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TRIP REPORT:
MONITORING OF
HONDURAS COUNTRY PROJECTS

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B82D Dates of In-Country Work:
April 8-16, 1985

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Executive Summary

The Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) Assistant Program Coordinator, Alice I. Payne, visited Honduras from April 8-16, 1985. The scope of work included: 1) working closely with the Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social (IHSS) to finalize the plans for the upcoming IHSS Leaders' Conference; 2) assisting IHSS in both the planning of the family planning orientation aimed at all levels of IHSS employees and in the materials development phase; 3) reviewing the Ministerio de Salud Publica's (MOH) communication strategy for its family planning program; and 4) monitoring the progress of the Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia's (ASHONPLAFA) nationwide campaign.

The preparations for the IHSS leaders' seminar were finalized and preliminary preparations were begun for the family planning orientations to begin next month. Further plans were developed to begin collecting baseline data and designing the print materials which will accompany biweekly family planning talks given in IHSS clinics.

The MOH is currently training its service delivery staff in family planning. The Health Education Division has developed a workplan to be implemented as part of the first phase of the MOH's overall family planning program. Radio dialogues, a poster and a newspaper supplement in comic book format will be used to communicate the themes of responsible parenthood and the maternal/child health benefits of spacing births.

ASHONPLAFA completed a month-long evaluation of its communication activities during the pilot phase of the project. The results of the analysis will be completed by early May. During the months of May and June a series of promoter and user oriented print and radio materials will be developed.

An inter-institutional commission meeting of communication experts took place with participants from the JHU/PCS-sponsored projects, as well as representatives from the Maternal/Child Health (MCH) Division of the Ministry of Health (MOH). Vehement opposition was expressed to the choice of the name "Guardian" for the condoms in ASHONPLAFA's Contraceptive Social Marketing (CSM) campaign. Since the name "Guardian" is also used for the MOH rural health workers, these workers and ASHONPLAFA's CBD workers are not collaborating as closely as they were before the CSM campaign, and relations between the MOH and ASHONPLAFA are strained. The participants at this meeting felt that the inappropriate name choice could have been averted had the CSM project shared its media plans. Therefore, this case provided an example of the merits of sharing communication strategies and materials. Everyone was eager to exchange plans and ideas, and joint production of certain materials was discussed. The participants plan to have a day-long seminar to go over these ideas in more depth.

It is recommended that:

- 1) Alicia Paz Meza be designated as the full-time coordinator for IHSS's project;
- 2) IHSS receive further technical assistance from JHU/PCS in the materials development phase;
- 3) MOH receive technical assistance from JHU/PCS in translating educational objectives into successful communication materials; and
- 4) Inter-institutional coordination be encouraged and maintained at the present high level.

Introduction

The Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) Assistant Program Coordinator, Alice I. Payne, visited Tegucigalpa, Honduras from April 8-16, 1985. The scope of work included: 1) working closely with the Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social (IHSS) to finalize the plans for the upcoming IHSS Leaders' Conference; 2) assisting in both the planning of the family planning orientation aimed at all levels of IHSS employees and in the materials development phase; 3) reviewing the Ministerio de Salud Publica's (MOH) communication strategy for its family planning program; and 4) monitoring the progress of the Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia's (ASHONPLAFA) nationwide mass media campaign.

Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social

Many meetings were held with the acting coordinator for the JHU/PCS-IHSS project, Alicia Paz Meza, and the Chief of Medical Services, Dr. Carlos Godoy Arteaga, to review and discuss the various activities planned for this year. We began by concentrating on the Leaders' Conference scheduled for the following week. Seven speakers were placed on the agenda, including Dr. Jorge Martinez-Manautou (Chief of the Family Planning Services Division of the Instituto Mexicana de Seguro Social), who will address a wide range of family planning and demographic themes pertinent to Honduras and Central America. The conference will take place both in Tegucigalpa (April 17, 1985) and San Pedro Sula (April 18, 1985), where approximately 65 department and division heads will be in attendance in each location. A great deal of logistical work was required, given the number of speakers and participants included, the most of which was completed by Alicia prior to my visit.

Alicia and I reviewed her workplan for this year. We discussed the family planning orientations planned for the other IHSS employees and the type of simple print materials which might be appropriate to accompany these sessions. I suggested that Oscar Viganó, the local JHU/PCS consultant (PRASSAR/AED advisor), and Lenin Flores of ASHONPLAFA could advise her on possible speakers, as well as offer technical assistance in the materials development. We also talked about ways to include the participants of last year's courses as "facilitators" in this year's activities.

We then discussed the materials development phase of the project. The materials will be designed to accompany biweekly family planning talks which will be given in the IHSS clinics. I explained the JHU/PCS approved methodology, with particular emphasis on gathering baseline data on the target audience and pretesting the material with the target audience. I suggested that she consider developing simple materials to assist the promoter and inform potential users, such as a flip chart and pamphlets. I encouraged Alicia to include all her preparations in the workplan in order to accurately reflect all of her efforts leading up to a final product. For instance, she had obtained various discounts when arranging for the Leaders' Conference; this will result in a savings to the project which can be spent on materials development. I also explained that a detailed workplan is necessary in order to forecast expenses more accurately. We then adapted the budget to the planned activities.

I met with Dr. Godoy several times. Since he is new to his position and therefore to the JHU/PCS-IHSS project, he was very eager to clarify certain aspects of the project. He was unaware that the IHSS had originally agreed to provide for all of the IHSS personnel costs (including travel and per diem). This concerned him due to the current governmental freeze curtailing this type of spending within the public sector.

I emphasized that Alicia had a full workplan for this year and expressed my concern that she also is coordinating several other projects. The lack of a full-time coordinator who can dedicate his/her attention to the project has been a recurring problem. I mentioned that it is important for Alicia to be able to concentrate on the activities of this project in order to achieve the goals and objectives in a timely manner. Dr. Godoy was very open to my observations and stated that he would take the matter up with the Director General of the IHSS.

Ministerio de Salud Publica

I first met with José Ignacio Mata, the Program of Communication on Child Health (PROCOMSI) advisor, and other members of the communication team in the Health Education Division, including Arturo Diaz who is working on the radio component of the JHU/PCS-sponsored project. José explained PROCOMSI's draft plan of the educational communication campaign for the family planning project. This proposal represents a long-range educational plan to change attitudes and

behaviors toward family planning of a largely rural population. It must be noted that the JHU/PCS input represents only a small part of the overall workplan; the majority of the MOH's funding comes from the UNFPA, through PAHO, and from AID/Tegucigalpa. The plan stresses educated and informed choices by couples, with particular focus on young couples and men. The themes which will be addressed through the JHU/PCS component will be responsible parenthood, and the maternal/child health benefits of spacing births.

Later in the day I met with Dr. Wilfredo Alvarado, Chief of the Health Educational Division. Wilfredo and I discussed his workplans, which include radio spots, radio dialogues, a poster and a newspaper supplement in the comic book format. I mentioned that various communication techniques had different appeal to different types of audiences. He emphasized that the MOH approach would be to educate and inform the public regarding the health benefits of family planning first before offering method-specific information. I was told that approximately 70% of the service delivery personnel had received training in family planning. Thus it would appear that the MOH is proceeding with the family planning program.

Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia

I met several times with Lenin Flores, the Project Director for the JHU/PCS-sponsored project, and his assistant, Aníbal Melgar, to discuss the evaluation of the pilot phase of the project and the status of the nationwide radio campaign. The evaluation was carried out in March in the pilot regions of Choluteca and Copán and, for comparison, in another region where Lenin's radio and print materials had not been used. Both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods were employed. A total of 548 women were interviewed, including the distributors and a systematic random sampling of women. Aníbal is in the process of tabulating the results, and the analysis should be completed by early May.

The nationwide campaign began in March with the broadcasting of the spots and jingles over 32 radio stations. The radio spots in Choluteca and Copán, areas already reached in Phase I of the project, were modified to include the

distributor's name and address. In addition, the spots also will be broadcast during the pregame football commentary. By mid- to late June, Lenin plans to have developed a variety of new print materials: flip charts, a general distributors guide, method-specific manuals for users, a poster and referral cards. Lenin mentioned that the preliminary results of the evaluation had shown the radio spots to be more effective than the poster and flyer. Consequently, he plans to modify his activities by putting more emphasis on developing innovative radio spots and programs.

Numerous meetings were held with German Cerrato, Financial Director, and Oscar Bonilla, Accountant, to clarify a variety of details regarding outstanding financial information.

Inter-Institutional Coordination

At Wilfredo's suggestion, professionals from the MOH's Maternal/Child Health (MCH) Division were invited to participate in the monthly meeting of family planning communication experts: Dr. Alejandro Melara, Acting Chief of the MCH Division, Lic. Magdalena Cruz Hernán, Supervisor, and Regina Duron, Assistant Program Coordinator of the Family Planning Program. Dr. Martinez from PAHO was present, as was Aníbal (Lenin was unable to attend) and Alicia. Each participant described his/her project's past activities and future plans. Everyone agreed that it would be beneficial to bring sample drafts of materials to share at the meetings.

The Contraceptive Social Marketing (CSM) "Guardian" radio campaign was a topic which was energetically discussed. Although the CSM representatives had been invited, unfortunately they were not present to respond to the complaints and dissatisfactions. Everyone agreed that the name "Guardian" had been a particularly poor choice since the MOH rural health workers are called Guardians. Oscar mentioned that this issue had been thoroughly discussed in the February meeting and clarified that the CSM project was a separate project within ASHONPLAFA that had nothing to do with Lenin's project. Dr. Miranda, the Population Advisor from US AID/Tegucigalpa, suggested that the MOH write a formal complaint.

Regina requested that the ASHONPLAFA radio spots be modified to include the word "clinic" or "health center" since family planning information and services would soon be available in the MOH clinics. She felt that the spots could be more general so as to include a reference to other service providers. This will be taken into consideration for future radio production, but it was explained that Lenin's radio spots have already begun to be aired nationally. She also suggested that the different groups share in the production of a flip chart. Oscar elaborated that the bulk of the information contained in a flip chart could be jointly produced, with each group adding its own particular focus and logo. Joint production of radio dialogues also was suggested. Wilfredo suggested having a family planning communications seminar which would allow the group more time to share ideas and strategies. Dr. Melara added that the MCH Division had funds to sponsor such a conference. The meeting concluded on an extremely upbeat note, with enthusiastic plans to meet during the first week of May.

U.S. Agency for International Development

Several meetings were held with Dr. Miranda during the course of my visit to discuss the projects' status, with particular regard to the upcoming IHSS Leaders' Conference. I met with Tom Park, Health, Nutrition and Population Officer, to review the three projects and the results of my visit. I mentioned my concern regarding Alicia's time and energy limitations due to working on several IHSS projects concurrently and stated that the project needed one person to oversee it. In terms of ASHONPLAFA, I described Lenin's excellent progress. I also outlined the MOH workplans which appear more concrete than they have in the past. Tom asked whether JHU/PCS would like to deobligate from the MOH project, and it was agreed that the issue would be discussed further during Patrick's next visit. Tom stated that he felt it was important to monitor the projects on a regular basis, every three or four months. He also mentioned that the unstable political situation might have negative fallout on the IHSS and the MOH.

Conclusions and Recommendations

All three projects have made progress since our last visit in February. The IHSS project is back on track with a full slate of activities planned for this year. However, it will be difficult for Alicia to follow through with the workplan if she also is held responsible for various other projects. Dr. Godoy understood this problem clearly and plans to resolve it with the Director General.

The MOH project has been revitalized, and several activities have been planned which will be implemented in the first phase of the MOH's family planning program. Everyone I spoke with at the MOH appeared enthusiastic about the family planning program in general, and each of its specific activities within the overall plan.

ASHONPLAFA's communication project is moving ahead as rapidly as ever, with plans underway to have a variety of new print and radio materials on hand by mid- to late June.

It is recommended that:

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- 3) MOH receive technical assistance from JHU/PCS in translating its educational objectives into successful communication materials; and
- 4) Inter-institutional coordination be encouraged and maintained at the present high level.

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