees wanting projects before they get on site."
"Three to six months."
"Six months." (4 responses)
"Any time, but determined by the committee."
"Variable, based on the type of project, the opinion of the APCD, and the point of view of the Volunteer."

Programming/Training Officers

"Three to six months."
"Any time -- the country has to determine."

Peace Corps Question II.6

What are the strengths and weakeness of the present process for approving projects. What changes would you make in the project approval process?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"Delays in getting the approval committee together slows down the process."
"It's OK."
"Having an approval committee of the Director, the AID Representative, and the Ambassador has been a slow and cumbersome process, especially since the AID Representative is in another country."
"The committee with AID and the Embassy is a real weakness."
"None."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"It's adequate."
"None -- it's important to keep it simple."

SPA Coordinators (usally APCD"s)
"Involve AID for technical assistance."
"The approval committee shouldn't include the Ambassador or the Embassy Economic Officer."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"It's adequate."
"Make the guidelines more rigid. Here they want to use the funds to repair a government library."
"It's fine."
"Having Volunteers on the approval committee is a real strength."
"Involve all of the APCD's in the approval process."
"It uses up our Volunteer per diem for consultations."

Programming/Training Officers
"The projects should be visited during the approval process."

Peace Corps Question II. 7 & 8

Should the approval criteria be modified in any way?
22 "Yes", 17 "No", 5 Undecided
Should other sectors be included in the SPA fund?
36 "Yes", 5 "No", 3 "Undecided."

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Education, health, water storage."
"Education and health."
"Health and special education."
"Health." (2 responses)
"Basic community needs, including water, health, and basic construction."
"Education."
"Water -- for food production and health/sanitation."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Education and health."
"Any projects that help community improve its' condition."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Health, and materials for special education." (2 responses)
"Provide for more community involvement, and include health, environmental health, community development organizations."
"Health."
"Education, not to buy books, but for teacher training."
"Health and water."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Community health."
"No, we include everything already."
"Education." (3 responses)
"Education, transportation, health, communications, money to get products to market."
"Speed up the process, and include infrastructure, raw materials, and transportation."
"We would need more funds if we include other sectors." (2 responses)

Peace Corps Question II. 7 & 8 (continued)

Should the approval criteria be modified in any way?

Should other sectors be included in the SPA fund?

WHO SAID WHAT

Associate Peace Corps Directors (continued)

"Any sectors that relate to improving basic living conditions."
"Drinking water, education, health, and housing."
"Education and health."
"Water, vocational education, and health."
"I didn't know any sectors were excluded."

Programming/Training Officers
"Health and education, including special education."
"Education and health."
"Water, child feeding, education, housing."

Peace Corps Question II. 9

What are the reasons some proposals do not get approved?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Not enough planning for community impacts, unrealistic estimates, duplication of unsuccessful activities, Volunteer overload."
"I don't know -- I only see the ones that are approved."
"If the community group has no history of working together or no tangible contribution to make to the project."
"One was too large, and two well projects had questions of feasibility."
"We ask for modifications to fit the criteria."
"One case of budget miscalculations."
"Lack of appropriateness, fear of corruption, unproven Volunteer."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"No clear committment on the part of the community."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Not concise enough a proposal, or Volunteers about to leave country."
"Some are too expensive, some don't have the technical background."
"Not clearly thought out, or not developed with a local community."
"Lack of confidence in the community group, too small (under $100), reliance on tourism to be self sustaining."
"Lack of community involvement."
"Costs projected are too high, lack of community involvement, too few beneficiaries, 2nd or 3rd project for 1 Volunteer."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Poorly written proposals."
"They all seem to get approved."
"Not sure."
"If the group could go elsewhere for credit, poorly written proposals, if the beneficiaries are not clearly identified."
"No cases yet."
"Lack of community involvement."
"Not appropriate to community needs."
"One program was an unmeasurable give away. We sent it to the Canadians, and they gave the money."

Programming/Training Officers

"The upper size limit has been a problem, but there are few denials."

Peace Corps Question II. 10

What kinds of projects do you feel have been especially successful or unsuccessful?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Small water development, weaving, garden, chickens."
"Don't know."
"The 4-H conference really got the community involved."
"Small animal husbandry. School gardens are viewed as punishment by the students and the revenues are pocketed by school officials."
"Gardens and wells. The unsuccessful projects are those where the Volunteer hasn't done their homework."
"Gardens. Income producing projects have been less successful."
"Water related, and agro-forestry. Animal raising and school related chicken projects have been less successful."
"Bridges on farm-to-market roads, community gardens. The improved wood stove production centers are questionable."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Carpenters' cooperative."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Stores for agriculture, animal production. Handicrafts are unsuccessful."
"Forestry."
"Gardening projects."
"Tool fundings look good, but it's too early to say."
"Gardens and wells."
"Garden, forestry, and orchard projects, and seed storage."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Bicycle water pumps."
"Water supply."
"Any revolving-bank type projects, and intercropping with fruit trees."
"chickens and small animals -- they provide better nutrition."

Peace Corps Question II. 10 (continued)

What kinds of projects do you feel have been especially successful or unsuccessful?

WHO SAID WHAT

Associate Peace Corps Directors (continued)

"Agricultural production, but agro-industry and marketing didn't work."
"Vegetable production. Egg production was unsuccessful -- it requires more technical skill. It should have been meat birds."
"Vocational education workshops."
"Gardens and wells."

Programming/Training Officers
"Commodity stores, potable water, fish stations. Unsuccessful? Artisan groups. Solar water heaters have little payoff."
"Bridge projects, fisheries."
"Soil conservation."

Peace Corps Question II. 11

What is the average time it takes for a SPA proposal to be approved?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"1-3 months"
"Depends on the size of the project."
"1 week on initial review, and then it depends on the Volunteer getting final estimates. Generally, 2-3 weeks."
"2 weeks."
"A couple of months."
"1 month."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"2-3 weeks."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"1-5 months"
"3 weeks."
"3 weeks to 2 months."
"4-6 weeks."
"If the projects are written and ready to go, 2 weeks."
"1 month." (2 responses."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Minimum 2-3 weeks, and maximum 4 months if it's poorly done."
"4 months."
"1-5 months."
"7-10 days." (2 responses)
"1-3 months from the time the Volunteers start."
"1 month."

Programming/Training Officers

"1-3 months."
"1 month."
"6 weeks."

Peace Corps Question II. 12

What happens to a SPA project if a Volunteer leaves before the project has been completed?

In all cases, the staff at all levels indicated that they would find another Volunteer to take over the project. In some actual cases this was the successor of the Volunteer who started the project, and in some cases it was a Volunteer from a nearby community who came in periodically to oversee the project.

Peace Corps Question III.1

What monitoring procedures for SPA projects are followed by the Peace Corps? Is this information shared with Volunteers?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"First they account for the money, then develop a report."
"A Volunteer full-time at the office is OK."
"Staff review of periodic reports, and visits while on tournee."
"APCD's monitor and assess."
"APCD's during regular site visits, Volunteer's bi-monthly reports."
"I discuss the project with the Volunteers as they come into the office."
"Up 'til now it's been done on an ad hoc basis. We should have quarterly reports, and enforce this by incremental funding of projects."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Don't know."
"I presume the APCD monitors during regular site visits."
"The past SPA coordinator did a lot of site visits. This is important."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"None by me, only by Program Managers."
"A system should be developed."
"There's not enough yet, but it's being planned."
"Progress reports, and visits of program managers and coordinators."
"We didn't think about monitoring unitl later on. We've developed an evaluation tool, but monitoring is sketchy."
"Bi-monbthly reports from lVolunteers, staff site visit reports, bi-annual summary of all funded projects."
"Site visits and correspondence have been adequate to date."

Peace Corps Question III. 1 (continued)

What monitoring procedures for SPA projects are followed by the Peace Corps? Is this information shared with the Volunteers?

WHO SAID WHAT (continued)

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"We need a full time person to monitor these projects."
"We monitor with visits and reports to headquarters by Volunteers."
"We have constant contact and correspondence with Volunteers."
"We don't have any procedures."
"We get evaluations and reports showing production and number of beneficiaries."
"The monitoring process is being set up now, and will be shared with Volunteers through meetings, etc."
"We need to improve the monitoring system."
"I would like to be much more systematic with monitoring."
"Site visits on 4-6 month cycle."

Programming/Training Officers

"Occasional Program Manager visits, and the completion report. Presentations on funding at job conferences generally use SPA examples."
"We need more evaluation."

Peace Corps Question III. 2

What internal evaluation procedures for SPA projects are followed by Peace Corps staff?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"Nothing formal -- evaluations will be done soon by an APCD."
"No formal procedures."
"Monitored by APCD's during regular site visits."
"Volunteers send bi-monthly evaluations to APCD."
"Staff conducts a review according to country's format."
"APCD's fill out evaluations."
"Presentations during staff meetings."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"None."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"There is an evaluation form."
"There is no interim or final evaluation developed yet."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"APCD evaluates projects on site visits."
"The Volunteer writes a termination report." (3 responses)
"Visits from Volunteers."
"Project should be good for one year, then evaluated."
"Each project has an internal philosophical direction which is respected."
"Staff does not file reports."
"Volunteer meetings."
"There's a plan for evaluations by local AID staff."
"Bi-monthly reports from Volunteers, and staff visit reports."
"Bi-annual summary of projects funded by donors."
"It's too new. Informal and written reports are needed, and there's a suggestion of competitive bids."
"A staff member should do evaluations, especially if funding over $5000 is involved."
"None."
"Volunteers do quarterly reports."

Programming/Training Officers
"Evaluation procedures are entirely informal."
"We have done an overall evaluation."

Peace Corps Question III. 2a

What kind of evaluation procedures should there be for SPA projects?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"Program managers involved in the approval process should also be involved in evaluating SPA projects."
"Evaluation with participation of other Volunteers."
"We could use more monitoring and followup."
"We're working on a new system now."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"I don't know."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Possibly we'll ask for periodic written reports."
"Close of Service procedures should insure that ACN's are done."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"A staff member should be designated to do an evaluation."
"We get an adequate presentation during staff meetings."
"Leave it up to the individual APCD's."
"Conversations with the people."
"Have a Volunteer specifically to work with funded projects, and part of their job would be evaluation."
"We need a full-time person to monitor these projects."
"It would be good one year from now to go back and look at the projects."

Programming/Training Officers
"We need a system."
"The time frame for each project should include a point halfway which would warrant a visit."

Peace Corps Question III. 3

What reporting procedures to AID are followed by Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Project lists, and status of requests."
"Quarterly financial reports by the APCD Administration."
"IAA's are sent over after they are signed."
"Quarterly reports by APCD Admin., and a yearly report in October."
"None."
"Informal -- we are peanuts to them."
"Reports and informal briefings."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration

"Don't know."
"IAA's and vouchers."
"Quarterly financial reports, and AID monitors our SPA bank account."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"We offered to give them copies of our paperwork but they're not interested."
"Informal briefings."
"None."
"Informal briefings weekly."
"Quarterly report, and a copy of all receipts with a ticker tape."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Copies of proposals."
"None that I know of."
"We send copies of IAA's and ACN's"
"Just accounting info."
"An AID representative attends the meetings."

Programming/Training Officers

"Year-end report to SPA representative in AID."
"Just financial -- no program reports."

Peace Corps Question III. 4

What reporting procedures to Peace Corps/Washington are followed by Peace Corps staff?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"The Programming/Training Officer has that responsibility."
"Monthly accountings, yearly reports."
"Quarterly reports, plus IAA's and ACN's"
"IAA's when they're signed, and ACN's when they're done."
"IAA's and ACN's"

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"Don't know."
"IAA's and ACN's."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Copies of IAA's and ACN's." (3 responses)
"We send copies of the reports presented to AID"
"ACN's plus photos, and also a year-end report with short and long term goals and achievement level."
"IAA's are sent when they are approved."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"IAA's and evaluation reports."
"IAA's and ACN's." (2 responses)

Programming/Training Officers
"Year end reports."

Peace Corps Question III. 5

Given that Peace Corps and AID/Washington have great interest inbeing well informed about individual SPA projects, can you suggest ways of providing this information that are not burdensome to the staff?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"No. We encourage PC staff who come here to visit the projects."
"PC/Washington should inform AID/Washington."
"The same reports we give to AID we should mail to Washington."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"I don't know."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"I don't believe they're interested, but either way, current reporting is sufficient."
"It's adequate now."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Send them carbon copies of the documents."
"I didn't know what they wanted."
"Have them send us forms to fill in."
"Keep it as is."
"It's adequate."
"No, it's very difficult to write because we have so much now."
"At the end of a project, APCD's should write up simple descriptions of the project with problems and advantages. This document could be circulated internally and sent to Washington."

Programming/Training Officers
"The current arrangement is not burdensome but adequate."
"It's adequate."

Peace Corps Question III. 6

Has information gathered from SPA evaluations and reports been used by AID or the Peace Corps to improve their program?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"I don't know."
"Yes."
"Yes, in an ongoing way."
"Not to date, but a program is being set up to do this."
"Not yet." (2 responses)
"Only informally."
"Yes, they often identify problems to be resolved or new projects."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"No."
"Before a Volunteer is considered for a second project, the first project is reviewed by the staff."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Yes, Peace Corps has used information from fisheries and forestry projects."
"Not yet -- we need to devise an evaluation method that serves this purpose."
"It's planned for the future."
"AID has funded 50 grain mills on the basis of SPA experience with 2 mills. They've also hired an ex-SPA Volunteer at the Farming Center."
"The potential exists with fisheries."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Little information has been gathered so far."
"Yes." (3 responses)
"No." (2 responses)
"Yes, we learned from our problems. We're giving smaller grants."
"Yes, and we would do more if we had a full time person."
"It will be."
"Not yet."
"I don't know."

Programming/Training Officers

"Yes."
"Not directly, but it has [illegible] for [illegible]

Peace Corps Question III. 7

Does Peace Corps share information about SPA projects with other countries? How?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"In our Ag. newsletter we descripe SPA projects, and we send this to other countries."
"Yes, but only person to person. It should be published."
"Not to my knowledge."
"At conferences."
"No."
"Informally at the APCD conferences."
"There's some sharing between myself and the Directors in two neighboring countries."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"No, but we'd like to."
"No formal sharing with other countries."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"No, and we'd like to. We need to know what works."
"Sometimes during annual conferences"
"None."
"There's no formal mechanism."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Just at the APCD conference."
"No." (4 responses)
"I'd like to do this some, but keep it small."
"At the APCD conference, but it wasn't that helpful."
"Yes, but only at the personal level."
"We share with other countries at regional meetings."
"There's some sharing with an APCD from a bordering country."

Programming/Training Officers
"Only indirectly through Washington."
"No."

Peace Corps Question III. 6

What kind of follow-up, if any, occurs after a SPA project has been completed?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"APCD's visit the completed project."
"None" (3 responses)
"None. This is one of the weaknesses in the operation. It's not done yet due to the time-crunch on the staff."
"Review of the project by an APCD or the Director."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"None." (3 responses)

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"None." (4 responses)
"Personal visits in some areas are made as possible."
"The Volunteers usually arrange followup. The staff have other priorities."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"I continue to visit the projects after the Volunteers have left because I often know the people."
"None" (3 responses)
"Volunteers in the area are asked to followup to see how things are going."

Programming/Training Officers
"Staff visits."
"None formally."

Peace Corps Question III. 9

What kind of follow-up, if any, should be done by the Peace Corps after a SPA project has been completed and the Volunteer has left?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"It's adequate now."
"Followup to see whether the philosophical idea of PC persists after the Volunteer has left -- 2 years."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"None."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"We should support the SPA project as long as is needed."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"None, given the nature of these projects."
"Volunteers in the area should be encouraged to see if it is working."
"We should do it somehow -- I may stop by and visit."
"Maintain contact with the group, and visit once in a while."
"Should be some type. It would be interesting to find out what happened maybe 5 years after."

Programming/Training Officers
"Some non-burdensome way. The completion notice should identify the point at which evaluation should be done."
"Visits."

Peace Corps Question IV. 1

What is your involvement with the SPA fund?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Approval."
"Oversee, approve, and disapprove projects."
"Write checks, and ulitmate authority."
"Oversight of SPA projects."
"Final signoff."
"Currently doing all aspects due to lack of staff."
"Negotiate and approve documents with the approval committee."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"None at present."
"Financial reporting."
"Keep the files and copies of the vouchers."
"Voucher preparation, fiscal paperwork."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"I'm responsible for overall management, and I am a program manager."
"General coordination and management of the program."
"I'm responsible for all funded projects, not just SPA."
"Technical assistance and analysis, plus a lot of legwork getting papers signed at AID."
"In charge of all the administrative side for Peace Corps."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Program manager."
"Approval committee member."
"Work with the Volunteers."
"Advise Volunteers about SPA projects as needed."
"Look over projects, advise, and help with IAA."
"None." (2 responses)
"Minimal."
"Technical review and consultation in my sector."
"Counseling Volunteers who have ideas for use of the fund."

Programming/Training Officers

"Chairman of the approval committee." (2 responses)
"Sit on approval committee meetings."

Peace Corps Question IV. 2

What are the advantages of the SPA to the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"It allows us to internally screen and guarantee funding for worthwhile projects."
"The Volunteers are able to help people meet community needs."
"Volunteers can get immediate funding, and the amount is flexible."
"It provides seed money for Volunteer projects."
"There is a more positive perception of the Volunteer by the community."
"It gives Volunteers a chance to do something, and show flexibility and creativity. Also it has immediacy -- not a long turn-around."
"My quick answer is, it helps the credibility of the Volunteers."
"It provides funds for development of projects the Volunteers see as important from having lived in the community."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"It's very good, since PC doesn't have money for projects."
"It makes the Volunteers get real involved with villages, shows the villagers that Peace Corps exists and assists local people, and gives the Volunteer a chance to realize some concrete results."
"The fact that it is easily available to the Volunteers."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Quick funding of small community level projects."
"The funding is relatively easy to administer and is readily available."
"It's a morale builder, and can lead Volunteers to greater community and secondary involvement."
"It makes Volunteers more aware of AID. Due to the SPA link, for example, AID has opened their library to use by the Volunteers."
"It's a very good idea, because Volunteers have problems with access to resources of the Ministries."
"It's a stabilizer."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"It makes the Volunteer's impact more significant, and it frees the staff from Volunteer pressure for material project needs."
"It's a painless way of getting a small amount of money in a short time."
"Lets Volunteers take initiative and work with community groups, and helps Volunteers who have problems of support for their primary job."
"It helps people help themselves."

Peace Corps Question IV. 2 (continued)

What are the advantages of the SPA to the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Associate Peace Corps Directors (continued)

"Helps develop Volunteer and staff skills, and is one of the best public relations things done."
"It gives more opportunity for Volunteers to work with local groups -- they can do a lot with a little money."
"Quick accessibility of funds -- little red tape."
"I find fewer Volunteers wanting to switch communities -- now they feel useful in the communities where they are."
"It helps Volunteers to initiate and demonstrate new technologies."
"It's easier to start projects that the community needs."
"It allows us to develop new projects and support existing ones."
"It gives the Volunteer funds for projects, and augments the prestige and the acceptance of the Volunteer by the local people."
"It helps the Volunteer to be accepted, gets them out to the village, and gets money to the village level."

Programming/Training Officers
"Having money for Volunteer projects."
"It's another tool for the Volunteers."

Peace Corps Question IV. 3

What are the disadvantages of SPA to the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Sometimes Volunteers might develop dependency."
"None." (2 responses)
"The Volunteers can get seen as a way to get money into the community."
"Long delays in the processing of documents cause problems in the community. The credibility of the Volunteer comes into question."
"If it's not done sensitively, the Volunteers risk being seen as grantspeople."
"It has increased the workload for APCD's and the cashier, and the approval process is unduly lengthy."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"Competition between the Volunteer and the community."
"It's a lot of paperwork."
"We have to be careful about the financial controls and procedures."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"A Volunteer following a Volunteer with a SPA project can find the community asking what are you going to bring the community. Also, the Volunteer can get away from a need to work closely with their agency."
"Volunteers can be seen as sources of money. Also, Volunteers can have raised expectations, and then may not get some of the money."
"It could lead to Peace Corps being seen as a funding agency."
"4-5 weeks are needed from final approval to arrival of the money."
"It can raise false hopes for some Volunteers."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"None." (2 responses)
"A Volunteer should not get started with a SPA project too early, or they won't put all their efforts into personal relationships."
"Volunteers can get too much compromised with the community."
"It can be a hindrance if there isn't a good working relationship with AID."
"The real question is, whether projects can be sustained after the Volunteer leaves and the funding ends."
"Only if we don't involve the local people."
"Some agencies may perceive PC as a funding agency.

Peace Corps Question IV. 3 (continued)

What are the disadvantages of SPA to the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Associate Peace Corps Directors (continued)

"Time demands on the APCD's."
"It takes too much time to approve and get the money."
"At times, we seem to be in a hurry to spend the rest of the funds."
"If we misuse the money, the whole Peace Corps philosophy could be in trouble. And it can cause volunteers to be frustrated that they didn't develop a project."
"People might start to see Peace Corps as a money agency rather than a people agency. They may start to want Volunteers for their money. Also, there's a sense of competitiveness among Volunteers."
"We have to be careful that we don't create expectations."
"Having SPA funds may increase the tendency of some Volunteers to "do their own thing. I'm also afraid that administration of SPA funds could become a major demand on staff time."
"The involvement with AID has led to confusion about Peace Corps being an independent agency."

Programming/Training Officers

"In general, the money is given indiscriminantly."
"If the Volunteer finds himself where he is expected to disburse money."

Peace Corps Question IV.4

Are there more advantages or disadvantages?
42 "More advantages", 0 "More disadvantages", 2 "Depends."

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"It's a definite advantage for the villagers, and for the Volunteers who have the motivation and skill to tap the fund."
"It must remain small. We do more if we teach Volunteers to access other money."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Local people usually understand their needs but sometimes don't have the means."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Depends if it's managed properly."
"There are many more advantages than disadvantages -- it gives the Volunteer a chance to do something positive with villagers in meeting one of their needs."
"It will take time to see the overall impact. My major concern is that it may increase the idea that a Volunteer is a free agent and not responsible to work through host country structures."

Peace Corps Question IV.5

In your opinion, has the SPA program altered the Volunteer's role in the community?
23 "Yes", 16 "No", 5 "Undecided."

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"The role has changed because it has given the Volunteer the ability to complete a community project."
"On the positive side, access to funds provides enhanced ability to initiate projects. On the negative side, Volunteers can come to be seen as a source of money rather than a source of help.
"No, Volunteers have always been trying to find outside funding sources."
"Not all that much -- Volunteers have always tried to arrange funding for their village projects."
"Yes, in some areas, because of the money and dependence."
"Positively. 'Monuments' have not happened, projects have been self-supporting."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Administration
"It has changed -- the Volunteers are seen in a more serious light."
"No, the Volunteers using SPA are in a program that has always looked for outside funding sources."
"Yes, it helps them get more involved with villagers and helps reduce early terminations."
"The gringo has the money."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"In some cases it has made the Volunteer more useful, and in others, it may have given false impressions of what Peace Corps is."
"Yes, the Volunteer may have increased prestige."
"SPA has complemented the traditional role of the Volunteers."
"The Volunteer is made a grantsman, but this forces the Volunteer and the community to deal with small business, money generation issues which is very positive."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"If the answer were 'yes', it would be a failure to follow the guidelines."
"It has helped the Volunteers feel more satisfied with their work."
"I feel it has made some Volunteers more serious about real development."
"I feel it has enhanced their role in the community."

Peace Corps Question IV.5 (continued)

In your opinion, has the SPA program altered the Volunteer's role in the community?

WHO SAID WHAT

Associate Peace Corps Directors (continued)
"Somewhat. I can see some Volunteers overlooking long range development objectives."
"The community contribution is an important factor."
"Yes, the Volunteer has more formal relationships with the community."
"No, because the Volunteer works in the community and the community knows the Volunteer."
"Some -- supervisors want 'their' Volunteers to go for money. It puts some Volunteers in a hot spot."
"It has added to their role."

Programming/Training Officers
"Over the long run it could."
"It has enhanced the Volunteers' role."

Peace Corps Question IV. 6

Do you think that the SPA has increased or decreased the role of the Volunteer as a motivator in enabling the community to help itself?

33 "Increased", 0 "Decreased", 11 "Undecided"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Increased 1000% -- we make communities match our money."
"It depends on the approval process and the project."
"It provides the critical mass to actually get something off the ground."
"It requires community planning and contribution so it does help."
"The funds are an initial carrot, which allows people to see what they are capable of doing."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"It depends on the setting, but it hasn't made them more dependent."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"It is increased because now the community knows about sources of funds."
"Increased -- now we can help people help themselves."
"It's had a positive effect."
"The more resources, the more the community can help themselves."
"We got people to do more than they ever thought they could."
"In one case, a Volunteer didn't want to be a grantmaker and his community expected him to be one. He wants to leave."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Too early to say."
"Volunteers have more interaction with leaders, agencies, and groups."
"They learn how to tap outside sources of funding."
"People said we were going to create dependence, but it was the opposite."
"Depends on how it is managed."
"Because of the process of education in the community that must be gone through, there is no problem with the community becoming dependent."
"We still need more training of Volunteers in community organization."
"It could increase, if the project is well planned."
"It motivates them to work as a group, and moves them toward new ideas and possibilities."

Programming/Training Officers

"It gives the Volunteers more leverage."
"Mixed. The Volunteers are a transient population."
"Yes, if the community is actively involved in the project."

Peace Corps Question IV. 7

Has the SPA fund meant that the Volunteers have been more or less effective in their communities?

35 "More effective", 0 "Less effective", 9 "Undecided".

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"They're more efficient."

"I've seen cases where SPA has made the difference for a Volunteer. One asked for money for a loom, now the community is selling clothing."

"Neither."

"Depends on the Volunteer -- it has helped some."

"Some would have been as effective, but it enables many more to attain this effectiveness."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"Substantially more."

"Much more effective for some."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"In most cases, increased. It depends on personality."

"Greatly increased."

"The Volunteer with SPA can normally do more."

"Much more effective, in every instance."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"We have to pay more attention to the person who handles the money."

"Volunteers have more opportunities to work with the agencies as well as other groups."

"they have been because they benefit the community."

"It's helped make Volunteers feel more like development professionals."

"Much more effective, by being able to add an extra dimension to their project."

"Much more -- we had one Volunteer who was terribly negative -- we suggested she develop a SPA project. She developed a model project. We eventually proposed her to be a Peace Corps fellow."

Programming/Training Officers

"The Volunteers have another tool."

Peace Corps Question IV. 8

Has the SPA program contributed to the CMP goals?
32 "Yes", 4 "No", 8 "Undecided"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"Last year we included SPA in the CMP."
"Yes, in improving production of agriculture and small animals."
"It has been particularly helpful in promoting small enterprise. Many of our big successes in Women's Coops would still not have occurred without it. It has been instrumental."
"In a secondary way of helping improve people's quality of life."
"Yes, meeting basic human needs."
"It has expanded our capacity to target community needs."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"Yes, it has generated more sites."
"We can directly help with local needs."
"In a sense it does, because most SPA projects have an agricultural focus."
"Meeting basic human needs."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"SPA is a support for other programs."
"Yes, the overall CMP goal is to help the local people help themselves."
"Yes, and it is related to the government's 5-year plan as well."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Yes, in terms of carrying out small projects."
"It makes it more community and development oriented."
"SPA gives more possibilities for making a real impact."
"SPA money enables us to address more of the areas cited in the CMP."
"It has helped our CMP goals in forestry and led to a new program of 6 Volunteers in forestry. Also in Ag. Education, school garden projects."
"No direct connection, but most SPA projects have been in agriculture, which is the main focus of the CMP."
"In budget no, but in planning yes."
"No, only in the sense of having made goals attainable in an easier way."
"I foresee it being used more in future years in forestry and fisheries."

Programming/Training Officers
"Yes, in terms of agriculture, fish culture, cattle, and small business."

Peace Corps Question IV. 9

Have SPA projects generated new collaborative efforts between AID and the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors

"Yes, by proximity."
"Yes, we've built a bridge . We have to talk to each other."
"No, AID doesn't actually do projects here, so opportunities are limited."
"No." (2 responses)
"Not really."
"Don't know."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration

"There's more contacts between the agencies."
"It has improved collaboration. We get better communication and help."
"Don't know."
"No, because AID has simply given us the money to use."
"There's more communication, and possibly will be more funding."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)

"Yes, and with other agencies as well."
"It fostered an initial collaboration, and also are collaboration with local agencies."
"Definitely -- AID is getting close to us."
"Yes."
"No, interest exists but nothing concrete yet."
"Maybe -- it has improved AID's administration of the Ambassadors Self-Help fund, for example."
"Some -- AID field agents have been responsive to helping Volunteers in the field."

Associate Peace Corps Directors

"Yes, AID has provided funds for other small projects."
"Yes, AID has seen that Volunteers have done a very good job."
"No." (2 responses)
"It's enhanced the relationship somewhat."
"AID knows more about us now, but I haven't seen any new projects."
"No, we get along quite well already."
"No, but we had joint PC/AID programming before SPA."
"Yes."

Peace Corps Question IV. 9 (continued)

Have SPA projects generated new collaborative efforts between AID and the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Associate Peace Corps Directors (continued)

"I think it will help in new efforts."
"Not yet."
"It has led to more communication, and a more supportive attitude by AID toward Peace Corps."
"Yes, and there were other AID/PC initiatives which were also helpful."
"Yes, the collaboration between Peace Corps, AID, and the local Department of Sanitation came about through the SPA."
"Yes, because it is a link between the agencies."

Programming/Training Officers
"No, there is no reason."
"I think so."
"Only between individuals."

Peace Corps Question IV. 10

How would you characterize AID's involvement in the SPA?
30 "Cooperative", 8 "Indifferent (neutral)", 2 "Antagonistic."
4 "Undecided".

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"AID controllers don't regard this as a burden."
"There's been constant complaining that projects are too small."
"From neutral to cooperative."
"Antagonistic -- AID views the program as a lot of paperwork."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"Sometimes cooperative, sometimes indifferent."
"The only problem is that AID's regulations have made the process slow, but they are attempting to correct this."
"Very cooperative."
"They helped in getting FY'84 funds quickly."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Excellent relations -- they have offered us more funds."
"Non-involvement."
"Cooperative, but not too involved."
"We are very fortunate -- the AID team here is excellent."
"The Mission Director has been antagonistic, but the field staff have been cooperative."
"Very cooperative."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"AID gives Peace Corps the $ but it lets it keep its' pride and character."
"At first they were indifferent, but they have evolved."
"Indifferent, but the indifference is beneficial to SPA and PC."
"They've given the responsibility to the Peace Corps."
"They are enthusiastic and very helpful."
"They don't take a great role, but are cooperative."
"Very, very cooperative and interested."

Programming/Training Officers
"We've always worked smoothly."

Peace Corps Question IV. 11

What do you think AID's role should be in the SPA?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"It's adequate." (2 responses)
"Mainly technical advice and assistance."
"Keep the money coming." (2 responses)
"Technical advice on request." (2 responses)
"Provide funds and play as small a role as possible."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"No role."
"As it is."
"I'd like a joint review of past projects."
"They should play a role in the approval process."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Cooperative but not too involved."
"Limited to administration and technical assistance."
"Financial record keeping."
"They should not be in the approval process -- they don't have a local field perspective so they can't really evaluate requests."
"We are satisfied."
"Currently it works beautifully. They give much freedom and consultation."
"Liason."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Staff meetings."
"Priorities and criteria should be set by Peace Corps, not AID."
"Responsibility should slowly be shifted to Peace Corps."
"Let us be independent." (3 responses)
"It's adequate now." (7 responses)
"Technical help." (2 responses)
"AID should delegate more authority to the Peace Corps."
"I'd like a biannual review looking toward program collaboration."

Programming/Training Officers
"Administrator."
"A little more of what we have."
"Should be minimal"

Peace Corps Question IV. 12

What other fast funding mechanisms are available to Volunteers?

In one country, there is American Women's Club, DTec??, and funds from the Netherlands, Canadian, and British Embassies.

In one country, there is SDA, Peace Corps Partnership, AID Artesan's Fund, and Trickle Up.

In one country there are Canadian and Dutch Embassy Funds, the SDAA, the NEHC, Peace Corps Partnership, and Partners of the Americas.

In one country there is the SDF, the EDF, and the Trickle Up Fund.

In one country there is Peace Corps Partnership, the Volunteer Support Fund (supported by Volunteer contributions), Darien Book Aid Plan, the Trickle Up Fund, UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services, Canadian Embassy, CARITAS, Terre des Hommes, and some small private business or church organizations.

In one country there is Catholic Relief Services, the Ambassador's Self-Help Fund, the World Neighbors, the Canadian High Commission, the Dutch Embassy Fund, CONGAT, UNICEF, and some private groups.

In one country there is the Ambassador's Self Help Fund, Peace Corps Partnership, and Catholic Relief Services.

In one country there is the Ambassador's Self Help Fund, the Canadian High Commission, the Dutch Embassy, Trickle Up Fund, the World Food Program, FAO, and Catholic Relief Services.

In one country there is the AID Forestry PASA Fund, the Ambassador's Self Help Fund, Peace Corps Partnership, the Dutch Embassy, the Baptist Mission, and Catholic Relief Services.

Peace Corps Question IV. 13

"In light of the existence of other funds, is the SPA necessary."
41 "Yes", 1 "No.", 2 "Useful but not necessary."

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"There's more money in SPA."
"SPA is community initiated."
"It's fast." (2 responses)
"It's a sure source."
"Theoretically, it's fast and has local control."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"It's a community program."
"Other funds have different criteria." (2 responses)
"SPA involves the Volunteers directly."

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"It's a quick process, and the decision is in Peace Corps' hands."
"It's faster, and the projects are more focussed."
"SPA is directly for the Volunteers."
"We can fund smaller projects, and it's available."
"It's fast, and doesn't have some of the restrictions others have." (2 resp.)
"We can fund larger projects."
"It's smaller, and the decision making is local."

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"It is quick, and we can use our own criteria." (3 responses)
"It's aimed at community projects." (2 responses)
"It's more certain and specific to Volunteers." (2 responses)
"The Peace Corps should have its' own funds and not depend on others."
"Each fund has its' own goals."
"It's fast."
"No, I preferred the AIP."
"It's not necessary but it's useful."

Programming/Training Officers
"Other funds have more specific criteria."
"We maintain control."
"SPA is ours, it's local, it's fast."

Peace Corps Question IV. 14

Are SPA funds used to support primary or secondary activities?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Acting Directors
"Both." (4 responses)
"Secondary." (3 responses)
"Primary."

Associate Peace Corps Directors, Aministration
"Depends on the sector."
"Secondary." (2 responses)
"Primary." (2 responses)

SPA Coordinators (usually APCD's)
"Both." (3 responses)
"Secondary."
"Primary." (2 responses)

Associate Peace Corps Directors
"Both." (3 responses)
"Mostly secondary."
"Primary" (6 responses)
"Secondary" (2 responses)
"It should be secondary, otherwise the Volunteer can use it to "dominate" supervisors or co-workers with "their" project."
"Primary, because the agencies aren't supporting them."

Programming/Training Officers
"Both." (3 responses)

AID

Question I. 2

Should there be any changes in the organizational structure.?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"It's adequate."
"The Peace Corps should have permission to have a bank account, especially if the fund is increased."
"The work is all done by Peace Corps, and this works well."
"No" (2 responses)

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"No changes."
"It should be better related to AID projects. Its a good mechanism to begin participation of Volunteers in AID."
"No."

Program Managers

"I wouldn't disregard projects which overlap with AID's projects."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"We need to see more paperwork."
"As we move more toward small business we may move away from community needs. This is a golden opportunity to meet community needs."
"I'm not involved in this aspect."

Question I. 3

What should be the role of AID in the SPA process?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"The facilities and goods being financed should benefit a lot of people"
"If AID were any more involved in SPA it would be caught up in procedural process"
"Hands-off."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"A technical role. It should stay the same."
"Aid should coordinate and offer technical assistance. It should not have veto power."
"Just to finance doesn't see the other role"
"Aid should be the administrator.
"Minimal, but... Our funding goes to those who are first off the mark. We should get more sophisticated, and target these resources."

Program Managers

"We should keep things simple, be friendly and supportive, and don't interfere."

Controllers

"Someone from AID should go out and see the projects"
"Its in AID's best interest to be part of the process"
"We should get reports, and otherwise stay out."
"We should help set up criteria."

Question I. 4

Does AID Staff make site visits? Should they?

In only 1 country were there regular site visits by AID staff.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"We leave full management and monitoring up to the Peace Corps."
"Yes, we should know where they are."
"If it's near an AID project, yes, we should visit. Otherwise I doubt if it's possible."
"We should visit and check out the use of the money at the end."
"No, let Peace Corps carry out the program. It's their program."
"Yes. I have, so has the Director of the Country Mission and others."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"I go occasionally in the course of other trips. I am confident in PC's ability."
"Intermittently. Peace Corps should do the bulk of the supervising. When we know of a successful project we don't need to go."
"We fund projects where a Peace Corps Volunteer lives which reduces the cost to AID."
"Only if there's a problem."
"No. That the responsibility of Peace Corps."
"Yes, we should learn how the program is going. We could possibly learn something from the project."
"Yes, we'd be derelict if we didn't."
"Too overworked."

Program Managers

"Yes, but not regularly. Since we know Peace Corps goes, we stay away."
"We should get out there, I'd like to see it, but i can't spare the time."

Controllers

"I assume Peace Corps makes site visits. I have no direct knowledge."
"No one from AID goes because of work pressure."
"Someone from AID should go."
"It should be done on some projects, but field staff time is expensive."
"No."

Question I. 5

What problems have you encountered in the management of the SPA Funds?

In all but one country, either no or minor problems were reported. In one country, personal differences have obstructed the approval process.

Who Said What

Directors/Deputy Directors

"None at AID level."
"In the beginning AID suggested sectors to fund, but the Peace Corps had problems with this. All was worked out mutually with agreement on common areas of focus."
"None. We've done the minimum required for prudent management."
"None." (2 responses)

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"The sectors of focus are too categorically limited. And it's hard to tell if certain costs are reimbursable under the guidelines."
"How to manage the funds. We transfer them to the Peace Corps PTO's checking account."
"We had minor documentation problems."
"None that I know."

Program Managers

"We should be copied on the basic information - when the project starts, and so on."
"Only small ones which Peace Corps has well in hand."

Controllers

"Twice requests for checks have been lost by the RBFO. In general the process has been slow — 1 to 6 months!"
"It's important that the Peace Corps Volunteer's get good estimates."
"None." (2 responses)

Question I. b

How much time do you devote to the administration of the SPA program?

Generally, the answer to this was either none or very little. The largest amount of time noted was 7-8 hours per week by one Project Manager.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"None." (6 responses)

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Very little time." (6 responses)
"3-4 hrs. per week or less."
"None." (1 response)

Project Managers

"7-8 hours/week. I have to review the projects."
"Less than 4 hours/month."
"2 hours a week."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"12 hours/year."
"12 hours/month."
"None."
"Very little." (3 responses)

Question 1. 7

Does AID participate in the project approval process?

16 "Yes", 8 "No", 2 "Don't know".

Question I.8

What issues arose in the negotiations of the SPA Program Country Agreement during FY'83 and FY'84?

In most countries, this process went fairly smoothly. In one country there was an intense discussion of how the approval process would run and who would approve projects.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors
"None of significance." (4 responses)
"Don't know." (2 responses)

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians
"None of significance." (6 responses)

Project Managers
"None." (1 response)
"We had to decide whether to go with SPA or AIP. Also, the Peace Corps staff doesn't like to do the bureaucratic part of the job."

Controllers/Budget Officers
"None." (4 responses)
"Don't know."
"We wanted to make sure the Volunteers were not given full responsibility for the funds."
"We dictated the disbursement procedure."

Question I. 9

What other issues exist between AID and the Peace Corps related to the SPA?

In general only minor issues were reported, with the exception of one country where there still exists considerable disagreement between the AID Representative and the Peace Corps Director about the direction that the expenditures should take.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"None." (3 responses)
"The criteria should be expanded to include infrastructure and education."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"None." (5 responses)

Project Managers

"Funds were obligated before the original agreement was signed, but we worked it out."
"None."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Peace Corps is frustrated with the amount of time it takes to get the funds once the project is approved."
"Don't know."
"None." (3 responses)
"We have an excellent working relationship."

Question I.10

What role does the host country have in the SPA program? Should it have a role?

In most countries, there is either no role or a minor role for the Host Country in the SPA process. In two countries officials at the community or regional level approve particular projects before they go to the SPA approval process. In one country, the Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation is heavily involved, gives advice and assistance, and must approve projects before they are funded.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors
"No." (4 responses)
"Yes, their involvement has been helpful."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians
"Current minimal role is adequate."
"No." (3 responses)
"Agencies should be involved in implementation of project."
"Yes, the Host Country should see that it suits their purposes."

Project Managers
"Local level only."
"It could be helpful to local agencies if they were involved."

Controllers/Budget Officers
"None." (3 responses)
"They should just set the direction."

Question I. 11

Is the current funding level, $40,000 per country, adequate, too little, or too much? What would be an appropriate amount and why?

16 said too little, 2 said adequate, 1 said too much, 4 said don't know.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"$150,000 to $200,000, proportional to # of Volunteers or AID country funding levels."
"$100,000 more or less, based on ability to use the funds."
"Proportional to # of Volunteers." (2 responses)
"Proportional to requests generated."
"Ask countries what they need."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Here, double it. It depends on what extent countries are using the fund."
"60,000 - there's 230 Volunteers here."
"It has been adequate, but won't be next year."
"Look at countries individually."
"Rank countries, with points for per-capita income, population, # of Volunteers, other economic assistance, utilization of funds, etc."

Project Managers

"Double the amount -- the needs are tremendous."
"$100,000 -- and I'd like to be able to do larger projects."
"Ask the countries how much they need, or use a formula."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Depends on the size of the country and the AID mission."
"It's too much, since we have $100,000 in the Ambassador's Fund."
"It could be double or more. If the Volunteers have good projects they should get money for them."
"There's never enough, especially if we get 100 more Volunteers."
"Rank by # of volunteers and amount of AID $ in the country."
"It's a question of how much money can be absorbed, planned, monitored."

Question I. 12

What accounting and vouchering procedures are used for the SPA?

BY COUNTRY

One country signs off on the agreement, telegraphs Paris, and the check is sent. Receipts and records are kept by Peace Corps, and verified by AID.

One country signs off on the agreement, and money is disbured by AID through a bank in the capitol to local bank accounts. Peace Corps brings in receipts and cancelled checks.

One country signs off on the agreement, and money is allocated to the AID account established with the Treasure. Checks are issued to community representatives.

One country signs off on the agreement, and then makes nearly all of the payments against vouchers brought in by individual merchants.

One country signs off on the agreement, and then transfers the full $40,000 to a local bank account in the name of the Peace Corps Programming and Training Officer. A certified annual liquidation report is given to AID at the end of the year.

Honduras data is missing.

One country signs off on the agreement, and then telexes the RBFO for the funds for each project. The funds are placed in a local bank account in the name of the Peace Corps Director. Reconciliation is done at the end of the project by means of checks and receipts.

One country authorizeds RAMC checks to the Peace Corps based on vouchers submitted by Peace Corps quarterly with a list of projects. Peace Corps has RAMC issue checks to volunteers. Volunteers submit vouchers, and Peace Corps keeps track of all receipts. AID does spot checks of records, receipts, and vouchers.

Question I. 13

Is the program guidance from Washington adequate?

16 "Yes", 2 "No", 5 "Don't know".

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"In the sense of program expansion, no."
"Yes." (3 responses)
"Yes, it's not restrictive. We could use more suggestions but no more rules."
"Yes, it's excessive."
"We want less. Often Washington doesn't understand the culture, or see what is necessary for the people."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Yes." (3 responses)
"No." (1 response)
"Yes, and a "permitted practices" cable would be nice."

Project Managers

"Yes."
"Yes, more guidance would mean more confusion."
"Yes, guidelines are something which could keep us from what we want to do."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Yes." (4 responses)
"No."
"I wanted guidance on how to speed up the disbursement process."

Question I.14

If you sought clarification of program guidance, did you get it in a timely fashion?

Only 3 of the countries have sought guidance. None were satisfied with the timeliness.

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors
"We sent a cable asking if it was possible to get another $40,000 and never got a reply."
"We fought even having a SPA, but it didn't work."

Controllers/Budget Officers
"It was never timely but it did clarify."

Question I. 15

Who receives the checks for the SPA projects?

In 3 countries, the checks go either to the Volunteer or the community group. In 2, they go to the community group. In 1 they go to the Volunteer, in 1 to the Peace Corps Director (and then the Volunteer), and in 1 it is all handled by voucher.

Who should the checks go to?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"The Volunteer." (1 response)
"Poor control could hurt the program. If the money is given to the community there are usually problems accounting for funds."
"The community." (2 responses)
"There are financial problems with giving money to Volunteers."
"Depends on the project."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"The Volunteer." (1 response)
"The community." (4 responses)
"Otherwise it would smack of American largesse."

Project Managers

"The Volunteer." (2 response)
"The Volunteer is ultimately responsible, so this is appropriate."
"It makes more sense culturally."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"The Volunteer." (2 responses)
"The community." (1 response)

Question II.1

What are the approval criteria for SPA projects?

In addition to criteria set up by Washington, countries have instituted country specific guidelines. In one country, there is a requirement that the community contribution be equal to 25% of the total cost. In 3 countries there is a guideline that the Volunteer be in-country for 6 months before a project will be considered, and in one there is a three months guideline.

Are you aware of the approval criteria for SPA projects?

WHO SAID WHAT

Director/Deputy Directors
"Yes." (3 responses)
"No." (1 response)

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians
"Yes." (3 responses)
"No." (2 responses)

Project Managers
"Yes." (2 responses)
"No." (1 response)

Controllers/Budget Officers
"Yes." (2 responses)
"No." (1 response)

Question II. 2

Should the aproval criteria be modified given AID's interests and priorities?

12 "No", 9 "Yes", 2 "Don't know."

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Remove some of the restrictions."
"No restrictions -- leave it to the country to decide." (2 responses)
"My concern is that Washington's priorities might not reflect ours."
"Certain geographical areas are of interest to us."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Leave it as is -- health and education have recurring costs."
"We need greater flexibility at the country level."
"Most of the criteria need modification for our situation."
"The $10,000 is so small."

Project Managers

"No." (2 responses)

Question II. 3

What is your role, if any, in the SPA project approval process?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"None." (6 responses)
"AID has veto power but we rarely use it."
(In 1 country, the Aid Representative [not interviewed] sits on the approval committee.)

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Consultation, support, review, and signature."
"None." (3 responses)
"Approve the vouchers."
"I occasionally refer small groups to the Peace Corps."

Project Managers

"None." (2 responses)

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Certify availability of funds." (4 responses)

Question II. 4

Should other sectors be included in the SPA fund?

18 "Yes", 3 "No", 2 "No opinion"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Health."
"Infrastructure and Education."
"No, we have other mechanisms to fund other sectors."
"It depends on the Volunteers in the country."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"No restrictions."
"No."
"It should depend on local AID and government priorities, but not we should not fund teaching English."
"Health."
"Health and Education."
"Depends on where Volunteers are by sector."
"Yes, if we get an expansion of the funds."

Project Managers

"If we get more money."
"Let Peace Corps decide."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"No, you could spread yourself too thin."
"Health."
"Nutrition."
"It's country specific."
"Health or school related projects."

Question II. 5

What are the reasons some proposals do not get approved?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"One project was not funded for classified reasons."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"If it's outside our area of concentration by Country Agreement."
"Lack of community involvement."
"Unsupportable recurrent costs."
"Sometimes for positical reasons."

Project Managers

"Political reasons."
"Projects get discouraged, not disapproved."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Lack of personnel in the community to take over management or staffing."

Question II. 6

Are you familiar with any SPA projects which you feel to be especially successful or unsuccessful?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"No." (4 responses)
"Water supply projects have been affected by the drought."
"All have been successful to my knowledge."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"No unsuccessful ones."
"No." (2 responses)
"Tool supply projects and projects with the handicapped have done well, but the small businesses are having trouble with marketing."
"I don't know of an evaluation which would identify this."
"Fisheries and forestry projects have done well."
"I don't know -- we should look at the failures for our own education."

Project Managers

"I like goat and fish projects, but chickens are high risk. Another is a boat motor -- who will maintain it? I wouldn't like to see loans."
"No."
"Too soon to tell."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"No." (3 responses)
"Gardens."
"Overall everything's done well."

Question II. 7

What is the average time it takes for a SPA proposal to be approved?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors
"As little as three weeks."
"On AID's part, less than a week."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians
"2-4 days to get the signatures on AID's side."
"1 week."

Project Managers
"4-6 weeks."

Controllers/Budget Officers
"Don't know."

Once a proposal is approved, what is the average time it takes AID to disburse the funds?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors
"Don't know."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians
"We usually give advances -- 2 days."
"3-4 weeks."

Project Managers
"Don't know."

Controllers/Budget Officers
"1-2 months usually, but it has been as long as 6 months."
"12 days."
"It can be from hours to weeks. We can get a check the next day if there's an emergency."

Question III. 1

What kind of reporting does AID receive from PC regarding the SPA?

In all countries but 1, an annual report is given to AID. 1 country gets Financial Report, Fiscal Report, and IAA's. 1 country gets quarterly Financial Status Report. 1 country gets frequent informal briefings, Activity Completion Notices, and Financial Reports. 1 country gets trimester briefings.

What kind of reporting should AID receive?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Just an annual report."
"We get adequate information."
"Semi-annual reports listing projects, with brief description, amount invested, community contribution, and technical problems we might assist with."
"Peace Corps must be accountable. Too much AID involvement violates the spirit of the program."
"Peace Corps should report on each project, capturing what is unique."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"We just get expenditure reports. We should get project reports."
"Send us copies."

Project Managers

"We should get copies of the final reports and evaluations of the project."
"We could use PVO information."
"Interim reports would be useful."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Pictures are important."
"ACN's and final reports -- the feedback is needed."
"Quarterly or semi-annual report on % of funds expended and projects completed."
"We get more than enough."

Question III. 2

Has information gathered from SPA evaluations and reports been used by AID to improve its' programs?

12 "no", 3 "Yes", 4 "Too early to tell," 4 "No response"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"AID and Peace Corps have two different sets of criteria."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"AID should be more familiar with institutions working in the countryside."

Project Managers

"Yes, we use the experience gained when approving other projects."
"If we get the yearly report it could make a difference."

Question IV. 1

Has SPA enabled AID to get resources to the commuity level at a reasonable cost?

All 23 people interviewed answered "Yes"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"There's a good review process, and the implementation is sound."
"There's virtually no administrative burden."
"This is the best AID investment -- no overhead and a good delivery system."
"We couldn't even be in some of these communities without the Peace Corps."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"It's good to work through the Volunteers."
"AID projects must go through the local government agencies, so there is a problem getting resources to the communities."
"It's one of the simplest things we do."
"By ourselves, we can't operate at that level."

Project Managers

"It's reached communities that would not have been reached by our projects."
"Having the Volunteer in the field cuts the costs by 10 times, more cost effective."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"The Volunteer makes it cost effective."
"Volunteers are cheap labor."

Question IV. 2

Does the SPA assist AID to meet its goals of responding to basic human needs in developing countries?.

23 "Yes", 1 "No".

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Probably more than anything else we do. It gives the Volunteers the $ to make their contribution real."
"No, here we don't work that much with basic needs -- half our budget goes into "economic stabilization."
"It gets resources to the rural poor, and is based on the communities own perception of need."
"Yes, although basic human needs are not as important here."
"Of course."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Much more so than a gargantuan operation."
"We're working with people below the poverty line."
"It lets us identify what the people want."
"Absolutely -- it gives us someone in the field who knows the needs of individual communities. AID does not have this in a systematic way."

Program Managers.

"We're working with grassroots, marginal people, outside the money economy and below the poverty level."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"The smaller is more effective than the larger."
"It helps individual villagers."
"We could take more advantage of it."

Question IV. 3

Have any SPA projects led to other AID or joint AID /PC initiatives?

4 "Yes", 11 "No", 6 "Undecided", 2 "Too early too tell"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Yes, we financed the expansion of a project that was started by SPA."
"Not to date."
"No, but I can see it developing in the area of seed stores."
"Don't know."
"I don't know, but I doubt it."
"No."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Not yet, but we want to do more."
"No, but I see possibilities in fish culture and forestry."
"Too early to tell."

Project Managers

"No, but it should in the future."
"It's too soon to tell."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"No, but sometimes it makes a bridge to other projects."
"Not from SPA directly, but we have had a very good working relationship with Peace Corps since way before SPA."
"Don't know."
"Too soon to know."
"No, AID and Peace Corps had a good working relationship before SPA."

Question IV. 4

Is the SPA more trouble than it's worth?

Unanimous -- 23 "No", 0 "Yes"

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Not at all. Informality is a strong point."
"Even we were more involved in the approval process it was not more trouble than it was worth."
"No, but it could be made easier."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"A small example of what can happen through interagency coordination."
"It's no trouble at all." (2 responses)

Project Managers

"SPA is a token of what could be done."
"Definitely."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"No, absolutely not."
"It's very helpful for AID and the US government."

Question IV. 5

How would you characterize the advantages of using AID funds through the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT-

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Outreach and supervision by Volunteers makes the funds more effective."
"It's flexible."
"It reaches the community level and assures that poor people are recipients of the aid, and there's minimum overhead costs and loss of resources because the Volunteer supervises."
"It reaches the perceived needs of the poor with minimal overhead and low risk."
"Speed, low cost, it responds to local needs and we can cover more area."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"It's a means of reaching communities we can't reach."
" They can maintain support in the field."
"It reduces overhead, and increases our outreach capacity 20 fold. Having the Volunteer in the community makes a tremendous difference."
"The Volunteers can conduct more programs and use more initiative."
"Allows grassroots projects to be funded and evaluated in a cost effective way."
"With other programs, our paperwork requirements reduce our ability to interact with the field -- it's frightening, and it gets worse every day."

Project Managers

"The funds go directly to the community and the community gets involved. Also, our relationship with the government is improved -- it shows we want to cooperate."
"It enables us to work at grassroots level in a way we cannot do -- all our projects have to go through government agencies."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"It's cost effective for us, and creates linkages with the Peace Corps."
"It gets funds to local groups."
"I'm comfortable with it because the Volunteer feels responsible for the money.
"When we try to do small projects our operating costs are high. Here, Peace Corps provides the administration."
"There is good control over how the money is spent."

Question IV. 6

How would you characterize the disadvantages of using AID funds through the Peace Corps?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"None whatsoever. It's difficult for AID to get moey even down the the cooperative level without SPA.
"If it's not planned well, the money could be spent on disparate projects here and there."
"The community may become dependent on the Volunteer or on outside funding."
"None."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"The Volunteers might be seen as a source of money."
"For Peace Corps, the 'per project' costs are relatively high on small projects."
"There are none." (2 responses)

Project Managers

"It's very labor intensive for the controllers."
"Initially Peace Corps was reluctant to work with us, but we have overcome this."
"Some people might say it takes money from other projects."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"None" (3 responses)
"AID doesn't have on-site review or spot checks."
"There are few disadvantages."

Question IV. 7

Do you have any recommendations or suggestions to make for the SPA program?

WHO SAID WHAT

Directors/Deputy Directors

"Avoid the tendency of any bureaucracy to build up paperwork and regulations."
"Increase the funds and give us more reports on what's going on."
"Increase the funding level based on the requests received."
"In certain cases, I would prefer to see loans rather than grants."
"Buy commodities or tools rather than labor, and minimize the financial management for the Volunteers."
"Make it an AID program. The Volunteers can help a population no one else can touch."

Program Officers/Assistant Program Officers/Technicians

"Increase the amount."
"Increase the sectors, and give Peace Corps either additional operating funds or permit Volunteer travel costs to be paid by SPA."
"Define how to transfer the funds to the Peace Corps."
"Washington should re-evaluate its' reporting requirements."

Project Managers

"Expand the sectors we can use the money for."
"Increase the funds, keep records by sector, and do a bi-annual review."
"Make sure not to bureaucratize it."

Controllers/Budget Officers

"Advance the full $40,000 each year to the Peace Corps Director and charge him with the responsibility."
"Combine SPA with the Ambassador's Self Help Fund, and recommend larger projects, or at least less projects under $500."
"Give more money if the Volunteers and projects can absorb it."
"Give them more funds, and reward quality work."
"Expand the program -- it's very useful."

APPENDIX C

REPORT ON TRIP TO THAILAND

BENCHMARKS, INC.
3248 PROSPECT STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20007 (202) 965-3983

February 7, 1985

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Jon Keeton and Ada Jo Mann

FROM: Thomas J. Scanlon Tad

My trip to Thailand was extremely valuable for the purposes of the SPA evaluation. I was able to interview all relevant AID and Peace Corps officials in Bangkok as in any of the capital cities where we are conducting the evaluation. In addition, I visited four SPA projects and interviewed six volunteers for the "volunteer opinion survey".

I thought it would be helpful for you if I reported immediately on my observations of the SPA program in Thailand. There have been some important misunderstandings about the SPA program; and some lessons are being learned in Bangkok which are relevant to all countries. Also some very critical issues are being raised. Here is my brief report.

1. The Peace Corps in Thailand has more small project activity than any country I have visited or am familiar with. Since 1978, the Thai government has been providing 500,000 bahts a year to the Peace Corps for small projects. In addition, the Canadian Embassy provides approximately $1.2 million bahts a year to small projects proposed by Peace Corps volunteers. The Netherlands Embassy had provided over 1.5 million bahts to volunteer projects as of December 1983. (I couldn't get the figures for 1984.) The Women's Club of the American Embassy also provides assistance to Peace Corps projects on a limited basis as does the German/Thai Fund. The Peace Corps team in Thailand considers itself to be a pioneer in the use of small sums to support volunteer projects. They do so with ample justification.

2. The quality of the projects is excellent. The Peace Corps team has imposed rigorous criteria on these projects. It requires community participation and keeps the size of projects small. The Peace Corps in Thailand is unique because of the extent to which it has provided its volunteers with funding for small projects.

3. The Accelerated Impact Program (AIP) was signed in February of 1983 and continued through July 1984. It provided $50,000 additional for small projects. It was signed in Bangkok by Loret Ruppe who was visiting there. AID is very pleased with the Peace Corps' performance in using the AIP funds.

4. When Loret signed the AIP program, Bob Charles, Patty Gergen and Jim Hanson were in training in Washington being briefed on the SPA program. When they arrived in Bangkok, the AIP program had already

been put in place and they assumed that the AIP money was SPA money. When Ada Jo issued her first report on SPA projects, Bob was chagrined to see that they were not included. In fact, he asked the staff to prepare a list of Individual Activity Agreements for Ada Jo to include in her next report. However, they summarized AIP projects, not SPA projects. The SPA money had been, in fact, lost to the program because it had never been obligated which would have required an additional AID/Peace Corps agreement at the country level.

5. In February 1984, AID and Peace Corps staff began to meet and deal with the issue of the relationship between the SPA and the AIP programs. AID/Washington (Asia Bureau) told the AID mission that the Peace Corps had to choose between the AIP and SPA program. They could not have both.

   There was nothing in the original concept behind the SPA program which justified this position. The bureau seems to have substituted SPA funds for Bureau funds. This was clearly not in the spirit of the original purposes of the SPA program.

6. Peace Corps/Thailand decided to opt for SPA rather than AIP funds because it wanted to be included in the worldwide program. However, both AID and the Peace Corps in Thailand really resent the need to choose. The SPA program is $10,000 less than AIP and it does require some reporting to Washington. The Mission Director told me that AIP could have provided up to $70,000 for the Peace Corps. It is important to remember that the need to choose between AIP and SPA was due to an AID regional bureau policy not the policy of the SPA program since it displaced an on-going AID/Peace Corps cooperative program and resulted in less not more being spent on small projects.

7. Because of the above, the SPA program is unpopular and misunderstood. Of course, this is unfair given that it was never intended to substitute for regional cooperative programs or to mean <u>less</u> money for small projects. Also, the Mission and the Peace Corps team have greatly exaggerated the reporting requirements connected with the SPA program. All the team has to do is xerox the project approval sheets and any evaluation and completion reports and send them to Washington. I checked the fiscal accounting system for the SPA and AIP projects and they are exactly similar. Yet, everyone from the AID and Peace Corps directors on down the line complained about the "burdensome" reporting requirements of SPA.

   It does seem that the Peace Corps team redesigned its formats and forms for small projects so that it would be consistent with SPA requirements. This is the only additional burden that I could determine.

8. The financial and accounting systems for SPA funds is exemplary. All checks are written through RAMC which avoids problems present in other countries.

9. Most importantly the Thailand experience raises two issues. "How much money for small projects is too much?" and "At what point does the administration of an extensive small projects activity by the Peace Corps staff require additional staff?" AID and the Peace Corps are unsure that they should have AIP, SPA and all the other funds mentioned above. They certainly don't want that much money to administer without additional staff.

I have heard requests for additional staff in every country I have visited. I am always initially skeptical of all these requests. However, when one looks at the number of small projects with which the Peace Corps team in Thailand is working -- as well as the relatively small size of SPA projects -- one concludes that the Peace Corps could not administer both the AIP and the SPA program wihtout additional staff.

My recommendation is that AID and the Peace Corps encourage the use of both SPA and AIP funds in Thailand and that part of the agreement between the Peace Corps and AID with regard to the AIP program contain funds for the additional staff capacity at the Peace Corps. An additional $250 a month would give the part-time staff needed for administrative and financial purposes. It may even be time to consider hiring a full-time professional person to coordinate small project activity.

APPENDIX D

AID STAFF MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

AID PERSONNNEL INTERVIEWED

Costa Rica

Tom McKee, Program Development Officer
David Kitson, Deputy Program Development Officer
G. Latham, Comptroller
Richard Archi, Deputy Director

Ecuador

Patricia Maldonado, Program Officer, Agriculture
Fausto Maldonado, Program Manager, SPA Coordinator
Bill Ross, Comptroller
Gerald Wein, Deputy Mission Director

Honduras

Cartaruchi, Mission Director
Danny Cruz, Program Oficer
Baltazano, Program Manager
Phil Cormany, Financial Officer
Kranstover, Assistant Program Officer

Morocco

Stacy Rhodes
Harry Petrequin, Acting Mission Director
Pam Callen, Assistant Controller

Senegal

Carol Henderson Tyson, Deputy Mission Director

The Gambia

Michael Bradley, Controller

Togo

Komi Agbo, Budget Officer

Thailand

Robert Halligan, Mission Director
Edward J. Ploch, Program Officer
Thomas J. Fallon, Controller
Richard L. Hopkins, Program Manager

APPENDIX E

PEACE CORPS STAFF MEMBERS INTERVIEWED

PEACE CORPS PERSONNEL INTERVIEWS

Costa Rica

Angel Caban, PCD
Carlos Murillo, APCD, SPA Coordinator
Juan Coward, APCD
Gilberto Ugalde, APCD
Mary Helen Bialas, APCD
Manuel Rodriquez, Administrator Officer
Marty Gold, PTO

Ecuador

Jose Velasco, PCD
Don Bryan, PTO
Lucy Schuler, Assistant Administrative Officer
Oswaldo Valdiviso, APCD
Mercedes Lundy, APCD
Michael Goldberg, Volunteer Coordinator, SPA/VPAC, Small Enterprise Development

Honduras

Peter Stevens, PCD
Alfonso Barahona, APCD, SPA Coordinator
Alex Corpeno, APCD
John Evens, PTO
Lucy Zuniga, Administration Officer
Jorge Betancourt, APCD

Morocco

Ann Hitch, APCD, Education Program
Stephanie Sweet, PTO
David Black, APCD
Ahmed MRabet, APCD
Mark Orlich, APCD
Jenny Fry, PCVL (P.C. Volunteer Leader)

Senegal

Lorraine Isaacs, PCD
Mora Sene, APCD Administrator
Chris Kopp, APCD
Steve Reid, APCD
Alioune, APCD

The Gambia

Johney Brooks, PCD
Anthony N'Jie, APCD
Michael Palmbach, APCD

Togo

William Tatt, PCD
Ellon W. Dedo, APCD Administrator
Margaret Gillatt, APCD
Etienne Apelete, APCD, Training Officer
Kodzo S. Amesefe, APCD
Marc Dagbovi, APCD, Education

Thailand

Bob Charles, PCD
Patty Gerken, APCD
Jim Hansen, APCD
Aajan Surat, APCD
Aajan Nikorn, APCD

APPENDIX F

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS INTERVIEWED

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS INTERVIEWED

Morocco

Robert S. Drake
Bill Bridges
David
Tharen Gorski
Borbara von Meyer
Anne Reese
Margo Schneidman
John Sentz
Will Lynch
Wade Prater
Susan
Theresa
Robert St. John

Honduras

Connie Falk
Kate Stratton
Carl Crozier
Patti Deeflinger
Lloyd Flores
Susan Parke
Mike McGee
Chris Tiffany
Cynthia Minarik
Martha Sweitzer
Wes Webbenhorst
Tom Callahan
Janine Copple
Craig Sandlin
Dana R. Green
Jennifer Barker

Senegal

Roger Swartz
Sarah Aikenhead
Cathleen Royce
Nancy Robinson
Eden Epstein
Velma Troy
Paul DeFiacomo
Tina Craig
Chris Gorkovich

Senegal (continued)

John McKinney
Susan Horowitz
Michele Herrington
Marsha Allen

Costa Rica

Kathy Benson
Kelly Wolcott
Chris Lambert
Arthur Kuesel
Lisa Myers
Jane Luders
Dave Hubacher
Barbara Fernstrom

The Gambia

Ed Boyer
Nancy Shillis
Beth Hines
Richard Marx
Akbar T. Bnafa
Paige Perry
Dolores Beasley
William Meikle
Joan Hanlon
Jody Swanson
Ray Gaut

Ecuador

Parmer Heacox
Mike Goldberg
Sue Fritzke
Paul Townson
Karen Pelerson
Ann Fitzgerald
Thomas R. James
Steven C. Parrett

Togo

Horace Greeley, III
Suzanne Marks
Todd Larson
Kirk J. Sodorberg
Alene McMahon
Margie Peronte
Dan Mapel
Maurice Johnson
Gregory Banks
Eric Reed
Nancy Lowenthal
Nancy Wirth

Thailand

Lucy Joyce
Scott Torpie
Sally Olsonasui
Dave McDaode
Mark Radke
Ron W. Rice

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF VOLUNTEER OPINION SURVEY

Question 1	Frequent Responses and Comments	Individual Responses and Comments
What are the advantages of the SPA to you?	Provides a funding source for projects. (34)	The SPA strengthens the volunteer's relationship with the Peace Corps as an institution.
	Enhances community involvement & development. (22)	Creates good public relations for the Peace Corps.
	Provides volunteers with something to work with. (19)	The PCV is trusted to manage the funds. The project creates records of what did and did not work.
	The Peace Corps controls the funds. (7)	
	Administration of the SPA is efficient (7)	
	Fairly flexible guidelines. (6)	
	Limited bureaucracy and red tape. (3)	

Question 2		
What are the disadvantages of the SPA program?	No disadvantages. (29)	Peace Corps approves the projects and AID disperses t funds
	Slow & lengthy funding procedures. (15)	A PCV has to be present for the eligibility of a project. This should not be necessary.
	Concern over PCV image; "Santa Clause figure."(8)	PCVs are not as well trained as other development workers.
	Lack of information about obtaining SPA monies(5)	There is a lack of follow-up funding and inspection for SPA project.
	Cash flow problems. (5)	Sometimes funds were put in the hands of irresponsible volunteers.
	One to two years was too short a period. (3)	The community's contribution and participation is not always checked
	Community unclear about source and funds	The projects are a one-time occurence.
	Eligible sector too limited (3)	Readily accessible funds keep the volunteer seeking other sources.
	Potential for creating dependency within the community. (3)	Throwing money at a problem is an AID solution.
	Can be seen as a handout to the community if not managed carefully. (2)	SPA bypasses host country agencies so the community doesn't have to learn the process of obtaining resources from them.

Question 2: Continued	Frequent Responses and Comments	Individual Responses and Comments
	Money is insufficient, especially since many PCVs are competing for the funds. (2)	The Agency giving money is directly involved in the project.
	SPA can be managed inequitably when only one person makes a decision. (2)	All responsibility comes to rest on the PCV.
	The SPA puts pressure on the volunteer to have a project when it may not be appropriate. (2)	Foreign aid may hurt more than help.
		Having funds available takes the focus off the Peace Corps' real purpose.
		The projects are not thought through sufficiently.
		Expectations could be raised which are not followed-:
		People might expect money in the future.
		The community might think that the PCV has a lot of funds to disperse.
		SPA could create a reliance on SPA by the PCV. It should be used as a last resource for starting projects.
Question 3	Of those saying yes	Of those saying no:
Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?	Technical projects forced the volunteers to learn new technical skills. (6)	The money could be better directed through Peace Cor programs in a lump sum.
		Guidelines are too rigid.
Results:	SPA makes the volunteers feel more useful and effective. (6)	
Yes: 80 No: 5 Undecided: 7 No answer: 4	The SPA money is important because it is necessary to start projects. (6)	
	The SPA creates hope in communities. (6)	
	Requires community participation to sustain community independence. (2)	
	The disadvantages can be easily rectified. (3)	
	programs in a lump sum.	

Question 4

It has been said that the SPA program has a negative impact on the community's ability to achieve self-help. Do you agree?

Yes: 13
No: 55
Undecided: 26
Yes and No: 2

Frequent Responses and Comments
Of those saying Yes

It inhibits self-reliance. Since the PCV applies for the money. (5)

True unless the SPA monitored closely. (4)

Of those saying No

It depends on the manner in which the volunteer administers and manages the project, especially the relationship with the community. (23)

SPA could have a negative impact, but doesn't necessarily. (16)

There should be active participation on the part of the community in all aspects of the project. (16)

Seed money gives the people a start so that they can create something for themselves, thus promoting self-help. (13)

The SPA creates self-sustaining projects. (10)

Individual Responses and Comments

Non-SPA PCVs will be expected to have money. (1)

Of those who were undecided:

By its nature it was designed not to have a negative impact on self-help.

If it was used as stipulated by the guidelines, i.e. utilizing community participation, then there would be no recourse for the people but to become self-sufficient.

If the projects were approved after a thorough asses and the community understood their obligation of mai ing the project, there would be no negative impact.

Question 5:

Does the SPA help or hinder the Peace Corps' development work in the community?

Help: 79
Hinder: 7
Both: 1
No Response: 9

Frequent Responses and Comments
Of those who said it helped:

SPA facilitates projects that are technically feasible but require funds to implement. (20)

As long as it is handled properly. (10)

The Peace Corps' effectiveness is increased. (10)

The community development process is facilitated. (5)

It helps because both parties have to contribute to the project. (3)

SPA makes Peace Corps experience become more valuable especially if the projects are successful. (2)

Of those who said it hindered:

The development work could be hindered if the projects were not managed properly by the by the volunteers. (3)

Individual Responses and Comments

Of those who said hindered:

One community group ceased doing things on its own a receiving SPA funds.

Question 6:

It has been said that volunteers who use SPA are perceived as grantspeople and this has a negative impact on the volunteer's role and effectiveness. Do you agree?

Yes: 21
No: 51
Undecided: 17
No Response: 7

Frequent Responses and Comments
Of those who answered Yes:

This perception of volunteers could be true but was not in all cases. (14)

The program detracted from other work he or she has to do in the community. (3)

Of those who answered no:

The perception of PVCs as grantspeople pre-existed SPA, volunteers could be perceived this way with or without SPA. (22)

Question 6: Continued	Frequent Responses and Comments Of those who answered Yes:	Individual Responses and Comments Of those who answered No:
	It depends upon the PCV, the people, site, how the SPA was administered, and how the PCV approaches the community and uses funds. (17)	The volunteers have more respect and esteem in the communities due to successful projects.
	Money has actually increased their effectiveness in the community. (14)	But the PCV must participate in a variety of projects in which funds are not necessary, such as community clean-up projects.
	No, because PCV's first evaluate the needs of a village and then solicit funds. (5)	
Question 7:		
What are the risks involved with the use of the SPA program?	Note that all risks cited are hypothetical, not actual cases of problems occurring.	The villagers won't fulfill their responsibilities.
	Possible misuse of money or mismanagement of money. (15)	The community may not be capable of carrying out the projects.
	The projects could create dependency and not be self-sustaining. (10)	Slow funding could hold up the completion of the project.
	The volunteers could be perceived as a money source. (8)	
	Projects could fail after having raised expectations. (8)	
	The lack of follow-up. (5)	
	No risks if the projects are managed well. (6)	
	Volunteers could develop and obtain funding for a project too soon. (6)	
Question 8:		
What should volunteers do to avoid these risks?	Strive to create community commitment and participation. (38)	Encourage the community to take more responsibility.
	Volunteers assess project and the community carefully. (26)	Underfund the project.
	Peace Corps staff should give better training, orientation and follow up. (10)	The community applies for and manages the funds.

Question 8: Continued	Frequent Responses and Comments	Individual Responses and Comments
	The SPA program should be administered better. (9)	Help the local people to understand the role they are play.
		Help the community to understand that the projects must continue after the PCV leaves.
		The volunteer should become well oriented in the use of funds before receiving them.
		Volunteer should use money in a manner that creates a self-sustaining project.
		The money should have strings attached; it should be withdrawn if not used correctly.
Question 9:	**Of those who said yes:**	
Did you receive an orientation to the SPA program and to these risks in your Peace Corps training program? Should you?	Received an orientation in pre-service training. (17)	The SPA program should be discussed in Peace Corps training programs.
	Received an orientation to the SPA program during in-service training. (8)	Examples of forms, steps and succesful projects should be given out in training programs.
	They didn't understand the the orientation properly and the information was unclear. (3)	Showed little interest in learning about the SPA program because it did not fund projects in her sector (education).
	Had been warned specifically to these risks in any way either in training programs or in other means of communication between the Peace Corps and the volunteers. (2)	Given pamphlets about available funds. Someone from AID talked about SPA. Instructions handed out.
	Of those who said no:	
	Received no orientation or training at all. (17)	After you're on-site you will see the need for funds and then will find information.
	Received no pre-service training in SPA because the program began after their training program. (5)	My impressions were negative; I was not clear as to what SPA would fund.
		Information provided by mail.
		Received information from PCV newsletter.

Question 9: Continuation

Frequent Responses and Comments
Of those who said yes:

Individual Responses and Comments

Received information by word of mouth.

Informal information mentioned.

Question 10

The SPA is a joint PC/AID program. Did you know this?
Yes 77
No: 7
No Answer: 128

The AID involvement has lead to slow down.
There was some confusion as to whether the funds really belong to AID or the Peace Corps.

Unaware that SPA funds came from AID when she first applied.

Question 11

Do you favor further PC/AID cooperation?

Favored: 65
Did not favor: 19
No opinion: 8
No answer: 4

Favored.

AID has a lot of resources and PC has limited resources and a lot of people. It is a good combination.

Good AID PR can help more; more access in country.

Peace Corps received funds (SDF) from AID and used them successfully. Good use of AID funds.

The Peace Corps is an excellent vehicle for AID to assist small communities.

The more people who get involved the better.

Would like to see a lot more.

As long as the PC does the project and the villagers contribute.

AID is especially important for technical advice.

It is good for AID to fund small projects as they have the reputation of only funding large projects.

Question 11

Frequent Responses and Comments

projects;
is too close a contact.

Individual Responses and Comments

AID projects are too big and often not practical. PCVs have better understanding of rural environment and are well-suited to administer funds.

When AID and Peace Corps cooperate it makes for better projects.

The Peace Corps is moving more towards working on projects. People know how they want to change their lives, but they just need assistance and money which AID can help provide.

Would like to see the AID library made accessible to volunteers.

Cooperation with AID is only logical for volunteers.

Favored with Qualifications.

The manner in which AID funds are distributed needs to be changed.

Funds are useful to PCVs, but working directly on AID

If it helps, the Peace Corps should keep money coming b not lower standards.

Peace Corps should maintain a grass-roots approach.

Make materials and technical consulting available as we as funds.

Cautious about Cooperation

Worked with AID and had many problems getting funds.

Cases exist where AID backs out of projects after volunteers are there.

PCVs working with AID projects are frustrated and unhap

It is great if AID just provides funds to the Peace Cor but not if volunteers have to fit into the AID bureaucracy.

Cooperation could be improved a great deal especially o AID side.

Question 11: Continued	Frequent Responses and Comments	Individual Responses and Comments
AID's side.		AID sometimes feels like volunteers are a "thorn"
		Did not favor
		It is possible that AID and the Peace Corps are not compatible.
		Both agencies should remain as separate organizations.
		Would prefer to see funds come directly to Peace Corps; AID has made it more difficult to get money.
		AID is political; the Peace Corps is not.

Question 12:	Frequent Responses and Comments Recommendation given for improving the SPA Program	Individual Recommendations
Should the SPA Program continue and How would you change it?	Better orientation beforehand. (8)	There should be a means by which an individual or family could receive funds.
Yes: 89 No: 2 No Answer: 4	More follow-up, supervision and site visits of projects. (5)	Make SPA funds directly available to government ministries.
	Streamline approval process so money can go immedialtely to PCV. (4)	Requirement of funding should entail a cash participatio of 25-30% on the part of the community.
	Increase fund, but hold limit at $10,000. (4)	Include funding for PCV travel in SPA projects.
Yes: 89 No: 2 No Answer: 5	Guidelines should be broadened. (3)	Put a ceiling on the individual country levels of $40,000 or else the money can be obtained too easily.
	Would like to see funding for malaria control, family planning and improved nutrition and other sectors. (3)	Obtain more input from volunteers as to the use of the funds.
	Stricter enforcement of community participation. (3)	Publicize the process for obtaining SPA grants and don't make them a last resort.
	Make education grants and make it essential that the community is involved. (3)	Beware of funding a project that the community doesn't really want.
	Someone from outside should review projects (perhaps AID). (3)	Look closely at the sources of funds and make sure the project is really receiving it.

Question 12: Continued

Frequent Responses and Comments Recommendations given for improving the SPA Program	Individual Recommendations
Strenghten education of volunteers in writing project proposals. (2)	Make sures that the relationship between volunteer and community doesn't depend on money.
Individuals granting the funds should do case studies of other project's failures, impact and implementation. (2)	Funding is not to be the first choice.
Hire additional people to review proposals throughly. (2)	Lower limit on size of SPA Projects (presently at $10,00 and continue to insist that volunteers be in service several months before applying.
The community not the PCV should control the money. (2)	Make it possible for the community to repay part of the fund or at least establish revolving fund to help others
10% additional funding should be allocated to all projects to allow for hidden costs. (2)	Make sure funds are fairly distributed. Make resources besides money available.
Make funding available for other sectors. (2)	Less paperwork.
	Emphasize the importance of finding someone in the community to donate services or money to projects.
	Feel requirement could be made that village must demonstrate successfully completed project.
	Require that no funding will be granted until PCV has served six months.
	Projects and funding should be handled by PC staff without involvement of AID and Embassy approval.
	Make sure PCV has time to complete SPA projects before granting funds.
	There should be more PC/AID collaboration like the USAID Land Management Project in Morocco which has PCVs and Utah State University involved in a 5-year project.
	Long term benefits should be stressed.
	Emphasis on use of local materials in training.
	Make technical support available for specific projects.

APPENDIX H

EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS FOR THE SPA/TA

1.) Program Consultations

2.) In-Service Training Programs

3.) SPA/TA Cover Letter to the Field

4.) Questionnaire for Peace Corps Directors on SPA/TA

5.) Questionnaire for Individual SPA/TA Activities

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Benin

Activity: Agriculture

Dates: March 23 - April 21, 1984

Consultant: Gerald Grosenick (from Wisconsin)

Focus of Assessment: Assessed agricultural programs in country to make specific recommendations relating to future programming and training directions.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Burkina Faso

Activity: Fish culture consultation

Dates: May 10 - June 20, 1984

Consultant: Roger Palm (Fisheries Sector Specialist, OTAPS)

Focus of Assessment: Project evaluation of fish culture.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Burkina Faso (Ouagadougou)

Activity: Rural Cookstove

Dates: March 1983

Consultant: Dr. Gene Ellis and Bruce Hanson, University of Denver

Focus of Assessment: Assessment of stove projects.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Cameroon

Activity: Inland Capture Fisheries

Dates: April 11 - 27, 1983

Consultant: Stephen P. Malvestuto, Ph.D., (from Dept. of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, Auburn University, Alabama)

Focus of Assessment:

Assessed feasibility of inland capture fisheries development program in four target areas.

1. Lake Lagdo
2. Mandara Mountain Reservoir
3. Lake at Maga/Pouss
4. Lake Tibati

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Costa Rica

Activity: Aquaculture

Dates: March 15 - 29, 1983

Consultant: Howard P. Clemens, Univ. of Oklahoma

Focus of Assessment: Program consultation for PC/CR which produced a report on the fisheries extension program in Costa Rica.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Costa Rica

Activity: Agro-Forestry

Dates: July 24 - August 6, 1983

Consultant: Richard Z. Donovan

Focus of Assessment: Gave technical and programming assistance to PC/Costa Rica at specific request of country directors Jean and Pepe Lujan. Assessed effectiveness of previous forestry technical training and status of forestry program. Identified modifications needed for future forestry programming.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Ecuador

Activity: Evaluation of PC/Ecuador Fisheries Program

Dates: February 16 - April 31, 1983

Consultant: David C. Garriques

Focus of Assessment: Provided specific technical training either not covered in pre-service training or that volunteers had a weak understanding of.

Other: Five separate zones were visited.

1. Carachi - Imbabura
2. Santo Domingo de los Colorados
3. Province of Napro
4. Province of Morona - Santiago
5. Zamora - Loja

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Ghana

Activity: Beekeeping

Dates: March 4 - March 24, 1983

Consultant: Mike Culp

Focus of Assessment: Assisted Ghana with beekeeping activities.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Guatemala

Activity: Bio-Energy Assessment

Dates: July 8-14, 1984

Consultant: Jay Hasheider

Focus of Assessment: Assisted PC/Guatemala in the development of programs relating to use of bio-energy.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Honduras

Activity: Artisan Enterprise Employment Generation

Dates: May 1 - 28, 1983

Consultant: Raymond A. Manoff

Focus of Assessment: Made recommendations to PC/W and field offices for possible PC actions relating to a strengthening of volunteer performances in income generation and craft industry activities.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Kenya

Activity: Small Enterprise Development

Dates: July 23 - August 15, 1983

Consultant: Peggy Benz

Focus of Assessment: Assisted with programming and training for cooperatives.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Lesotho

Activity: Small Dam Construction Feasibility Study

Dates: January 7 - 22, 1984

Consultant: Val Mezainis (from Tucson, Arizona)

Focus of Assessment: Assessed status of involvement in small dam construction and proposed specific recommendations for future programming and training directions.

Site visits:

1. Nyka Soba
2. Silo area
3. Sekameng area
4. Mokhotlong area

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PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Liberia

Activity: Feasibility study for marine and inland capture fisheries

Dates: May 10 - June 20, 1984

Consultant: Roger Palm (Fisheries Sector Specialist, OTAPS)

Focus of Assessment: Project evaluation of fish culture and feasibility for marine and inland capture fisheries.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Malawi

Activity: SPA program management

Dates: May 1984

Consultant: Franklin Moore

Focus of Assessment: SPA program management

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Mali

Activity: Aquaculture/Freshwater Capture Fisheries Assessment

Dates: January 6 - January 22, 1983

Consultant: Val Mezainis

Focus of Assessment: Assessment produced two reports:

1. "A Preliminary Feasibility Study for a Catch Assessment Survey on the Niger River in Mali"
2. "Fish Culture Program Potential in Mali"

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Mali

Activity: Water Resources Management

Dates: August 1 - August 13, 1983

Consultant: Steven Roy Evett

Focus of Assessment: Completed analysis of irrigation systems, needs assessment, proposal for training and analysis of equipment needed in-country.

Sites visited: Bamako, Koursale, Koursalekoro, Nyame Bankoumana, Segou, Tamani, Diourou, Kouela, Sama, Babougou, Cinzana.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Morocco

Activity: Expanded Inland Capture Fisheries

Dates: April 26 - May 6, 1983

Consultant: Stephen P. Malvestuto, Ph.D. (from Dept. of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, Auburn Univ., Alabama)

Focus of Assessment:

Evaluated potential for expansion of program in inland capture fishery development. Three reservoirs were visited:

1. Bon Regrez
2. El Kansara
3. Indriss ler

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Niger

Activity: Capture Fishery Program Evaluation

Dates: August 25 - September 8, 1983

Consultant: Stephen P. Malvestuto, Ph.D. (Dept. of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures, Auburn University, Alabama)

Focus of Assessment:

Provided technical backstopping to PCVs involved in fishery project on Niger River.

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Sierra Leone

Activity: Marine Fisheries Advisory

Dates: May 1 - 24, 1984

Consultant: Stephen Drew

Focus of Assessment: Provided programming assistance for PC marine fisheries.

1. Yelibuza -- The EEC Kambia Fisheries Development Project
2. The Shenze Region -- FAO Project
3. Tambo/Mama Beach -- The GTZ Project
4. Konakridi
5. Bonthe

PROGRAM CONSULTATION

Country: Tunisia

Activity: Reservoir Capture Fisheries

Dates: April 6 - 16, 1984

Consultant: William D. Davies (Professor, Dept. of Fisheries and Allied Aquaculture, Auburn University, Alabama)

Focus of Assessment:

Objectives of assessment: Overall goal to develop an inland fisheries program in cooperation with government of Tunisia.

1. Increase supply of fresh fish in interior regions.
2. Assist small farmers living near inland water resources to develop fishing skills.
3. Provide employment opportunities related to marketing of fish products and supporting activities (e.g. boat building).
4. Possibly improve quality of inland water resources by stocking fish species that readily utilize the plankton produced as a result of enrichment.

Site visits -- three reservoir systems;

1. Bir M'Cherga
2. Sidi Salem
3. Mellegue

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Belize (held in 4-H Center just outside of Belmopan)

Dates: August 8 - 19, 1983

Trainers: Steven Joyce
Judy Elliott

Participants:

Focus of Training: Food Preservation.

Training concentrations:

1. How to design appropriate solar food dryer.
2. Proper techniques for preparing and drying herbs, fruits, vegetables, meat, fish.
3. How to construct low-cost "evaporative cooler" with charcoal.
4. Introduction of alternative methods of preserving fruits, vegetables, meat, and fish.
5. Introduction of haybox cookers.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Cameroon

Dates: August 1983

Trainers:
[Participants costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Agriculture Marketing.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Dominican Republic

Dates: July 1983

Trainers:
[Participant costs only]

Participants:

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Dominican Republic

Dates: March 11 - 20, 1984

Trainers: Dr. Gerado Budowski, Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanca (CATIE) in Costa Rica

Participants: 14 PCVs (1 volunteer from Haiti); 7 HCNs

Focus of Training: Agroforestry.

Provide participants with a general understanding of agroforestry, both in technical and programming aspects -- Part I.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Dominican Republic

Dates: July 19 - 21, 1984

Trainers: Dr. Gerado Budowski, Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanca (CATIE) in Costa Rica.

Participants: 14 PCVs (1 volunteer from Haiti); 7 HCNs

Focus of Training: Part II of agroforestry training. Presentation by PCVs of project plans, based on 1st workshop, for technical and feasibility feedback.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Ecuador

Dates: March 5 - 16, 1984

Trainers: [Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Small enterprise development.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Ecuador (Quito)

Dates: February 20 - 25, 1984

Trainers: Curtis Gentry

Participants: PCVs and HCNs (ratio unknown)

Focus of Training: General beekeeping training including introductory course on Africanized bee.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Guatemala (Guatemala City)

Dates: February 13 - 17, 1984

Trainers: Ramon Venegas (Chief of National Beekeeping Program in Panama)

Participants: 3 PCVs; 27 HCNs

Focus of Training: Course on the Africanized bee.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Activity: Agro-Forestry In-Service Training in Dominican Republic

Location: Haiti

Dates: February 11-20, 1984

Participants: PCVs

Purpose: To send Mike Jenkins, PCV/Haiti, to Dominican Republic for Agro-Forestry IST -- Phase I. Sent again to follow-up workshop in Dominican Republic - Phase II -- July 17-21, 1984.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Honduras (La Esperanza)

Dates: November 7 - 18, 1983

Trainers: Paul Sommers
Denise Conley-Lionetti (OTAPS Health Sector Specialist)

Participants: Total 15 PCvs and HCNs

[Participant Costs Only]

Focus of Training: Home Gardens for Nutrition Improvement.

To link basic household data information with field observations to selections of crops and designing a garden.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Honduras

Dates: May 27 - June 1, 1984

Trainers:

[Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Pest management control.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Jamaica (Woburn Lawn, St. Thomas)

Dates: May 28 - June 2, 1984

Trainers: Eric Shirey (from Aprovecho Institute)

Participants:

Focus of Training: Improved Cookstoves.

Techniques of wood stove construction and concepts behind efficient wood usage

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Jamaica (Linstead) (4-H Training Center -- Rose Hall)

Dates: August 20 - 31, 1984

Trainers: Laura Goldman
Peter Zweig

Participants: Total 28: 14 PCVs; 14 HCNs

Focus of Training: Solar and other energy conserving food technologies.

Concentration: Design, construction, use, and maintenance of solar food dryers, fireless cookers, and smokers.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Kenya

Dates: February 14 - 25, 1983

Trainers:
[Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Crop Drying and Storage.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Lesotho (Ma Fafeng Region)

Dates: August 16 - September 5, 1984

Trainers: Dale K. Miller (science teacher at the George School in Langhorne, PA)
John Risley (from Tucson, AZ)

Participants: 15 PCVs; 5 HCNs

Focus of Training: Small dam construction -- technical and theorectical aspects of dam construction.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Mali (Babougou)

Dates: November 28 - December 17, 1983

Trainers: Steven Ray Evett (Head Trainer)
Jim Bell (OTAPS Water/Sanitation Sector Specialist)

Participants: 5 water management PCVs; 7 regular PCVs; 4 HCNs

Focus of Training: Water/Resource Management.

Concentration:
1. Hand dug well siting and construction.
2. Simple surveying for garden irrigation system design and layout.
3. Cistern construction.
4. Water lifting methods.
5. Crop water requirements.
6. Ditch and pipe flow.

Overall Training Goal: For trainees to acquire hands-on and practical theoretical skills necessary to design and construct small garden irrigation schemes.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Nepal

Dates: February 20 - March 2, 1984

Trainers:

[Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Small animals.

Country: Paraguay

Dates: February 1984

Trainers: Laura Goldman, Farallones Institute, California
Judith Elliot, Farallones Institute, California

Participants: 15 PCVs; 15 HCNs

Focus of Training: Solar and energy conserving food technologies.

Areas of concentration:

1. Solar drying of fruits and vegetables.
2. Construction of solar food dryers.
3. Construction of fireless cookers.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Paraguay

Dates: February 1984

Trainers: [Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Beekeeping

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Activity: Sent 3 PCVs from Paraguay to IST on Pest Management Control in Honduras

Location: Paraguay

Dates: May 27 - June 1, 1984

Consultant:

Purpose: 2nd country training for 3 PCVs from Paraguay. Training workshop in Honduras on pest management control.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Philippines

Dates: February 21 - March 5, 1983

Trainers:

[Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Agriculture Marketing.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Togo

Dates: March 19 - 26, 1983

Trainers: Larry Jacobs (Aprovecho Institute)

Participants: PCVs and HCNs (ratio unknown)

Focus of Training: Design and construction of wood conserving stoves.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Western Samoa

Dates: April 8 - 23, 1984

Trainers:

[Participant costs only]

Participants:

Focus of Training: Vegetable gardening

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Country: Yemen

Dates: July 23 - August 1, 1984.

Trainers: Jim Welch, Home Energy Workshop, Fort Collins, CO
Leigh Seddon, Community Builders, Montpelier, VT
Paul Jankara, OTAPS Energy Sector Specialist

Participants: PCVs (predominantly architects and engineers working in housing construction and water development projects) and Yemen officials.

Focus of Training: Photovoltaic Workshop.

Training broken down into three phases:

Phase I: Sana'a -- Technical Background and assembly of Small Systems
Phase II: Hodeidah -- Water Pumping Installation
Phase III: Sana'a -- Designing of Photovoltaic Systems and Final Projects

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Activity: Provision of business and marketing consultant to Women's Welding Cooperative

Location: Morocco

Dates: FY84 (10/1/83 through 10/1/84)

Consultant: Ahmed Berrezel

Purpose: To provide business and marketing assistance to a women's welding cooperative (of thirteen women).

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Activity: Supply of diesel repair materials for IST in Morocco

Location: Morocco

Dates: August - September, 1984

Consultant:

Purpose:

Purchase materials only

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Activity: Development of IST design on small enterprise development

Location: Senegal

Dates: March, 1984

Participants:

Purpose:

Hired local trainers to develop small enterprise development training design.

Appendix H.3

PEACE CORPS

December 27, 1984

Mr. David Burgess
Acting Director
c/o American Embassy
Rabat, Morocco

Dear David:

In January 1983 a Memorandum of Understanding between the Peace Corps and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was signed establishing the Small Project Assistance Program (SPA). Since that time eligible countries have negotiated Country Agreements in the field establishing a fund of $40,000 per country per year. The fund is designed to support the implementation of small projects at the village level which have been identified by Peace Corps volunteers working in conjunction with local community organizations.

Concurrent with these field activities, technical assistance to SPA countries has been delivered through a Participating Agency Service Agreement (PASA) managed by the Office of Training and Program Support (OTAPS) within Peace Corps and monitored by the Office of Rural and Institutional Development (RD) within USAID. In order to ensure maximum benefit from the SPA program, the PASA delivers programming and technical assistance to the field in support of the village-based development efforts. This assistance was designed to stimulate and support field-based small project development through program consultations and in-service training. The PASA funded over 50 miscellaneous technical assistance requests in FY 83 and FY 84.

In addition, SPA/Technical Assistance funds have been used for partial support of three regional program staff conferences. The purpose of the conferences was to enhance Peace Corps program staff technical programming and training skills, especially in the areas of food production, renewable energy and small enterprise development supported by the SPA program. The conferences were also used to evaluate the SPA program.

Recognizing the experimental nature of this collaborative mechanism, AID and the Peace Corps are conducting a joint evaluation of the SPA program, with Creative Associates, Inc. and Benchmarks, Inc. as the contractors for the evaluation. Part of this evaluation, through the attached questionnaires, seeks to examine the impact of the SPA program on the Peace Corps by examining the

scope and effectiveness of technical assistance delivered to the field through the SPA/TA PASA. The management of SPA grants to communities has also been reviewed by Creative Associates/Benchmarks field teams which have visited seven countries. The enclosed questionnaires deal only with the technical assistance and not the community grants aspect of the SPA program.

GUIDE TO THE SPA TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE QUESTIONNAIRES

Enclosed are two SPA Technical Assistance Questionnaires. The first is for you to complete in consultation with your country team. It covers the general subject of SPA/TA. We estimate that this should take no more than 30 minutes.

In addition, there are questionnaires enclosed for each SPA/TA activity funded to date in your country. We request that you assign the most appropriate staff person to evaluate individual SPA/TA projects. A brief description of each project is attached to these individual activity questionnaires. Filling in this questionnaire should also be a task of no more than 30 minutes.

Information gathered in this questionnaire and from interviews of Peace Corps staff in selected countries will be used to assess the impact of the SPA program and the technical assistance it provides, as well as to improve the programming of this technical assistance.

Your cooperation with this evaluation will contribute substantially to the possibility of continuing this technical assistance program. The Peace Corps needs to demonstrate to AID the results of the technical assistance provided to date and the diverse ways in which this technical assistance benefits individual country programs. Only you can provide this information. It is in your interest to do so.

Please complete the attached questionnaires and return them to me at the address below by January 31.

Peace Corps/OTAPS
M-701
806 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20526

Thank you for your assistance in providing the information requested in this evaluation.

Sincerely,

Ada Jo

Ada Jo Mann
SPA Coordinator

Questionnaire for Peace Corps Director on SPA/TA

1. Descriptions of the technical assistance activities (referred to in this questionnnaire as SPA/TA activities) carried out in your country are attached. Did you realize that these activities were funded with resources from a Technical Assistance PASA with AID to support the SPA program?

2. As a result of these SPA/TA activities:

   A. Describe any SPA projects which were generated as a result of the SPA/TA activities.

   B. Describe any new program initiatives assisted by the SPA/TA.

   C. Describe the usefulness of these SPA/TA activities to the overall Peace Corps program in your country.

3. How can these consultancies be improved in the future?

4. Are you aware that SPA/TA funds can be used to pay for local and regional experts to meet your programming and training needs? Do you intend to use them for this purpose in the future?

5. SPA/TA funds can be used for funding in-service training for host country nationals. How important is this to the Peace Corps program in your country?

6. Using SPA/TA funds involves additional administrative responsibilities for your staff. Do the results justify the additional effort?

7. How are requests for SPA/TA initiated and approved in your country?

8. How satisfied are you with the timeliness and quality of OTAPS' response to your request for SPA/TA?

9. SPA/TA funds, like SPA grants to communities, are designed to allow for quick response to your need for technical assistance. The present system requires that countries make requests for technical assistance one quarter in advance of the proposed implementation date. How important, in your view, is this quick response mechanism? Is it really necessary?

10. Do you have any suggestions for improvement of the administration of the SPA/TA program by OTAPS?

11. SPA/TA funds were used to provide support for three programming and training conferences during 1983. In January, one was held for the Inter-American Region in Quito; in March, one was held for the Africa Region in Mbabane, Swaziland; and in May for the NANEAP Region in Manila.

    A. Was the programming and training conference useful to you in administering the SPA funds? How?

    B. Was the conference useful to you in carrying out your programming and training functions as a member of the PC staff? How?

Questionnaire for Individual SPA/TA Activities

1. How successful was this technical assistance activity described in the cover sheet? Please write a brief, candid assessment of the activity including any reasons or circumstances you might suggest as contributing to its success or lack of success.

2. What condition or need led to your request for SPA/TA?

3. How relevant was the technical assistance to the SPA program in general? (For example, did it lead to new projects, provide technical help to volunteers with SPA projects or have other direct or indirect linkages with the SPA program?)

4. What were the reactions of the PCVs to the technical assistance provided?

5. What were the reactions of the host country nationals to the technical assistance?

6. Can you point to any new Peace Corps program initiatives assisted by the SPA/TA activity?.

7. How can the consultancy have been improved?

8. When you requested and received SPA/TA funds, you accepted additional administrative responsibilities. Was it worth the additional effort?