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**FINAL EVALUATION OF
THE LESOTHO DISTANCE
TEACHING CENTRE--
UNIVERSITY OF
MASSACHUSETTS,
AMHERST**

**SPLIT-SEMESTER
PARTICIPANT TRAINING
PROGRAM**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
II. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	3
A. Program Inception	3
B. Program Purpose	5
C. Program Design and Description	5
D. Inputs	7
E. Outputs	8
F. Beneficiaries	8
G. Evaluation Purpose and Methodology	8
III. PARTICIPANT TRAINING MODELS	10
A. Other Participant Training Models	10
B. Special Issues in Split-Semester Participant Training Model	12
C. Constraints of Model	13
D. Design vs. Implementation of Model	14
IV. PARTICIPANT SELECTION ORIENTATION AND PREPARATION	17
A. Candidate Selection Procedures and Assessment	17
B. Candidate Preparation and Orientation	18
1. Lesotho	18
2. Amherst	18
C. Candidate Testing	19
D. Recommendations	20
V. PARTICIPANT SUPERVISION AND MONITORING IN U.S.	22
A. Academic Supervision at UMass/Amherst	22
B. Support Services and Accommodations	23
C. Recommendations	25
VI. PARTICIPANT SUPERVISION AND MONITORING IN LESOTHO	26
A. Program	26
B. Academic Supervision for Independent Study	26
C. Reintegration into LDTC work	27
D. Recommendations	28
VII. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS	30
A. Cost of Split-Semester Program vs Other Programs	30
B. Recommendations	31

**TABLE OF CONTENTS
(Continued)**

	PAGE
VIII. PERFORMANCE OF PARTICIPANTS	32
A. Academic Performance	32
B. Relevance of Training to Needs	32
C. Transfer of Skills and Knowledge to LDTC Work and Staff	35
D. Recommendations	36
IX. PERFORMANCE OF FACILITATORS	38
A. USAID/Washington and Lesotho	38
B. LDTC	39
C. Phelps-Stokes	40
D. CIE	40
E. Recommendations	41
X. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	44
XI. APPENDICES	53
A. Chronology of Project Events	54
B. List of Persons Interviewed	56
C. CIE Program Statement	58
D. Participant Speech to P.S., Minister of Education	60

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The split-semester program was implemented between September 1982 and May 1984 as a M.Ed. degree training component under the USAID/LDTC project, "Structuring NFE Resources in Lesotho". Program design was intended as a response to training needs of participants, demand for graduate degree training, limited time in final phase of project, and need to maintain normal project activities.

Unlike traditional graduate degree programs where participants remain at their training centers for 18 to 24 months with consequent disruption of local institution activities, the split-semester provided for an absence of only two periods of four months each, separated by an 8-month period of Independent Study combined with normal work in-country.

As implemented, participants were selected and needs assessed prior to departure for the Center for International Education at the University of Massachusetts. The training center provided academic guidance, training courses, and social support services. The ability of the CIE to provide relevant courses was an issue of some concern to participants.

During Independent Study at the LDTC in Lesotho, participants continued normal work activities while researching and writing papers. Returning to the CIE for a final semester, they succeeded in obtaining M.Ed. degrees as planned.

The split-semester program model as implemented demonstrated its viability and potential for meeting the objective of maximum relevance of training to participant needs with minimum degradation to local institution functions. However, it did fall short of expectations and potential.

Relevance could be improved by a more accurate match-up of training courses to participant needs, and by integrating Independent Study research

with the needs of the institution. Value to the local institution could be improved by greater use of participants to train staff and, as mentioned, to provide Independent Study research useful to the institution.

Model replication is possible in numerous variations and should be considered a highly viable and cost-effective alternative to traditional graduate training programs.

II. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. Program Inception

The University of Massachusetts, Center for International Education (CIE)/Lesotho Distance Teaching Center (LDTc) Split-Semester Participant Training Program was a USAID-sponsored master's degree program that trained eight senior staff members of the LDTc in nonformal education under the USAID/LDTc project "Structuring NFE Resources in Lesotho".

Before the Split-Semester Participant Training program was designed, there was a series of events and historical linkages between the two institutions which allowed this unique split-semester program to take place. Since 1975, the UMass CIE had been involved in training and institution building at the LDTc. The LDTc director was a graduate of UMass/CIE as were other short- and long-term consultants affiliated with the LDTc, including the project director. This provided a base for the formal and informal ties that existed between the two organizations.

During CIE's early involvement with the LDTc, a few of the LDTc division heads requested, as a part of institutional development, the inclusion of degree participant training programs for the upper level staff members. USAID/S&T's initial response was that such programs would be detrimental to the LDTc's institutional development since degree programs would require a minimum of nine months, and more realistically, two years out of the country and away from the LDTc. In addition, having division heads away from their jobs for such a period of time is costly, not only in terms of direct costs for the training, but also costs related to the LDTc staff's absence. The cost of transporting the students and their families, as well as the time and money that would be necessary to train and pay for operational experts

(OPEXers) to replace them during their study, would be quite high. In addition, the timing of the long-term training would be such that LDTC staff would complete their degrees and return to the LDTC only as the project was coming to a close. It did not seem to be a very wise investment.

In November of 1981, during the third year of the project, the second mid-term evaluation of the LDTC was conducted. The evaluators highly recommended that both short- and long-term participant training in NFE skills be integrated into the project immediately. The evaluators concluded that neither the short- nor long-term staff training outlined in the project paper was adequate to successfully contribute to the LDTC's institutional development. At the time of the evaluation, only two in-service seminars had been held and only two staff members had completed long-term training.

Originally, LDTC had proposed degree training at the bachelor's and master's levels in financial management, accountancy and education. Various universities in anglophone Africa, the United Kingdom and the U.S. were identified as possible host institutions. Overseas long-term training was to be complemented by short-term training (on- and off-site) for all LDTC staff members. The problems and constraints related to the long absence of LDTC staff sent for overseas training, however, had not been addressed. The project lacked funds to replace staff for two to three years with OPEXers and to cover the transportation and allowance costs for family members. More importantly, there was no strategy for reducing the opportunity costs of productive time lost in the orientation and training of OPEXers as well as the reestablishment of participants into their positions upon completion of study.

Because of the LDTC's previous affiliation with the University of Massachusetts CIE and both institutions' familiarity with one another's programs, methodologies, philosophies and staff, the two institutions began

discussing the idea and prospects for developing a participant training program tailored to the needs of and constraints facing the LDTC.

In January of 1982, USAID and the LDTC invited a consultant from UMass CIE to Lesotho to conduct a two and a half week workshop and help develop a training plan aimed at meeting the specific skill needs of the LDTC while minimizing the negative aspects of losing staff for long periods of time.

In June and July of 1982, a second team of UMass consultants made a trip to Lesotho to conduct intensive training workshops in financial management and revolving loan funds for the LDTC staff. This training was for both degree and non-degree participants. During this workshop, a needs analysis was conducted to determine the skill needs of the degree participants before their final selection.

B. Program Purpose

The purpose of the UMass/LDTC Split-Semester Program was to provide a Master's degree training in nonformal education to mid-career professionals that would be of maximum relevance to the LDTC and the project's institution-building goals while causing minimum disruption to on-going programs. The program was designed to provide quality long-term participant training while maintaining, upgrading and integrating key training components for the institutional development of the LDTC.

C. Program Design and Description

For various reasons, the Split-Semeter program that was implemented differed slightly from the original design. Because this was essentially a pilot program, the evolution of the design is worth noting as it changed to meet the needs and fit within the constraints of the situation. The original

design evolved from a series of dialogues, brainstorming sessions and workshops which included USAID/Lesotho, S&T/ED, UMass/CIE and LDTc staff members.

As mentioned, two of the main concerns of USAID and the LDTc were that an extended period of time away from the project would be costly and would hinder the institutional development of the LDTc. The idea of conducting the training partially at CIE and partially in Lesotho emerged as a strategy for addressing these concerns. Originally, the designers envisioned the students spending one semester at UMass and two at the LDTc. The Lesotho portion was to include a combination of independent study, workshops and instructed classes.

The CIE, however, was concerned about quality and content control of such extended field work. Their aim was not to open a Lesotho-based UMass/CIE campus. In addition, spending such a short amount of time at UMass would severely limit the participants' integration into the CIE, an integral part of the Center's approach.

Initially, the designers envisioned a training model comprised of UMass CIE, AID and the LDTc, in which UMass CIE would act as the contractor and training institution. However, AID could not negotiate a contract with UMass, or any other institution, without going through the lengthy process of a competitive bid which requires issuing a request for proposal (RFP), awaiting the receipt of proposals and selecting a contractor. It became clear that setting up a new mechanism was not worth the time and would be a misuse of resources.

The alternative approach was then to identify an existing contractual mechanism. It was at this time that the S&T/ED Project Monitor suggested the use of Phelps-Stokes as it already had a contract with AID to manage

participant training programs. As a part of the new arrangement UMass was awarded a small sum of money to pay the salary of a student advisor.

As previously mentioned, the timing and location of the split-semester design needed to be revised. The institutions decided that the eight participants selected for long-term degree training would be divided into two groups of four. The individuals in each group would spend two semesters at UMass, Amherst and one in the field conducting their independent study as well as assuming positions as division heads at the LDTC.

The first group arrived in Amherst in the fall of 1982 and returned to Lesotho after one semester to begin independent research in December 1982. The second group arrived in Amherst in the spring of 1983, spent a semester at UMass and in May returned to Lesotho. Both groups spent June, July and August of 1983 in Lesotho working at the LDTC. The first group returned to spend the fall of 1983 in Amherst while the second group continued its independent study in Lesotho. In December 1983, the first group completed its CIE requirements and went home. The following semester, group two returned to UMass Amherst for spring semester to complete the master's training.

D. Inputs

The major input in this program was the master's level training in education of the eight participants.

The master's training involved course work in the following areas: curriculum development for adult and nonformal education, training techniques in nonformal education, developing skills for nonformal education, special problems in international education, applied group dynamics, education for community development, project planning in international education, needs analysis methodology, evaluation of nonformal education, and organizational

behavior. The above courses were supplemented with courses in areas such as script writing, educational technology, photography and literacy, depending on the student's particular area of emphasis and work at the LDTC.

E. Outputs

The output of the Split-Semester Program was the acquisition of M.Ed degrees for the eight participants and the enhanced skills and knowledge this training experience may represent.

F. Beneficiaries

Eight individuals received master's degree training in education. However, since the participants were staff who held key positions at the LDTC, one of the most dynamic educational institutions in Lesotho, it is safe to say that, with the transference of skills and knowledge, there were and will be many other beneficiaries. As the participants' training in nonformal education, literacy and numeracy as well as other skills are sharpened, similar programs in Lesotho will also be enhanced. Thus, the Basotho recipients of the LDTC's materials and the participants in their projects will be indirect beneficiaries of the split-semester program.

G. Evaluation Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this evaluation is to take a critical look at the Split-Semester Participant Training Program to determine the success of project design, implementation and management. In addition, this evaluation compares the innovative aspects of the Split-Semester program to other participant training models in an effort to determine the benefits of

'ncreased relevance, improved performance and reduced costs to be gained from this alternative.

The evaluation was conducted over a period of two months with a total of approximately 22 working days. It was divided into three portions: Washington, D.C.; Amherst, Massachusetts; and Maseru, Lesotho. A team of two evaluators compiled data primarily through interviews with key staff members of USAID/S&T/ED, UMass CIE, USAID/Lesotho, LDTIC, and the former participants. Participant responses to a questionnaire arising from issues raised in the first draft of this evaluation were gathered in Lesotho with the assistance of AID/Washington. Project documents and correspondence between the key actors were also a prime source of information. A third evaluator assimilated the compiled data and wrote the majority of the evaluation document.

One constraint to the evaluation was the delay in its start. As data collection began in May 1985, a year after the last group of participants completed its studies, it was at times difficult for the faculty and staff to clearly recall the particulars of the program. On the other hand, the gap between program completion and final drafting provided a very useful opportunity to follow-up on the long-term impact of the training. Also, due to project budget limitations, the evaluators faced severe constraints which hampered the collection of data. In spite of the above constraints, the innovative nature of the split-semester program, and the issues raised in view of its design and implementation, make this evaluation, in our view, a worthwhile effort.

III. PARTICIPANT TRAINING MODELS

A. Other Participant Training Models

Although developed in response to the specific training needs of the LDTC, the split-semester program was designed as an innovative alternative to other participant training models and the problems associated with them. Several of these models can be generally described as follows:

-- Consecutively - Attended Courses Abroad

Training courses requiring a stay abroad for one or more years, although the traditional and most well-used model for graduate training, often have unfortunate side-effects. The local-institution post occupied by the participant may, in his absence, be left vacant or filled temporarily, and his duties carried out by less qualified and committed employees. Alternatively, it is filled by an OPEXer at considerable cost to Government or donor country. There is no guarantee that the OPEXer will do a good job and, an outsider, he is rarely able to maintain operations on an even keel. The negative effect on an institution in terms of financial costs and the ability to carry out mandated activities is multiplied by the number of high-level posts vacant at any one time. Furthermore, the training itself may be less effective and less relevant to the specific institution or country situation the longer the participant is alienated from his job environment.

-- In-Country Training

Provision of graduate-degree training courses and experiences tailored to the specific needs and interests of each participant would be extremely costly and impractical. In-country training therefore

generally involves a series of 2-4 week workshops, discussion groups and other non-degree training in a relatively limited range of subject areas to suit a wider group of participants. It is usually hands-on-training, highly work-related and technical, and, although it can be expensive according to the number of expatriate trainers required, is cost efficient in that it serves more people and addresses specific problems and skills. In-country training is limited in scope and academic depth, however, and the beneficial effect of training in a large educational institution abroad and with a mix of students sharing views from different perspectives and backgrounds is absent. More to the point, in recent years, as was the case at the LDTC, professional staff in LDCs tend to demand higher degree-level training. The feeling is often expressed that such education would bring greater respect from colleagues as well as giving one's institution greater legitimacy in the country.

-- Variations on the Standard Model

To avoid the loss of large numbers of key professional staff at one time, many projects severely limit the number of staff to be trained abroad, allowing only one at a time to receive graduate training. This method both lowers morale of qualified staff not receiving such training and greatly reduces the scope and scale of benefits derived from such training. These and other training programs, although usually part of a package of institution-building measures for a single institution, tend to treat each participant as highly individualized and isolated cases. As a course of study is tailored to fit the individual, participants, attending courses abroad simultaneously or in staggered fashion, are sent to different institutions in different

locations. On their return, there is often no integrated effort to re-introduce the participants to their institutions and, by doing so, to enhance the impact of the training on participant or institution.

B. Special Issues in Split-Semester Participant Training Model

The split-semester program specifically addresses the need to cause minimal disruption to the on-going activities of the local institution while providing maximum relevance to institutional and project needs.

In this model, participants are sent to educational institutions abroad for one semester, are returned to their home institution for eight months of independent study, and then complete their studies with a final semester abroad. In this way, no key group of staff is absent from the institution for more than four months at one time. As a result, institutional needs suffer to a minimal degree and the participants themselves benefit by being able to more closely relate their studies to the practical aspects of their work assignments and vice versa.

Other positive features are as follows:

-- Relevance of Studies

The inclusion of an Independent Study component in the middle of the training course allows the participant, in effect, to tailor his academic program to fit his own work situation. The fact that this Independent Study period takes place in the local country setting and that the participant must perform work duties while researching the study paper considerably enhances its potential relevance to the institutions's needs.

-- Feedback and Involvement of Local Institution in Training Program

Unlike other graduate programs which take place entirely outside the

ken of the local institution, the split-semester brings participants back home to work for a period prior to return abroad for a final semester. This mix of academic training and work environment potentially offers opportunities for the institution to become more involved in the determination of participant courses abroad and in the conduct of Independent Study.

C. Constraints of Model

Given that the model evidently responds to many problems experienced in other types of training courses, it should be asked why it has not, to our knowledge, been employed earlier in other projects. There are a number of specific concerns that may have acted to discourage use of this model:

- 1) Cost. The model requires the expense of one additional roundtrip travel fare for each participant than would be the case under other models. There may also be extra costs associated with provision of housing for a period less than one year and training center charges related to the inconvenience caused by the need for repetitive services such as student reception and installation.
- 2) Institutional Cooperation and Coordination. The split-semester model requires a higher than usual degree of cooperation between the two organizations involved in the training program, the local institution and the training center. The latter must accommodate itself to offering two four-month periods of study interrupted by an interim period of eight months. Ideally, course offerings, advisor assignments and any other special programs given foreign students may need to be re-designed specifically to meet the needs of split-semester students.

The home institution, on the other hand, must make arrangements to compensate for staff absences, not for an extended period of one or two years, but for the two four-month periods, occurring a year apart. If appropriate staff are not available to fill the gap, the two periods of disruption, although brief, could have almost as much negative impact on the institutions as a lengthier period.

The institution must be willing to cooperate in assisting the participant's Independent Study training during the eight month interim between semesters abroad. The temptation to let work pile up for four months awaiting the return of the participants may be too great for some institutions.

- 3) Logistics. The model makes issues of transport, housing, administration, assignment of advisors, etc. more complicated than is the case with other training models.
- 4) Timing. Under the usual semester system followed by the majority of training institutions in the U.S., courses are offered once only on an annual basis. A participant group experiencing two full semesters, therefore, will find its course options limited.
- 5) Orientation. The four months allotted for each of the two CIE segments of the program are insufficient for acclimitization to the school, culture, climate, etc. Although not directly related to the prescribed training, potential benefits derived from the broader experience of a different culture and social and academic activities offered by the institutional community will likely be foregone.

D. Design vs. Implementation of Model

In a consultant report on the LDTC project (January 1982), a training

program had been recommended that would bring participants to the U.S. for one four-month period only and concentrate the remaining training on-site in Lesotho. The on-site training was envisioned as part of the broader training program mandated, but apparently neglected, under the original institution strengthening project. In view of the specialized training requirements for the more professional and experienced staff and particularly the desire of all parties, the LDTC, AID and CIE, to provide a quality program, the expanded use of the UMass CIE to provide a M.Ed. program was accepted and the split-semester concept designed.

The concept itself is a simple and straightforward one. To further minimize disruption of institution activities, the eight professionals selected for the program were divided into two groups to be sent in relays to CIE, one in the fall semester, the other in spring. As far as structure is concerned, i.e. the two group four-eight-four month relay, implementation did not diverge from design. Specific details of implementation, i.e. points regarding housing, courses and especially the subjects and procedures of Independent Study during the eight months in Lesotho, were worked out on an ad hoc basis as the program developed. A key factor permitting the remarkable speed in which the program moved from design to implementation and the smooth implementation itself was the well-established relationship between the CIE and LDTC staff and expatriate advisors. It was remarked by all parties throughout the process that the new model was an experiment with potential for replication elsewhere. However, as implemented, it did not live up to the expectations of many of the actors, both facilitators and participants. Viewed objectively, the program was not a failure--it succeeded in providing an M.Ed. degree to the eight participants with little disruption to the LDTC.

The implementation experience suggests it could have been a better program, its unique features, the at-home Independent Study-work period, in particular, offering considerable opportunity for institution-building and more practical academic training than is the case with other more traditional models.

As noted, the split-semester program concept was designed to address problems encountered in earlier participant training models. Nevertheless, although applicable elsewhere, the LDTC/CIE model, as implemented, was a response to a unique situation, the chief characteristics of which are as follows:

- 1) The LDTC is a small, dynamic institution, 90% Basotho, with clearly defined aims and high staff morale.
- 2) The staff requiring graduate-level training were all mid-career professionals with practical experience in nonformal education programs.
- 3) The training was part of an on-going project which had largely utilized personnel from the University of Massachusetts Center for International Education for in-country institution-building.

These specifics may ultimately account for the facility with which the graduate training was arranged and conducted, and the ability of students to adapt to a U.S. educational training program and succeed.

In the following chapters, the specifics of implementation are examined, lessons learned, and recommendations made for improvement. The objective is to describe how and under what conditions a split-semester model can be achieved that will indeed provide the benefits of greater relevance to student needs, ie. more effective training, while insuring less disruption to Government Institutions. Given the increasing demand for graduate education in LDCs, this new model could be of considerable value to development planners.

IV. PARTICIPANT SELECTION, ORIENTATION AND PREPARATION

A. Candidate Selection Procedures and Assessment

The eight participants in the UMass/LDTC split-semester program were selected by the LDTC primarily on the basis of their work roles. It was deemed essential that the participants be key staff members so that, upon return, they could train other members in their divisions, and affect policies and overall division performance as well as project content and quality.

After the LDTC selected its candidates, the prospective participants had to begin the standard UMass/CIE admission process. The workshop held in June-July 1982 also served as a component of the selection process. The workshop provided a framework in which the Basotho and CIE consultants were able to analyze and evaluate the participants' training and educational needs and goals. There was, however, some miscommunication between UMass/CIE and the LDTC regarding the exact purpose of this workshop. Some of the Basotho staff were led to believe that the workshop was solely for the selection of participants. Needless to say, there was some resentment on the part of the Basotho that outside consultants would come in for a short period of time and use something as limited as a workshop to rank their candidacy and make selections.

However, as mentioned, this was not the intent of the workshop and those who participated reported that it was quite helpful in defining their training and educational activities. The workshop consisted of a review of nonformal education topics, an examination of institutional aspects of the LDTC, and the development of individualized M. Ed. and short-term training programs. This needs assessment was done within the framework of the LDTC's future skill needs in areas such as accounting, materials development, training, research

and evaluation, management, literacy, community and staff development, and the use of computers. The needs assessment has been criticized by CIE and LDTG officials as well as participants. There is reason to believe that the needs of at least one participant would have been fulfilled best by specialized technical training rather than the broader graduate work of the CIE.

B. Candidate Preparation and Orientation

1. Lesotho

One of the areas that participants and student advisors reported as needing the most improvement was preparation and orientation both in Lesotho and the U.S. Preparation and orientation in Lesotho was minimal. The needs analysis section of the summer workshop constituted the bulk of orientation. Because the informal ties between the two institutions were already in place, participants did have CIE graduates working close by to serve as resource people. There was, however, no formal orientation in Lesotho.

2. Amherst

Upon arrival in the U.S., the first group of participants spent one day in orientation meetings with student and faculty advisors, reviewing academic, cultural and social aspects of life at the UMass, CIE. Participants reported that the content of this portion of the orientation was quite helpful and complete, but very intense.

In terms of course preparation, the orientation was also minimal. Students received lists of course offerings upon arrival in Amherst, a day before classes started. This posed problems as it did not give the students ample time to accurately discuss courses with their advisors or other professors to see if they met their needs. Also, participants who

had very specialized skills in technical fields, such as educational radio and script writing, and could not find suitable courses at CIE, did not have sufficient time to meet professors and instructors in other schools to see what courses were available or what possibilities existed for independent study.

In short, the students were faced with one day to go through academic, social and cultural orientation, select courses and settle into their living quarters. The general feeling among the participants interviewed was that the orientation was not extensive enough.

In response to these complaints, the second group of participants received a week-long orientation, as well as an orientation at Phelps-Stokes in Washington. No information is available to the evaluators on the impact of this orientation.

C. Candidate Testing

One technicality which CIE and the students worked out with only a few minor inconveniences was the GRE testing of the students. The CIE is, in special cases, willing to waive GRE scores as an entrance requirement, providing that the student has a strong educational background and takes the exam at the earliest opportunity. Since the workshop in Lesotho was in July, there was not sufficient time for the candidates to take the GRE in Lesotho. Having arrived the day before classes were to begin with a schedule already full, it was impossible for the students to take the GRE in the U.S. before beginning classes.

The problem, however, was resolved during the first semester, and students registered to take the GRE with a minor snag in scheduling. The exam was scheduled for the same day as one of the CIE workshops. This presented a

slight conflict in timing, but it was resolved with minimal difficulty. Before the testing, student and faculty advisors held a preparation session for the students. In the session, the group reviewed and discussed the nature, structure and biases of the test. Issues such as cultural and educational biases were raised. These were important issues to discuss as the participants were not accustomed to this type of exam. All students took the examination and scored well without problem.

D. Recommendations

Some of the recommendations that follow are related to program design, others are related to implementation and/or simple clarifications on the part of the actors involved.

- The evaluators recommend that the in-country orientation and preparation in Lesotho be more complete.
- All participants commented that the more informed they were before they arrived in Amherst, the better their performance and the easier their adaptation would have been. The participants were sent welcome letters briefing them on the climate and what type of clothes to bring, but all agreed that this was not sufficient. The briefing packet should have contained more preliminary information about UMass and CIE, its course listings for CIE and other schools, as well as social and cultural programs offered.
- More orientation time is needed in Amherst before classes begin. For the first group, too much material was given to the students to digest in too short time. If students arrived a few days to a week before classes as in the case of the second group, it would have allowed them time to settle into their apartments or dormitories, explore the

campus, discuss courses and program offerings with CIE and other UMass faculty and students.

- No major activities such as tests, workshops or retreats should be scheduled on the date that students are to take the GRE. The evaluators recommend that the exam be taken in the U.S. as it was in the case of the Split Semester program so that students can be properly prepared.
- The needs assessment leading to participant selection and determination of course needs should be conducted carefully as it is a factor in achievement of program objectives. Considerable weight should be given the question of whether participant needs will be fulfilled at the particular training center under review.

V. PARTICIPANT SUPERVISION AND MONITORING IN U.S.

A. Academic Supervision at UMass/Amherst

The CIE provides academic support services to all of its students. Each student has an academic advisor who is a professor at the Center. Other academic support services often take the form of informal student groups and study sessions. Like all students at CIE, the LDTIC participants received the standard academic support services.

Academic guidance on course selections was provided at the beginning of each semester and towards the end of the first semester in preparation for the Independent Study and second semester. In addition, a "reentry" workshop was held with all four participants in each group prior to return to Lesotho for Independent Study. A special weekly course designed "to round out and consolidate" the academic program of the LDTIC participants was provided as well.

While all eight students completed the degree program with minimal problems, most commented on the lack of access to their advisors and insufficient academic guidance in relation to some aspects of course planning. That is, most of the participants would have liked guidance on courses available from programs outside the CIE. One participant commented, "There was course information (from other programs), but not complete enough to make decisions about courses outside of CIE." Another mentioned that he learned of the possibility of taking media courses at another university too late to include it in his schedule. There is no information available to indicate that the participants took advantage of this knowledge in the second semester when their own familiarity with the center would have compensated for advisor negligence.

One aspect of the CIE that facilitated academic supervision was the flexible and cohesive nature of the CIE. The program is very participatory and promotes a strong community atmosphere and support system. At the time of the split-semester program, the CIE had three staff members with Lesotho experience which was quite helpful to the participants. The participants took the normal course load of 4-5 classes per semester and, with the exception of one, had no academic problems. This may be attributed in part to the CIE's commendable record in Master's degree completion.

The degree to which course work was to focus on Lesotho was also questioned by some participants. Some felt that it should have focused more on Lesotho, in particular, and more on situations similar to that at the LDTIC. Others, including two professors, felt that too heavy a focus on Lesotho would be limiting. This issue could have been better clarified in early stages of program introduction and orientation.

B. Support Services and Accommodations

All participants, in both written interviews at the end of training and oral interviews a year and a half after the program, applauded the efforts of the student advisors who served "above and beyond" the call of duty.

Two graduate students played this role for one year each during the program. This proved to be an important role as the advisor facilitated the participants' adjustment to UMass, CIE, life in Amherst, dealing with a university bureaucracy, getting their allowance from the contractor and other potential logistical headaches. The student advisor also helped in the cultural and social orientation of the students and even with academic problems.

The second year advisor described student life at the CIE as very close-knit socially and academically. There were lots of meetings to facilitate student-student and student-faculty interaction. A few of the participants joined the African Students Organization and the International Students Organization which also enriched their stay at UMass. Ongoing relationships with other students, however, were difficult to maintain since the participants did not remain at the CIE for consecutive semesters. This was a bit frustrating to some. To others, academic concerns filled such a large part of their time that this was not a problem.

Student housing was an aspect of the program that received both heavy criticism and praise from the participants. The first year the students were in off-campus housing, not within walking distance, and transportation to campus was a problem. Some students enjoyed off-campus living, others complained that they were isolated from university facilities, activities, faculty and students. The second year, students were on campus, most in double rooms, some in singles. All who shared rooms commented that single rooms should be ensured for graduate students. All students interviewed recognized that there is a housing shortage in Amherst and that considering the transitory stay of the split-semester participants, the CIE did the best it could. There were no major problems.

A number of support services delegated to the responsibility of the contractor, Phelps-Stokes, were problematic. Participants' allowances in particular were repeatedly late, paper work regarding medical insurance and reimbursements were also slow in being processed. This was a hardship on the students and some had to borrow money from friends in the interim period. At one point, Phelps-Stokes refused to accept collect calls from participants.

C. Recommendations

The following recommendations arose from interviews with CIE staff, student advisor and the participants:

- The inclusion of other schools should be considered in the split-semester program. While students were allowed to take courses at other schools, course information was not available to them in a timely fashion.
- Student housing is another aspect of the program that should be revised. It is difficult to satisfy the desires of all participants and some felt that the housing arrangements were fine while others found them unbearable. Greater effort should be made to ascertain participant housing requirements and, if possible, meet them.

VI. PARTICIPANT SUPERVISION AND MONITORING IN LESOTHO

A. Program

As planned, the split-semester program provided a period of eight months between semesters during which participants conducted Independent Study while taking up their normal duties at the LDTC.

Each participant had signed up for six units of Independent Study, the intention being that three units would be completed in the first four months, the second three units by the time the second semester of study at CIE had begun. Despite a slow beginning to the undertaking of study assignments and consequent last minute panic, in all but one of the eight cases, the Independent Study work was completed by the time the second semester began, and the one soon after.

One intention of the Independent Study segment was to increase the relevance of the training program to practical aspects of the work duties and country environment of the participants. All participants agreed that their Independent Study project was very relevant to their specific work and/or the LDTC in general. Projects include the titles: "Initiating Participatory Research in a Low Income Housing Area", "Integrating Functional Literacy into the Mamathe Learning Post Program", and a study of why school drop-outs do not participate in nonformal education activities in rural areas. Records available to the evaluators indicate that good grades were received on each Independent Study paper.

B. Academic Supervision for Independent Study

Contrary to expectations, the bulk of academic supervision for the Independent Study segment of the split-semester program occurred at the CIE in

Massachusetts rather than on-site in Lesotho. This supervision consisted of assistance in preparing study proposals, review of study activities by mail at the mid-point of completion, and discussion following final submission of papers and return of participants to the CIE. The CIE provided no support on-site.

Participants interviewed generally commented negatively on the lack of academic assistance provided during the Independent Study segment. Although the LDTC Director and expatriate project advisor could have been expected to be responsible for supervision and monitoring at this stage, their support appears not to have been felt in the academic sphere. LDTC management allowed participants ample time off work in support of program objectives, but because there was no advisor concerned with the specific details of participant study, no one was present who could, if necessary, argue for a concomitant cut-back in the work load to make the proffered free time a practical option. No appointed advisor was present to help identify appropriate local people to assist with individual study problems or to help the participants set deadlines and abide by them. Group meetings to support Independent Studies had been recommended by the CIE prior to the return to Lesotho of participants, but these were apparently not held with the regularity originally planned.

Academic achievement, however, is very much an individual matter. One participant whose excellent record is especially notable felt the academic support at the LDTC during Independent Study to be good. He simply "made sure someone acted as (his) advisor all the time.

C. Reintegration into LDTC work

Students interviewed noted that their work benefited from the Independent

Study, although they did not specify the extent or manner in which this occurred. It would appear that some pressure was felt by participants to place greater emphasis on work rather than study during the on-site segment of the program. The varied activities of the LDTC would have required substantial attention.

In that the LDTC Director and advisor noted improvements in the academic and general professional development of the participants during the Independent Study phase, it must be concluded that reintegration with the LDTC was accomplished with little difficulty. Information available to the evaluator on this subject is limited.

D. Recommendations

-- An on-site academic advisor should be assigned to the Independent Study phase of the program. As implemented, there was no one individual to organize and manage the program in support of objectives and no advocate of participant needs. Assuming the cooperation of the LDTC or other institution, the advisor, among other responsibilities, should be able to advocate to management the requirement that Independent Study receive reasonable support of the institution and should assist the participants to understand the necessity of balancing work and academic obligations. He should also work individually with each participant to facilitate completion of research projects.

Instead of a program of group support meetings, provision of a more formal on-site supplementary training to participants during the Independent Study phase should be considered. This training could combine the academic advisor's role as supporter of individual projects with a more general course on evaluation, research and other techniques

related to the practical application of academic skills to specific work problems.

- Use of local educational facilities and faculty to support Independent Study objectives should be considered in future programs. An appropriate academic advisor assigned from the University of Lesotho faculty, for example, could provide the assistance noted above and be less expensive than an expatriate advisor to the project.
- Consideration should be given to the use of a faculty member from the training center to provide academic advisor support or to run a workshop during the course of the Independent Study phase. Chief benefits would be the reinforcement of ties between the two institutions, the added incentive for training center faculty to provide support to participants during their study in the U.S., and the provision of appropriate assistance to participant research projects.
- It would appear that no regular reporting on the Independent Study phase was required of LDTC senior staff. Documents indicate that no report was made to the CIE until September 1983. Regular reporting on specific issues of concern by the LDTC Director or an assigned academic advisor to the training institution and AID facilitators should be a required activity.

VII. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

A. Cost of Split Semester Program vs. Other Programs

The only cost figures available to the evaluators is the PIO/P which merely authorizes expenditure up to a certain sum; it does not account for sums actually spent on project implementation:

Travel per student	\$ 2,700
UMass Program fee	3,000
	<u>19,000</u>
(including advance allowance of \$100)	
TOTAL	\$24,700 *****

We will assume that the program cost the full \$24,700 per student, \$22,000 of which represents the academic program and living costs in the U.S. We do not have figures for costs associated with the Independent Study phase in Lesotho. Given that the participants live in their homes and proceed with normal work routine, the only cost at that stage would be related to research projects. We do not know if assistance was given for this purpose.

The travel costs appear to be those for two round-trips to the U.S. Academic program costs are for one year attendance--we do not know whether the split year increases costs to the University and therefore charges to the program.

The traditional consecutive attendance model may very well be more costly in that the participant remains at the training center for a much longer period, with consequent living allowances and academic fees. According to AID, a twelve-month period of study has an average cost of \$18,000, more if

supplementary language training or orientation is necessary. If the usual M.Ed. program is longer than one year, then traditional costs will easily be higher than for the split-semester model, even with the extra round-trip airfare requirement.

Despite the limited financial data available to us, we might conclude that the cost differences between traditional and split-semester models are not significant and that, if this is true, financial costs should not play a major role in determining choice of model. Rather unexpectedly, we believe that the split-semester may be less expensive than the traditional model.

B. Recommendations

- Comparative cost breakdowns of traditional and split-semester models should be made by AID. It is likely that the split-semester is at least in the same cost range as the traditional model and entirely possible that it is, in fact, much less expensive. In view of the added potential benefits of increased relevance and decreased disruption, the split-semester may be very cost-effective indeed.
- Comparisons of additional but related costs: those for OPEX replacements for long-term, consecutively-trained participants; and in-country academic advisors or training center coordinators to assist during split-semester Independent Study should be considered as concrete alternatives arise in specific situations.

VIII. PERFORMANCE OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Academic Performance

The eight participants in the split-semester program are themselves as much a factor in its success or failure as are institutional facilitators and program design.

In this case, the participants were mature, senior-level professionals with some years experience in the practical side of nonformal education. Faced with a difficult situation, for example the uncomfortable housing assignments or inadequate orientation, they were mature enough to adapt and make the best of it. Similarly, on the academic side, while unanimously remarking on the insufficient availability of courses, they realistically accepted the situation and made the best of what was offered by the CIE.

Generally speaking, the participants performed well. They each took a full and sometimes over-full load of courses and received good to excellent grades. Remarks made by academic advisors indicate agreement on the participant's high level of performance.

B. Relevance of Training to Needs

The LDTIC and AID supported the split-semester program on the basis that the proposed training would meet the needs, not only of the individual participants, but of the institution. The PIO/Ps for each participant specify course subjects suited for the particular individual in view of his role in the LDTIC.

A rough comparison of PIO/P-recommended subjects and the list of courses actually taken by students indicates that a reasonable match-up was made between the two. As suggested by AID, all participants took several courses

in nonformal education subjects. Where a participant required a role-specific course, one was usually taken. In some cases the PIO/P recommended subjects outnumbered any viable courseload and were therefore not always represented in the participant's training. Most of the participants noted that they were unable to take all their desired course choices. Either desired courses offered in one semester were not offered in the other, the course was not offered at all, or there were simply too many desired courses and insufficient time. The ability to take desired courses was in part a function of familiarity with the University. There is reason to believe that both participant groups found more appropriate courses during their second semester at the CIE.

Expectations also played a role in determining satisfaction with training relevance. Courses were criticized by some for being too theoretical and not directly related to the kind of work performed by the participants at the LDTC while other participants appreciated the value of the broader subject matter to his or her specific work. Two of four participants interviewed following the first semester felt that courses had not been very beneficial to their work. Criticisms tend to focus on the lack of tailor-made courses, specific to participant work roles and even specific to Lesotho. Such courses would be rare in any graduate training institution and the style of criticism indicates that some students were not well-prepared to understand the more theoretical nature of graduate education. Nor were they well briefed on the potential use of the Independent Study to apply the theory learned in the U.S. to particular local work conditions. One disenchanted participant sought courses on radio broadcasting and media. Although he did take two, he seems to have been disappointed not to be able to concentrate more exclusively on this subject. In the limited time available for graduate training and the

necessity to take other courses on nonformal education subjects, it would appear that a better understanding of the graduate training would provide more realistic expectations or, given a need for strong focus on media subjects, a different training center or more technical non-degree course would be advisable. The ambiguity of the relevance issue suggests that participant judgments could change with time. The University experience broadened the participants understanding of their field and perhaps of graduate education as well. Four of five participants interviewed more than one year after the training ended felt it had, in fact, been relevant and useful. Two years after the training, all of seven interviewed found it valuable.

The Independent Study was largely subject to the discretion of the participant and advice of the CIE advisor, and was always conducted on subjects relevant to the work and interests of the participants. CIE advisor comments on the final Independent Study product were not available to the evaluators. Although Independent Study subjects were relevant to the student, they could, perhaps, have been even more relevant to the participants and very useful to the institution as well had the subject matter been developed with the close cooperation of the LDTC. No effort appears to have been made by the latter to link the research needs of the LDTC directly to the Independent Study research conducted by the participants.

The Independent Study research papers of at least six of the participants have never been published, and it appears that, in most cases, no one in the LDTC management has even read them, let alone discussed them openly with participants and other staff. For the most part neither participants nor management appear to have made an effort to raise the issue. There are a few exceptions. A participant did publish a paper, one paper is now used as a

training module, and an LDTC staffer is using a paper written by a participant to assist in teaching.

C. Transfer of Skills and Knowledge to LDTC Work and Staff

The final measurement of success of any training program is more than whether a degree was obtained. The training program for the LDTC project was intended to enhance the skills and knowledge of participants so that their contribution to the institution's activities would be improved. In order to ascertain whether this has indeed been the case, it is necessary to interview LDTC staff training participants over a period of time. Initial responses to this question were mixed. Two years after the training ended, however, there was universal agreement that it had upgraded work competence and skills significantly. One participant reported being better able to deal with people, another that as a result of the training greater self confidence is felt, another that work is now more understandable and still others noted that new techniques and skills learned are being applied on a continuous basis. More concretely, participants saw the benefits of their training in the planning and writing of a proposal for UNICEF, in the expanded radio time used for nonformal education programs directed at rural villages, and in one's activities as a workshop consultant.

In a report of the LDTC Director and project advisor produced immediately following the Independent Study period of the first group of participants, significant changes and improvements in the academic and general professional development of the participants were noted. "The increase in knowledge and in the confidence of the participants has added much to the successful implementation of the LDTC project." The annual evaluation report conducted by a team of consultants at roughly the same time produced a somewhat

different view of the effectiveness of the training. Their interviews detected that the contribution to institutional development of the training was perceived as "relatively small". An updated view of the NFE-project evaluators is not available.

There are a variety of ways in which the impact of a training program, initially directed at the one participant, can be spread to other beneficiaries. The LDTC does not appear to have fully utilized the new pool of skills and knowledge created by the M.Ed. program to benefit other staff. Although most participants have either led or assisted in workshops, with one exception these have been run for non-LDTC staff. On-the-job training has been provided by participants to new staff members under their supervision, but little formal or organized training occurs. One participant does conduct monthly sessions for senior staff in his division on the subject of how to train junior staff.

D. Recommendations

- In order to take advantage of the improved knowledge and skills developed under the M.Ed. program, and provide an opportunity to transfer these skills to other staff, participants should be required to design and teach workshops to other staff.
- Greater effort should be made to provide relevant courses to participants. First, a course list should have been reviewed and discussed with participants and LDTC management prior to departure from Lesotho for the CIE. Further, the nature of graduate work, i.e. the introduction of general theory which can be applied to specific skills by the participant himself, should be better conveyed. In the view of the evaluator, some participants had unrealistic expectations of graduate training available at CIE or similar institutions.

- Independent Study is the point in the training process at which the theory can be translated into practical results. Giving the participant an opportunity to do Independent Study research in-country and while in the active work setting is one of the unique features and advantages of the split-semester program and should be well-utilized. It is recommended that the research requirements of the LDTC or other institution be made the Independent Study themes of participants. Several benefits will accrue to this approach: One, the institution will obtain research information of value to it and at less cost than were it to employ consultants or utilize its own staff under non-study conditions. Second, the participant will be forced to focus exclusively on work-related problems. Three, the Independent Study paper will more likely be published if it meets institution needs, and, in any event, will be more widely read and distributed under institution auspices. The work and results, therefore, would receive greater recognition and make a greater impact on the community. Finally, in determining its Independent Study research interests, the institution will be required to more closely examine its own needs in view of the work assignment of the participant.
- For purposes of both self-assessment and to assist facilitators and evaluators in attempting to measure the effectiveness of training (and re-design the program accordingly), participants should each be required to provide regular progress reports to appropriate facilitators.

IX. PERFORMANCE OF FACILITATORS

A. USAID/Washington and Lesotho

The role of USAID both in Washington and Lesotho was both creative and supportive. Officials in the AID Science and Technology Bureau had had a long-term interest in the LDTC-NFE project of which the split-semester program became a training component. It was with the financial support and contributory brainstorming of AID officials that the innovative program was initially designed with CIE and LDTC officials to meet the specific needs of the LDTC under the time constraints of the project. AID showed a high degree of flexibility and speed in this case.

In the field, design and implementation were furthered by an AID mission represented by a series of three education officers, all of whom were interested in the program and facilitated the paperwork and decision-making required for implementation. Reportedly, there were no conflicts between AID/Lesotho and AID/Washington.

Two criticisms could be made regarding the role of AID. One is related to the use of Phelps-Stokes as contractor for the participant program. The argument has been made that using the University of Massachusetts directly as implementor of participant training would have been less expensive and would prevent problems that arose regarding allowance payments and other assistance. The evaluators find, however, that under present rules of administration, AID simply had no choice but to turn to an already existing PIO/P mechanism in the limited time available to initiate the program. Use of the University of Massachusetts, even if possible, would have required a lengthy bidding process. In the future, AID might consider finding a way to

be as flexible in such matters as it was in developing the split-semester program, but this is a subject outside the parameters of this evaluation.

A more substantive problem involving AID's role is its failure to require the kind of documentaton of program-related activities that would make this evaluation more exacting in its remarks. Although regular reporting is required on the project, no clear guidelines and procedures appear to have been in existence for the sub-project, i.e. this program.

In view of its recognized novelty, the split-semester program should have generated a more thorough and organized monitoring system. Highly informal reporting by CIE to the LDTC and, much more rarely, by LDTC to CIE did occur, and participants filled out a CIE-written questionnaire, but as far as we can tell, the facilitators and participants were not required to report on defined aspects of program progress, including follow-up on program completion.

B. LDTC

The LDTC originated the request for degree training in the U.S. and acted to support the concept of the split-semester. During the four-month absence of the participants, it assigned assistants responsibility for their work to insure minimal disruption to the institution. On their return to Lesotho, the participants were given ample time to carry-out Independent Study, although inherent work pressures may have appeared an obstacle to its use. The LDTC also provided transport, materials, and secretarial assistance in support of the Independent Study component of the training. But it did not go the step further needed to fully exploit the innovative aspects of the split-semester program, i.e. to make the course a more useful instrument for institution-strengthening and more effective than it was in strengthening individual participant skills. As noted earlier, the Independent Study might have been

used to serve institutional research interests and, in so doing, benefit the participant whose work would find greater relevance and institutional appreciation. Further, the skills of the M.Ed. participants could have been disseminated widely through participant conducted staff training sessions.

C. Phelps-Stokes

The role of Phelps-Stokes as contractual agent was simply logistical. It arranged health insurance, provided the book and monthly living allowances, and paid enrollment fees. Its role appears to have been minimal, but very little information is available to the evaluators in this regard, and the Phelps-Stokes advisor to the program has departed.

The relationship between the participants and Phelps-Stokes was often not good. All eight participants expressed concern regarding whether proper amounts had been paid to them and remarked on delays in payment of allowances and reimbursements. Although the reason for using the services of Phelps-Stokes as contractual agent are strong, it clearly would have been preferable if CIE had been able to play this role.

D. CIE

The formal role of the CIE was to provide the U.S. academic training program and related academic-social support (See Appendix C).

Participants' views on how well CIE carried out these roles are mixed. With regard to the academic role, the CIE has been criticized by participants for offering an insufficient number of relevant courses. This does not include nonformal education courses which were complimented on their relevance. Regarding support activities, the participants complained about the lack of orientation support. They felt the lack of relevant courses could

have been met by dissemination of more information on courses available at other schools in the area. It was generally felt that faculty advisors were too busy to meet with participants while student advisors assigned by the program coordinator are commended. Criticism made the first year, however, may very well have been resolved in the second. Reports from the program coordinator indicate that a series of sessions was held specifically to work out the details of the academic/professional needs and goals of the participants and to find a way of meeting them during training.

A review of available correspondence between the LDTC and the CIE reveals a more informal role played by the latter in which the student advisors and program coordinator demonstrated a very strong concern for the quality of the training program at the CIE as well as for the quality and conduct of the Independent Study in Lesotho. The close relationship between the two institutions is responsible for the conception of the split-semester, and rapid implementation is due to the availability of an institution willing to accommodate itself to its trial. Reports indicate the CIE's interest in the model of the split-semester, its outcome in practice, and ways in which it could be improved and lessons learned from mistakes in implementation. There was a strong commitment to make the model work. The CIE is the only facilitator which regularly reported on aspects of program progress. This reporting was done in a series of informal letters from the program coordinator to the LDTC Director.

E. Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are ones not already made in the course of this evaluation:

- In order to assist each facilitator with its input to program implementation and to provide data necessary for evaluation purposes, each facilitator and participant should be required to submit a brief progress report on its own activities on a regular basis, usually every 3-4 months. Copies of every report would be held by AID/Lesotho and Washington, and facilitators would be required to send copies to other facilitators as appropriate.
- When a program or project is viewed by designers as "innovative", i.e., when an original activity is undertaken to improve on previous models or norms of design or management, the obligation arises to fully document the innovation, its design, its implementation and its results, so that replication might be considered and the design adapted to benefit other programs. In such cases, even the standard regular formal reporting system recommended above is insufficient. Documentation indicates that all facilitators were aware of the innovative nature of the split-semester program and those at the CIE and AID in particular indicated an interest in its potential for replication. Simple on-going reporting, interview, questionnaire and follow-up procedures should have been established early on in the program.
- The lack of reporting highlighted in the two above recommendations can be explained by the informal nature of relations between the two major facilitators, the CIE and the LDTC, which characterized project genesis and implementation. The concept of the split-semester and the speed in which it was brought to reality are products of this informality and the flexibility of AID. But once established, the program is a case of "Who's in charge here?". No one facilitator or individual was assigned

to coordinate the program from beginning to end, to establish reporting procedures, and to insure that the program met its initial goals of minimal disruption and maximum relevance. The program suffered from lack of continuity. During its implementation, there were three AID Lesotho mission education officers and a turnover in LDTC project advisors. The two program coordinators at the CIE most responsible for program design left the University of Massachusetts and even the graduate student advisor post changed hands. The program should have had a single manager to insure the coordination of its various facilitator parts, the optimal achievement of all program objectives, and, not least of all, to maintain an institutional/program memory for the sake of evaluation and replication.

X. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Between November 1981 and June 1982, the concept of the split-semester program was developed in response to the specific needs of the LDTC in Lesotho. As eventually defined, those needs were: One, to provide maximum relevant graduate-level degree training to eight professional staff members occupying key positions while, two, causing minimal disruption to the activities of the institution and project. The latter point was particularly pressing as the training had to take place before the completion of the umbrella project aimed at strengthening nonformal education at the LDTC.

Although the project had decided to provide a series of in-country workshops and other training programs for LDTC staff, the institution, following a growing pattern in the LDTC, insisted on graduate degree training for its senior staff. Graduate training, at this time, could not be viably provided in-country and the prospect of a traditional M.Ed. training program was not attractive to the project advisor and AID. The absence of key staff for an extended period of one and a half to two years, could not be countenanced, especially in the final phase of the institution-strengthening project.

The solution, the split-semester program, sent participants to the CIE at the University of Massachusetts for a period of only four months, returned them to the LDTC for eight months, during which time the participant combined his regular work routine with six credits of Independent Study, and followed this by a final four months at CIE to complete the degree. In theory, the two brief absences minimized institutional disruption to a degree not experienced in the traditional degree training model, and the Independent Study in-country maximized the relevance of the training to a degree also unusual for a graduate degree program.

The split-semester program design, as implemented by the LDTC and the CIE from 1982 to 1984, raises two sets of issues. One set relates to the implemented program. The other set of issues returns to the original concept and informs us of its value and viability. The issues encountered in program implementation have been described in the preceding chapters and most do not require repetition. Problems in housing, allowance payments, academic advisors, etc., are correctable and, even if not, have negligible impact on the end result of the training program. There were four strengths in the program as implemented:

- 1) Each of the eight participants obtained an M.Ed. degree from the CIE. Participants questioned whether their courses could have been more "relevant" to the specifics of their work and country. Whether the fault here lies in the unrealistic expectations of the participants, a wrong choice of training centers, or the candidate and needs selection process in June 1982 at the LDTC is subject to argument. All participants took courses in nonformal education, all appear to have had at least one or two courses specific to their work roles. The traditional model would have had the advantage of additional course time, non-repetitive semesters, and more time to develop greater familiarity with the educational options outside the center. But the traditional model's courses would not necessarily be more relevant in the way that the participants mean and would not offer the extremely relevant Independent Study period.
- 2) The eight month Independent Study segment which took place between semesters at the CIE gave participants an opportunity to apply their studies directly to their interests/work roles in the field. There is no equivalent in the traditional model except for doctoral studies

which might include research in-country. And there is no equivalent in other models for the combination of work and study included in the split-semester program.

- 3) Due to the Independent Study/Work phase, staff members were required to be absent from Lesotho for only two periods of four months each, instead of a consecutive period of 18 or more months under the traditional system. During these absences, colleagues handled the additional work load with no major problems, according to four of seven participants interviewed. Although the excessive work load did cause problems in these cases and the annual evaluators (November 1983) felt that "absences for training . . . slowed down project progress considerably," it seems logical that the abbreviated period abroad had a less negative impact on the institution than would the longer absence. It also seems probable that steps could have been taken to foresee and resolve difficulties caused by the four month absences where they arise.
- 4) All eight participants attended the same training center, a step which might have served to reinforce group cohesion and morale and, through discussion with fellow-participants, helped individuals to relate their overseas training to their work situation and vice versa. This aspect, however beneficial, is not intrinsic to the program model.

The program as implemented did serve its basic purpose, although clearly it could have worked better than it did. Lessons learned from implementation suggest that, in fact, the design has considerable promise and could, with several changes, be improved to provide what the original concept promised--and only partly delivered--minimal disruption and maximum relevance. What elements of the implemented program and improvements would make the program design most effective?

1) Training Centers. Due to logistical problems of housing and advisors, the program would work best if one training center is used, although this is by no means necessary. A program manager would be assigned at the training center, as was the case with the implemented model----his role would be to assist participants with locating relevant courses, at the CIE or other local centers. Course information would be provided to the local institutions well in advance of participant departure and training center orientation would begin at least one week prior to classes. During the semesters a special seminar might be held for participants to insure their progress and the application of studies to work-role situations.

The program as implemented benefited by good relations between the LDTTC and the CIE, but this situation is not easily replicated elsewhere. Such relations would be useful to resolve logistical problems, but more important, they would insure establishment of procedures leading to agreement with the local institution on relevant research subjects for the Independent Study. In a larger split-semester program, use of the center's program manager as a short-term consultant during the Independent Study could assist considerably to facilitate communication and provision by the center of relevant training.

Academic relevance at the training center itself, an issue raised repeatedly by participants, may be resolved in several ways, depending on the source of the problem:

1) Use of a different training center if the match-up was not appropriate. An improved needs assessment might make the difference here.

- 2) Better pre-departure orientation, if the problem was unrealistic participant expectations of graduate training.
 - 3) Better orientation and advisor assistance, if the problem could be resolved by greater use of the training center and other area training facilities.
 - 4) Change of course scheduling to provide subjects highly relevant to the particular participants, an unlikely possibility unless large numbers of participants are involved.
- 2) Independent Study. Practical relevance should be emphasized here and to do so participants would complete research projects meeting the immediate, utilitarian needs of the institution. These projects would be proposed and discussed between institution officials, participants, and, if applicable, project advisor prior to the training. In this way, work and study would be closely integrated. An academic advisor would be chosen from the local University or other source to assist participants in completing work-study. If sufficient funds are available, the CIE program manager would be offered a two week consultancy to conduct an in-country workshop for the participants and other staff, during which time the participants would receive further academic assistance. In this way, the center program manager would be brought into the work context of the program and useful mutual feedback might occur.
- 3) Local Institution. The program would work best if the local institution is fully committed to the support and exploitation of a participant training designed largely to strengthen the institution's own capabilities. Certainly the participant benefits as a result of his training program, but the chief beneficiary ideally should be the

institution. Before, during and following the program, the institution can take measures which will maximize relevance and effectiveness of the training while minimizing disruption to the institution. The institution must plan carefully to insure that the training provided is appropriate to the work role the participant is to fill on his return, that the Independent Study is as essential to its program as it is to the participant's, and that the institution's work can be adequately performed during the participant's absence. At the completion of training, the participant's new skills should be used to the maximum extent in performance of duties and disseminating skills and knowledge to others. It might assist institution officials from the start to periodically ask themselves why the participant has been sent for study in the first place and what they can do to facilitate the institution's objectives in this regard. The degree of commitment of the local institution can mean the difference between a simply adequate program and one that is truly institution-strengthening.

- 4) Where sufficient numbers of participants warrant, a program manager located in-country would be appointed. The manager could be the academic advisor, an AID official, or project advisor as appropriate. The manager would coordinate all aspects of the training and insure adequate feedback and reporting by all parties. Alternatively, the CIE

manager could play this role, but this would require deepening his involvement in the Independent Study segment of the program, at consequent financial cost.

This model, albeit an ideal, responds to the obvious inadequacies of the program as implemented and suggests its potential for maximizing relevance and minimizing disruption to Government institutions.

Graduate training is very much in demand in the LDCs and, where government and other institutions have limited resources of professional manpower, it is particularly disruptive to lose staff for lengthy periods of time. For the donor country it is a highly questionable investment. Training provided in the context of institution-strengthening projects is usually best suited to honing specific technical skills which can be accomplished by in-country workshops, etc. Long-term training abroad not only disrupts the normal functions of an institution but increases the risk of permanent loss by giving the participant a valued degree, leading often to employment opportunities in the private sector or higher government position. In terms of the country's overall development, this is something the donor country can swallow, but for the project and institution it can be the ultimate disaster.

We are not speaking hypothetically here. Four of the eight participants trained under the split-semester program of the Nonformal Education Strengthening project have already left the LDTC for other positions. There

1 On a more positive side of the issue, consider the split-semester participant, now employed by another institution, who credits the M.Ed. program with making him a "critical consumer" of reports. As a result, he ordered a second version of a report that had not satisfied him and consequently forced a reversal of a previous "go" decision on a presumably inadequate project. His education continues to benefit the country.

is no easy way to discourage the trend favoring graduate degrees or its consequences. But, the model of training used can and should assist in helping the project get the most for its investment. By tying the training closely to the work situation as can be the case with the split-semester program, the institution is benefited during the training process itself. Further, the participant is provided a more relevant graduate education with less time spent abroad, a factor which may at least act to discourage his departure for greener economic positions in the developed countries.

In the view of the evaluators, the split-semester program is a viable proposition offering benefits to the institution and participants which greatly exceed in potential those inherent benefits in the traditional consecutively attended graduate degree program. The program would suit both individual participants as well as groups like those in the LDTC case. Considering the increasing demand for graduate degrees internationally, it is surprising that the model has apparently been untried previously.

One 8-participant program cannot fully establish, nor should it discourage, replication of the model elsewhere. Improvements, as noted above, can and should be made. Variations are likely to be numerous. For example, were the training program merely extended by four months to twenty, instead of 16, it could take a form resolving several of the problems mentioned in the course of this evaluation. Participants would spend a four month semester at the training center, undertake Independent Study/Work in their home institution for one year instead of 8 months, and then complete their final semester abroad. This small change in timing would allow the participant greater choice of courses by providing training once during the fall and then once during the spring semester. Secondly, the extra four months for Independent Study would give the participant more time to complete a

worthwhile and more comprehensive research project while performing his normal work routine, thereby causing even less disruption to the institution than in the original model.

As innovations invite innovations, it is to be hoped that more improvements and variations will follow replication of the split-semester model.

A P P E N D I C E S

APPENDIX A
CHRONOLOGY OF PROJECT EVENTS

CHRONOLOGY OF PROJECT EVENTS

November 1981 USAID Evaluation Team recommends training program.

January 1982 Consultant runs workshop and determines overall project training needs.

June-July 1982 Workshop chooses participants and recommends specific training needs.

Sept-Dec 1982 First group of 4 LDTC participants attends CIE

January-May 1983 Second group attends CIE.

 First group works at LDTC and researches and writes Independent Study projects.

June-August 1983 Both groups Work/Independent Study.

Sept-Dec 1983 First Group attends final semester CIE.

 Second Group attends final semester CIE.

APPENDIX B
LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Jim Hoxeng	AID/S&T/ED
Nancy Maklan	CIE Graduate Student Advisor
David R. Evans	CIE
George Urch	CIE
Bob Miltz	CIE
Dick Betz	LDTC
Linda Zieghan	LDTC
Matsemo Mobe	LDTC
Paul Motlatsi Morolong	LDTC
Sechaba Seutoali	LDTC
Moleko Pholonngoe	LDTC
Lipholo Makhera	LDTC

APPENDIX C
CIE PROGRAM STATEMENT

Statement on CIE/UMass Program fee.

Where students are being sent to CIE for degree or non-degree training in the context of an institutional development activity. CIE undertakes a variety of special, focussed training activities which adapt the program of the individuals to the situation and needs of their home institution. In order to insure consistent quality in this effort CIE charges a program fee for each student which is in addition to normal tuition.

Arrangements prior to arrival

- finding and securing housing
- handling negotiations, planning, approvals
- assisting foreign student office with visas and travel
- responding to queries, problems, bureaucratic snafus
- arranging loans to pre-pay fees, down payments necessary

Administration

- correspondence & communications with Phelps-Stokes, AID/W, AID/Maseru, LDTC, University Offices.
- financial documentation
- problem solving with contradictions between all the bureaucracies involved
- arranging transportation (to and from airport) to local conferences, events, professional activities

Academic Programming

- Detailed advising on program planning in conjunction with faculty advisor
- Responsibility for a special group seminar for all LDTC participants on campus where they work on adaptation and application to LDTC needs of their studies
- assistance in registration, access to closed courses, dialogue with faculty, special arrangements with faculty on projects and papers
- help with problems in courses, with papers, with meeting University regulations
- setting up collegial learning activities

Off-Campus Activities

- Finding special workshops internship placements, NFE organizations to visit, and making all arrangements.
- Assisting in attending professional conferences, meetings, seeing relevant visitors etc.
- Supporting social and entertainment activities which are essential for morale and adjustment
- Support in solving personal problems, problems at home, emergencies, etc.

Miscellaneous

- linkage to on-site training activities at LDTC through consultants at UMASS during preparation
- Setting up and carrying out plans for personal library and resource center for each participant.
- detailed orientation to CIE, UMASS, and life in New England

APPENDIX D
PARTICIPANT SPEECH

THE SPEECH

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of my colleagues here, I wish to express our sincere appreciation for the fact that you have all been able to make it here tonight.

The purpose of this get-together is to let you know a little of how much we have gone through to be where we are now. It is to share with you our joy over having achieved what we have. It is mainly to thank you all for having made it possible.

As most of you might remember, in July, 1982, the Lesotho Government, through the Ministry of Education and with the assistance of the USAID, established a new and unique programme with the University of Massachusetts in America. This unique creation was thenceforth referred to as a split-Semester Masters Programme. By its very nature all eight of us here were fated to be used as guinea pigs.

In this programme each of us was expected to satisfy all the requirements for a normal 4 Semester Masters Programme, units and all, in 2 Semesters on campus, plus 8 months research work at the home base. You can see how tall the order was!

Being guinea pigs, both in Lesotho and the USA, for such a huge undertaking, involving such large sums of money, had, as can be expected, tremendous repercussions for us. For one thing, finding appropriate housing was no easy game because not many Landlords were willing to have their houses rented for one quarter of the year as their housing leases were designed for no less than a year.

It was also nearly impossible for us to be placed in the University residences due to the awkward times for which we were intending to stay on campus.

Even as we were registering for classes we were not always sure what to call ourselves, nor was anybody. It was not clear for our Washington based Agency-Phelp-Stokes, whether we were to be treated as part-time or full-time students but since it was easier on their purse they decided that we were full-time. While by every other definition we were part-time. Were we not only on campus for 4 months at a time?

As I stated earlier a split-semester programme meant we had to spend some eight months here in Lesotho. We each came back to our respective jobs, while at the same time we were expected to work on our 6 unit research papers. This meant that throughout our studies we had outstanding office versus university expectations. This automatically meant one institution suffering for the other.

A split-semester programme also meant going through the most rigorous and strenuous type of training ever experienced by any of our fellow international students on campus during our time. It also meant, most unfortunately that we could not take any other courses except those offered during the fall (autumn) semesters for half of us and during the Spring semesters for the other half. (Let me explain here that the first group only knows what America looks like in autumn because it went over there on two consecutive autumns while for the same reason the second group only knows what the country looks like in spring. This is the group that went through 4 winters in two years. I am sure if we were each to start telling you now what the US looks like, we might come up with two different stories - remember the story of the elephant!

Let me tell you at this juncture, that while the programme had its own problems it also had its own advantages which we sincerely feel it would not be fair to ignore.

Because of the programmes short-term nature, we continued to get our full-salaries over the 4 months. For this our families did not have to suffer financially - as a result of our absence from home.

We did not stay away from our respective jobs for too long so the institution did not suffer as much as it would otherwise have. By the same token we were not seperated from our families, friends and country for long periods which by far minimised our homesickness.

Looking back at how well we managed to survive the crash course, we feel that the programme has helped us realise our full potential. If indeed we survived that, we are capable of doing more.

Yet since we have been back, and the notion of how much we have done and how much we can still do has hit us: We have gradually felt our knees begin to weaken and waver.

Normally, when a soldier has been to war and fought well, as the war ends, and he is commanded to go back home to nurse the wounds and sometimes have to live with crude abnormalities, he expects to be honoured. Not only with gold medals but also with an assurance for a secure, better and brighter future for himself and his family. If it were not for this, it is certain that no one would, of their own accord join the army.

We therefore feel it would not be out-of-line for us to expect, to be given some recognition for a job well-done.

For this reason, we would like to say to you, ntate Malie: our Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Education here standing before you are eight soldiers fully armed to work for the Lesotho Government. We would not like to find ourselves leaving for greener pastures outside the LDTC where our professionalism is most appropriate, or worse still drifting with the current erosion of highly specialised manpower into the Bantustans. And we appeal to you to protect us from forces that would finally push us into this vicious current. In short, we would like to be recognised as professionals in our field.

If you can take care of this, then we would be in a good position to recommend that with a few modifications, time and money allowing this approach to training should be allowed to evolve.

At this juncture we would like to thank all the people who have made it possible for us to go through this course and to successfully complete it. We thank the Ministry of Education for planning and giving the programme a go-ahead and the USAID, for making it possible through their financial contribution.

In conclusion, we extend our special thanks to our Principal Secretary ntate Malie, the Deputy Principal Secretary ntate Tsekoa and the representative of the USAID for being here tonight.

Ntate Malie, Ntate Tsekoa, bo 'm'e le bo ntate re entse moketjana ona mantsibueng ana ho le leboha ka seo le re etselitseng tsona. le ho re bontsa tseo re tlileng re li roalletse.

Re leboha balekane ba rona (ba malapa a rona) bana ba rona le batsoali ba tleng ba re lumella ho tsoa ka har'a malapa, re ba siea ba le bang.

Re utloisisa mathata 'ohle ao bosieo ba rona ka har'a malapa bo ha bakileng.

Re leboha basebetsi 'moho le rona, hobane re lumela ka tieo hore hoja e se ka tšehetso e matla eo ba re fileng eona ekasitana le mangolo a monate a 'nileng a re fa matla a tsoang ho bona re ka be re sa fihlela katleho ena.

Rea itebohela le rona ka tšebeliso 'moho e bileng teng har'a rona koana lichabeng esita le mona hae. Re ile ra eletsana le ho thusana ka boitelo bo makatsang. Tsoarang joalo mabeoana.

Metsoalle ea rona e 'nile ea re letsetsa, ea re ngolla, ea re fa le 'ona makumane a morao-rao... Rea leboha.

Bo-mme le bo-ntate Mosotho o e a re Botle ke ho boea le marungoana. Re 'nile ra ea ntoeng mose ho maoatle, 'me ke rona bana re tlile, re khutlile re ntse re le kaofela 'me ha re le tjena re tjee, ka thuso ea lona, mong ka mong o jere marungoana a hae.

Rea leboha.