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RONCO CONSULTING CORPORATION
Family Planning Training Project
(PAC II)



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TRIP REPORT

Countries Visited: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
The Arab Republic of Egypt
Dates: May 26 - June 5, 1986
Traveler: Abderrazak Thraya
Purpose of Trip: To meet with the task force in charge of preparations for the conference on MCH/FP and integrated services and the TOT workshop.
To follow-up on the proposed joint project with the National Population Council (NPC) regarding the development of coordinated training in Egypt.
Trip Report Number: 38

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NPC Meeting (5/19/86)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Abderrazak Thraya, RONCO PAC LI Regional Program Officer, visited Jordan and Egypt from May 26 through June 5, 1986. In Jordan, Mr. Thraya was to meet with the task force formed by the Minister of Health to be in charge of preparations for two project activities, namely:

- a) a conference on MCH/FP within integrated services; and
- b) a TOT workshop for governorate level training teams.

In Egypt, Mr. Thraya was to discuss with NPC senior staff the project proposal on "Developing Coordinated Training in Egypt."

The Jordan visit was productive as it provided the opportunity for the Regional Officer to assess the progress of the task force in preparing for the implementation of project activities. In addition, the Regional Officer's participation in the task force meeting was beneficial since it motivated the members to hold meetings on four consecutive days during which several important issues were clarified and pertinent decisions were made.

The passage through Egypt on the way back to Tunis was not so productive. It was crucial for the Regional Officer to meet with Professor Maher Mahran, the NPC top executive, in order to procure agreement on the proposed project. However, after three days it became clear the meeting would not transpire on this visit. In the interim, discussions were held with the USAID/Cairo Population Office for a new strategy vis-a-vis the NPC in the implementation of the proposed project.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In April of 1986, the Ministry of Health of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and RONCO Consulting Corporation jointly designed a sub-project on developing MCH/FP training within integrated PHC services to be implemented in Jordan. This sub-project was put together in response to a direct request by the MOH to RONCO for assistance in MCH/FP Training.

The main components/activities of this sub-project included the following:

- 1) a conference on MCH/FP within an integrated health delivery system;
- 2) a TOT workshop for selected training teams from all governorates;
- 3) an assessment of the training needs for front line personnel providing MCH/FP services; and
- 4) a Program Planning workshop to design governorate-level training plans in MCH/FP.

The main department involved in these activities is the PHC Directorate. However, collaboration from other MOH departments is necessary to insure the success of these activities. For this reason, the Minister appointed a task force to study the mechanisms for the implementation of all these activities. The members of this task force were representatives from various directorates of the Ministry. Their most immediate task was to prepare for the first two activities listed above. The main purpose of Thraya's visit to Jordan was to meet with this task force and to participate in some of its meetings.

The itinerary of Mr. Thraya's travel included a three day transit in Cairo on his way back to Tunis. The purpose of this transit was to discuss with the NPC the content of a project proposal on coordinated FP training in Egypt, submitted by RONCO a month earlier. A minor objective of this trip was to assess ITRFP's commitment to launch with the governorate-level training project.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Jordan

The members of the task force charged with planning the conference on PHC/MCH/FP as well as the MCH/FP TOT workshop were heads of the following departments: Primary Health Care, Maternal and Child Health Care, Research and Planning, Health services, and the Regional Health Director of the Balqa Governorate. All were selected by the Ministry of Health.

Between May 28-31, 1986 this task force convened several meetings at which the RONCO Regional Officer was present. These meetings led to the following major decisions:

- o Both the conference and the workshop will take place at Jerusalem International Hotel where very adequate facilities for such conventions exist. This decision was based on findings from visits to and negotiations with several hotels in Amman.
- o The conference will be inaugurated by H.E. the Minister of Health.
- o The work session for the TOT will include mornings and afternoons; the Health Directors' conference will be conducted in one 6-hour morning session. (This is because central-level health directors need to be in their offices in the afternoon.)
- o The members of the task force will have an active role as facilitators throughout the conference proceedings.

- o Some participants (3 to 4) from the TOT workshop (July 5-10) will take part in the Health Directors' conference scheduled for the following week (July 12-15). It is anticipated that their participation will greatly enhance the discussions on MCH/FP training.

Egypt

During the three-day stay of the Regional Officer in Cairo, Professor Maher Mahran, was unavailable to discuss the content of the proposed project which was sent to him a month earlier. With Professor Mahran virtually inaccessible, discussions were then held with Population Office of USAID/Cairo.¹

Following these discussions and facing the realization of a general lack of response from the NPC² on many FPP projects and its inability to move ahead, it was decided that RONCO should rely less on the NPC and envisage a much more active role for itself in the execution of the project.

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Dr. Abdessalam Hassan, Head of Planning at the NPC, who has been involved from the very beginning in the design of the project, does not have any real decision-making power within the NPC. This information came from Tim Seims (USAID/Cairo). This finding has been reinforced through the contact that the Regional Officer made with Dr. Hassan when the latter showed some reluctance in being further involved in the project.

2 It is worth noting, however, the NPC met on May 19, 1986. This meeting was the third to be chaired by President Mubarak. A translation of the major decisions endorsed by the council is found in Appendix D.

In the absence of meeting with Professor Mahran, a letter was drafted and sent by the Regional Officer. A copy is presented as Appendix B of this report. This letter was accompanied by a covering letter from the acting Population Director, presented as Appendix C.

ITRFP is still interested in proceeding with the governorate level training project and has expressed through the ITRFP Dean its commitment to solve any problems between ITRFP and RONCO.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proposed for consideration by RONCO.

Jordan

1. Both the Health Directors' Conference and the TOT workshop be implemented on schedule, as the MOH and USAID/Amman are eager to develop MCH/FP activities in Jordan.
2. Consideration be given to the World Bank project in the implementation of the Health Directors Conference, as this project constitutes the backbone for future development of health services delivery in the country.

Egypt

1. RONCO play a more active role in implementing project activities with the NPC.
2. A group of senior-level staff involved in FP training in Egypt be identified to assist the NPC in the implementation of project activities.
3. For PAC workers training activities, RONCO envisages working in the future directly with the Egyptian Ministeries of Health, Social Affairs, Education, Information, Local Government and Wakf. The major decision of the May 19th meeting was that the role of the NPC is only one of coordination and follow-up.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED

JORDAN

Bob Haladay, Population Officer, USAID/Amman
Dr. Suleiman Qubain, Director PHC, MOH
Dr. Zeid Kayed, Director MCH, MOH
Dr. Abdallah Hamdan, Director Research Planning, MOH
Dr. Kais Halawa, Director Health Centers, MOH
Dr. Abdulhaleem Hyasat, Regional Health Director,
Balqa Governorate
Dr. Walid Al Khateeb, Consultant

EGYPT

Mr. Timothy Seims, Acting Director, Population Office
USAID/Cairo
Mr. Laila Stino, Assistant Population Officer
Mr. John Dumm, Assistant Director, S&T/Population,
AID/Washington

APPENDIX B

June 4, 1986

Prof. Maher Mahran
Secretary General
National Population Council
Dar El Salam, Maadi
Egypt

Dear Dr. Mahran:

I am sorry I could not meet with you during my passage through Egypt on my way back to Tunis from Jordan. I was not able to request an appointment with you sooner because of some uncertainties in my travel plans.

The purpose of my plan to meet with you was: a) to discuss with the the RONCO proposal sent to you by our Project Director Mr. Tom Milroy on April 4, 1986. You will find herewith for your review a copy of that correspondence, for which we have not yet received a response; b) To provide you with more details on the regional meeting organized by RONCO and scheduled to take place in Tunisia from Sept. 1 to Sept. 5, 1986.

But most importantly, I was hoping to discuss with you the implementation of the National Conference on the role of family planning training institutions in Egypt described as activity C in the sub-project proposal. I did have several meetings on this subject with your colleagues Dr. Effat Ramadan and Dr. Abdel Salam Hassan since that meeting we had with you on Oct. 2, 1986 during which USAID Population Officers Mr. Timothy Seims and Ms. Laila Stino, as well as Ms. Salha Awad, ITRFP dean were present. It is during that meeting that the plan to have this conference was first debated and then developed into the present project proposal. This project proposal contains a set of activities on which you gave your agreement during the Oct. 2, meeting. It is within RONCO's annual plan that these activities take place no later than Sept. 30, 1986 and because of fiscal constraints, we have to obligate the allocated funds by the above date.

The NPC can play an important role in coordinating family planning training in Egypt. I am quite certain that ultimately this conference will enhance the effectiveness and impact of family planning training activities in the country. Bearing this importance and the time frame in mind and while awaiting of your comments on the proposal, RONCO will initiate the preliminary activities for the preparation of the conference and proceed to the formation of the task force which will be in charge of planning it. We anticipate that this National Conference takes place by mid-August, 1986, and we look forward to your full participation.

Once again, my apologies for not contacting you sooner to allow for sufficient time to plan for this meeting. I hope the arrangement will be a little better next time I visit Egypt.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Abderrazak Thraya
Regional Representative

cc: Tom Milroy (Durham/NC)
Jinny Sewel (AID/Wash)
Timothy Seims (USAID/Cairo)

APPENDIX C

June 4, 1986

Prof. Maher Mahran
Secretary General
National Population Council
Dar El Salam, Maadi
Egypt

Dear Dr. Mahran:

Before his departure Mr. Thraya asked us to forward this letter to you. We wish to take this opportunity to express our support for this conference. This National Conference on Family Planning has a considerable potential for making a better family planning program in the country. We are happy to see that this conference is moving towards execution and that our meeting with you and your staff have resulted in a fruitful endeavor.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Timothy Seims
Acting Director
Office of Population

APPENDIX D

THE NATIONAL POPULATION COUNCIL

MEETING MAY 19, 1986

Translated from Al Ahram and Al Akhbar newspapers

President Mubarak chaired the third meeting of the Council this year to examine a report on the population strategy and objectives. He reviewed the achievements of the various ministries in the past three months.

Following are the major decisions endorsed by the Council:

- For the first time, the President gave directives for allocating special funds from the national budget, in the coming five-year plans, for each ministry to finance population and family planning projects instead of relying on international agencies only.
- Each ministry's five-year workplan was discussed and the President gave instructions for setting up committees that would examine obstacles and difficulties and how to overcome them as well as better coordination among ministries.
- A report on the population control objectives prepared by the Council stating the rates of fertility reduction and increase in the prevalence rate of family planning acceptors by year 2001 (not mentioned) was discussed and endorsed.

- Geographical distribution of the population, to decrease the population density in the Nile Valley by estimating new communities.
- Curbing emigration from rural to urban areas and reducing the urban ratio of urban population from 43.3% to 41% by year 2001.
- Increasing women's employment and improving their status.
- The necessity of curbing illiteracy among women by improving the standard of basic primary education and decreasing the high rate of school dropouts by enforcing the child employment law and providing places for each child in the schools.
- More attention given to child care and reducing the death rate among children up to 5 years of age.
- The Council discussed the population five-year plan and the requested budget for 6 ministries: Health, Social Affairs, Education, Information, Local government and Wakf as well as the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS).
- The Council endorsed the relationship between the implementing ministries and the Council whose role is coordination, follow-up, approving allocation of funds from the national budget and approving any international agreement.
- The Council affirmed the important and positive role of TV, radio and the personal contact through the Information Centers of the State Information Service and assured the success of the FP messages through mass media.

- The Council discussed the role of the local governments in light of the population policy.

Translated by L. Stino, HRDX/POP