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Project Assistance Completion Report  
Maseno South Enterprise Development (OPG) - 615-0226

The ProAg was signed on August 25, 1982. Project PACD was September 30, 1985. The amount authorized for this OPG was US \$ 500,000.

The project purpose was to strengthen the capability of the Diocese of Maseno South through a U.S. PVO, World Education Inc (WEI). This purpose was to be reached by supporting locally appropriate and self-sustaining development activities in the Maseno South Diocese of Western Kenya.

By the project assistance completion date (PACD). (September 30, 1985), various project elements were only partially completed.

First, the project did procure office equipment and furniture, a Subaru Station Wagon and eleven motorcycles (Honda). The total value of these commodities (handed over to the project) amounted to approximately US \$24,756.93. The project did not undertake any physical construction.

The loan component was not completed during the life of the project. For this component, by PACD only the client survey, (which was to precede loan funding) had been completed. Therefore, no lending was carried out. One reason for this, apparently, was that some of the staff employed for the loan program was not adequately trained.

The training by project staff of eleven (11) development assistants to promote locally-appropriate, self-sustaining development activities was adequately carried out. However, this was done only during the last year of project implementation. Earlier training of Development Assistants was not possible, due to frequent turnover of management staff.

Another project accomplishment included the development of a series of educational materials written in local languages. The topics covered included food production, water and income generation.

As reported by the Bishop of the Maseno South Diocese and by WEI, this project involved contributions from several other donors. Such contributions, like USAID's, were made to a diocesan Integrated Rural Development Program, and apparently helped finance activities which focused on women, health and agriculture. However, USAID was not advised in any detail about the activities or accomplishments that may have been made possible through other donors' contributions.

Initially, the planned project outputs were to (a) select and train seven Development Assistants, to be paid for (by the end of project) by their own parishes; (b) establish 140 small-scale enterprises, comprising approximately 7,000 individuals; (c) establish a functional system (to be tested, and revised as necessary) to evaluate the Integrated Rural Development program; and (d) develop and produce five sets of learning materials for the use of church groups in development activities. The steps by which these outcomes were to be achieved included the training of trainers, community participation in planning and evaluation, and materials development.

Overall, there were some notable successes in the project. By PACD, 150 local development groups had been established - 10 more than anticipated. Eleven Development Assistants (DAs) were trained, four more than planned. These DAs served as trainers of community groups, and assisted them to identify, plan for and carry out successful income generation projects.

However, at a workshop held in the district in June 1985 the DA's themselves complained to a USAID project officer that they were not meaningfully involved in the loan program. They did not like the fact that they were directed to refer the local groups to other staff members in the program, and believed this was a management error that impeded the proper fulfillment of this component of the project.

Secondly, although World Education reports state that the rudiments of an Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) evaluation system are in place, management of the IRDP component has still to implement it. In 1984, CORAT, a consultancy firm, made recommendations for the further evaluation of the agricultural, water and technology components of the project, as well as for the need to tighten project management procedures. This followed World Education's initial evaluation of the agricultural part of the program.

Third, the project did not fulfill a key purpose, i.e., to demonstrate that the Episcopal Church in Kenya is an effective mechanism for administering revolving loan funds. There was evidence that the hierarchical nature of the Church, with virtually complete power vested in the Bishop and his appointees, did not result in efficient or effective project management at the community level.

Fourth, although Development Assistants were trained, there is no evidence presented that payment of their salaries was taken over by the Diocese upon project completion.

In addition, the project faced serious management problems at both middle and senior levels. There was a high turnover rate of staff for general administration of the project, as well as of staff employed to assist with the revolving loan fund. Moreover, some revolving fund loan staff members were not as competent as needed.

A mid-term evaluation, held in August 1984, pointed toward ways of resolving these issues. The evaluation suggested the need for locally-based management (often absent); more competent staff; and a re-examination of the loan policy. WEI, together with Maseno Diocese, seems to have tried to act on the recommendations in the evaluation, but AID's role in the project was over before substantial results could be seen of a positive nature.

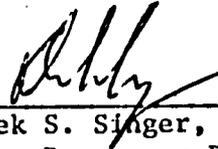
As this point, the project may finally be moving towards attaining its original goals, i.e, to enable rural adults to gain the skills and knowledge they need to participate in and contribute to the development of Kenya through the establishment of locally-appropriate, sustainable small-scale economic activities. The Development Assistants do appear to be effective agents in mobilizing local communities in development activities, as evidenced through their work with Diocesan groups and individuals. The loan program is also being reorganized. Thus, the project was not a total loss, although more could and should have been accomplished.

A number of lessons were learned from the problems emanating out of the project that may be relevant to programming, design and implementation in other areas. As stated earlier, the project got off to very slow start. Strong project management was often lacking. There was consistently late reporting and under spending of funds in various areas. The loan component, a key element, was seriously delayed. In retrospect, the major problem had to do with poor and inadequate management. In particular, WEI did not have a local representative in place to manage the project, nor even a Nairobi-based coordinator. Periodic visits from WEI's Boston headquarters just were not adequate to keep this project really on track\*.

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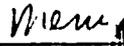
\* Note: WEI advised USAID that, when this project began in 1983, USAID did not agree to having a WEI staff member stationed in Kenya for this activity. Moreover, by the time this issue was re-examined after the mid-term evaluation, the Anglican Bishop who ran the project in Maseno South made plain his own opposition to having any "outsider" connected with the project.

One result, was a high turnover in both senior and middle management level personnel at the project site. The Bishop in charge of the project in Kisumu, although well-meaning and idealistic, took many unilateral decisions, and rarely consulted with others involved (almost never in advance). In the future, right from the design stage of such projects AID should insist on in-country project supervision from its grantees. This would provide a necessary, if not sufficient condition to head off or minimize myriad problems of communication relating to project programming and implementation. Among the most important such improvements would be that project funds could be spent in a timely manner; meaningful and accurate reports would be prepared and forwarded to USAID (and the PVO's home office) on time; and diverse problems that require corrections and adjustments be caught and dealt with more rapidly and effectively.



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