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TRIP REPORT:
MONITORING OF HONDURAS COUNTRY PROJECTS

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Executive Summary

The Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) Regional Program Coordinator, Patrick L. Coleman, visited Honduras from June 19-26, 1985, and Assistant Program Coordinator, Alice I. Payne, visited Honduras from June 16-22, 1985. The purpose of the trip was to monitor the progress in the development of new materials and discuss future collaboration with: 1) the Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia (ASHONPLAFA); 2) the Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social (IHSS); and 3) the Ministerio de Salud Publica (MOH).

ASHONPLAFA's family planning communication activities in support of the CBD program are progressing very well. ASHONPLAFA has begun a national radio campaign where approximately 15,000 spots a month are transmitted. ASHONPLAFA is currently developing print materials for use by the CBD workers. The new materials will emphasize improving the knowledge level of the CBD workers themselves so that they will be able to transmit better and more complete information to clients and potential clients.

The Ministry of Health has developed a comprehensive media package in support of its fledgling family planning program. The Health Education Division has worked very closely with the family planning unit of the Maternal Child Health Division of the Ministry in developing the media materials. Media activities in radio, television, newspapers and posters are planned by the Ministry over the next six months. Drafts of the radio materials were presented to JHU/PCS for approval during this visit.

IHSS is moving less quickly than the other institutions in development of its family planning communication activities. IHSS personnel are currently receiving communication courses designed to improve their knowledge level of family planning and hopefully they will be able to pass on this information to clients and potential clients in the near future.

AID emphatically endorses JHU/PCS support for family planning communication programs in Honduras. The AID Mission requested that JHU/PCS continue its support both to ASHONPLAFA and IHSS past the current proposed termination date of both projects.

It is recommended that JHU/PCS:

- 1) continue to support family planning communication activities in Honduras after the current projects end;
- 2) provide the MOH with rapid approval of their communication materials; and
- 3) continue working with IHSS to institutionalize their family planning program.

Introduction

The Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) Regional Program Coordinator, Patrick L. Coleman, visited Honduras from June 19-26, 1985 and Assistant Program Coordinator, Alice I. Payne, visited Honduras from June 16-22, 1985. The purpose of the trip was to monitor the progress in the development of new materials and discuss future collaboration with: 1) the Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia (ASHONPLAFA); 2) the Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social (IHSS); and 3) the Ministerio de Salud Pública (MOH).

Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia

We reviewed the progress of the national radio campaign which had begun last March. Thirty-seven radio stations have been contracted to broadcast the radio spots; many of them have donated free time above and beyond the contract agreement. These efforts have resulted in an average of 15,000 airings per month of the radio spots. We also discussed the monitoring system which was established to assure that the radio stations were fulfilling their agreements. The local community-based distributors serve as the monitors. This system has been working well and radio stations have been identified which fall below the contractual agreement and, at the same time, those who go well beyond. With this information ASHONPLAFA is able to return to the radio stations and thank them for their encouraging support or point out that they have not met their obligations. This is the only such monitoring system used in the country both in the public and private sectors. At the same, ASHONPLAFA also does an informal "sounding" of the reactions the community has to the radio spots.

The analysis of the evaluation conducted on the pilot phase of the radio is being put into the final form. ASHONPLAFA is planning to develop four micro-radio campaigns; two will be developed in July, and two more in August. These micro-radio programs will be used to combat rumors or misconceptions which were identified in target audience research and the evaluation of the pilot radio campaign.

Thirty thousand revised posters will be ready for national distribution by late July. ASHONPLAFA is currently working on a manual for the community-based

distributors which will address basic information and common concerns regarding the pill and condom. ASHONPLAFA also plans to develop referral cards for the community-based distributors to use with their clients. In August, ASHONPLAFA will have developed two user-oriented pamphlets (on the pill and condom). They also will develop a cloth flipchart (flexible and easily transported) for the promoters.

A general meeting was held to review JHU/PCS financial forms and the second year budget. During the meeting ASHONPLAFA requested that JHU/PCS provide them with overhead for the project LA-HON-03 in order to cover ASHONPLAFA's expenses related to the project. We explained to them that in principle JHU/PCS is in agreement with overhead but that it must be established through an overall general audit of ASHONPLAFA. They requested that JHU/PCS fund an audit out of the project's budget. While the overhead is being resolved, we agreed to allow them some direct costs to cover their direct, project-related expenses.

A final meeting was held with the Executive Director, Alejandro Flores, the Program Coordinator, Ramon Saramiento, the Chief of the IEC Department, Juanita Martinez, the Administrative Chief, German Cerrato, and Patrick Coleman. During this meeting, we discussed what had transpired during the visit and possible future expansion of JHU/PCS-sponsored activities with ASHONPLAFA. Don Alejandro requested that JHU/PCS continue working with ASHONPLAFA in family planning communication and expand into other areas besides the CBD program. ASHONPLAFA explained that they are currently in the process of constructing five regional offices; each office will have an IEC officer which will facilitate communication activities throughout the country. Two areas that ASHONPLAFA suggested that assistance would be useful are: 1) to let people know about their expansion and what ASHONPLAFA does; and 2) to develop the in-house capability to counteract bad publicity about family planning and population in the country. ASHONPLAFA representatives agreed to discuss this matter internally and prepare a pre-project proposal for discussion during future visits.

Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social

Alicia Paz Meza, the JHU/PCS-sponsored coordinator, had just finished a family planning orientation course for 35 auxiliary nurses when we arrived. The nurses were enthusiastic and requested a follow-up course. Alicia is using the pre- and post-methodology, as well as a final evaluation, in order to document the initial change in knowledge and attitudes as a result of the course. Alicia stated that this group, primarily, is in need of information and education because they deal directly with patients. She will continue to organize these sessions for auxiliary nurses, doctors and other IHSS personnel. The trained personnel then act as "multipliers" by informing others in their division of what they have learned. Family planning personnel from other public and private agencies in Honduras have been collaborating with IHSS on these courses.

IHSS will begin to structure the information that will be given to insured clients during clinic talks. IHSS is also starting to formulate a simple baseline survey to be administered to the insured IHSS clients in order to ascertain their level of literacy and basic attitudes towards family planning. IHSS plans to develop simple user materials such as: pamphlets, a poster and referral cards to use as support materials in the clinic discussions. Patrick encouraged IHSS to collaborate in any way possible in the joint production of materials with ASHONPLAFA and MOH.

Alicia has also noticed that the women often wait up to two hours before being attended to in the clinics. She would like to develop continuing A-V presentations to better utilize the women's time. She mentioned that she did not have access to films, and we informed her of the JHU/PCS Spanish films. USAID/Tegucigalpa is considering donating a film and slide projector to IHSS. Alicia also noted how helpful Population Reports had been to her work.

Alicia still has not been officially named as the JHU/PCS-sponsored project coordinator and, therefore, is responsible for a variety of tasks. Consequently she feels she will not be able to offer the family planning orientations to all IHSS personnel as originally planned. Dr. Godoy, Chief of the Medical Services Division, stated that he would be persistent in trying to obtain approval to name Alicia as the project coordinator. He was also interested in discussing future collaboration with JHU/PCS with particular regard to improving the institutional capability of IHSS in family planning/health communication.

Dr. Godoy and Patrick Coleman held a final meeting to discuss the project's development. Dr. Godoy expressed concern that the project is progressing at a very slow rate. He emphasized the commitment of the institution to family planning and feels that the upcoming visit by IHSS leaders to the Instituto Mexicano de Seguro Social, as a result of Dr. Jorge Martinez Manautou's visit, should provide further impetus for family planning program development within IHSS. Dr. Godoy reaffirmed the need for the project coordinator to commit at least 50 percent of her time. Dr. Godoy made an official request to the Director General of IHSS to request that Alicia be transferred to his division for 50 percent of her time. We discussed the work plan and materials development, and Dr. Godoy concurred with the need to coordinate activities with ASHONPLAFA and the MOH. Dr. Godoy and Patrick also discussed the probability of IHSS requesting a no-cost extension to the project. Dr. Godoy stated he would consult with the project personnel but his opinion was that a two-month no-cost extension was needed.

Ministerio de Salud Pública

The MOH/Health Education Division has developed four radio spots and a radio forum. The theme of the radio spots is to increase public awareness regarding family planning as a method of improving maternal/child health through the practice of spacing births. The spots will focus on the following topics:

- 1) improvement of maternal health through family planning;
- 2) improvement of children's health through family planning and breast-feeding;
- 3) spacing births to reduce infant mortality;
- 4) avoiding early and late pregnancies.

The radio forum consists of approximately 33 episodes presented through the characters of Marcos and Lilian, a young couple who decide to delay early marriage. The central plot will evolve and eventually address marriage, family planning and responsible parenthood. The primary target audience of this radio forum is the rural health workers and other volunteer health workers, such as midwives. The radio forum is intended to motivate them and offer them a

dynamic teaching material to use in their discussions with the communities. The series will be aired to groups followed by a general discussion. A discussion guide will be produced along with the radio forum. The secondary target audience of these radio forums will be the general public. The MOH/Health Education Division is quite anxious to get this material on the air, particularly since this is an election year and political spots may pre-empt any or all radio time after October and requested that JHU/PCS approve the radio materials without delay.

The MOH/Health Education Division is designing a poster and developing a slogan which will be linked to the radio slogans. The theme of these will be to improve maternal/child health through birth spacing. A Sunday newspaper supplement in comic book form will also be utilized to address these themes.

Dr. Alvarado and Patrick Coleman discussed the progress of the project, especially in the last six months, and future activities. Even though the project is expected to last through calendar year 1986, Dr. Alvarado requested that JHU/PCS consider a one-year extension of project activities due to the lack of first-year activities. Patrick stated to Dr. Alvarado that it was a bit premature to think of such an extension but that JHU/PCS was very willing to continue supporting the Ministry's activities, especially due to their renewed commitment to family planning communication. Dr. Alvarado suggested that additional funds could be used from JHU/PCS. The Ministry would like to expand their media programs to include television and tape shows in clinics. Dr. Alvarado agrees that these additional media activities should come in a second or third phase once the Ministry has their family planning communication program going.

Inter-institutional Coordination

An Inter-institutional Coordination meeting was held in ASHONPLAFA's small conference room. Representatives of ASHONPLAFA, the MOH, IHSS and AID were present. ASHONPLAFA Executive Director, Alejandro Flores, attended the meeting so a brief overview of the purpose of these meetings was discussed with him so that he would have a better understanding of why these meetings were important and how they could be useful to the overall coordination and development of family planning communication activities. Representatives from each institution gave a brief summary of their recent communication activities

and their future plans. It became obvious during the discussion that certain activities, such as baseline audience research, had been repeated by all the institutions. It was suggested that the data be shared and that they discuss future activities in greater detail, before they are carried out, so that input and guidance can be provided by other institutions. It is hoped that these meetings will result in greater coordination and that possible future materials will be developed by the institutions as a group rather than individually. All the participants at the meeting, except the social marketing group from ASHONPLAFA, expressed a desire to work closer together and have already begun to share ideas, expertise and materials development plans.

Agency for International Development

When we met with Tom Park he mentioned a recent contraceptive prevalence survey which indicated the popularity and unmet demand for voluntary surgical contraceptive methods. We then talked about future collaboration of JHU/PCS in Honduras, and he indicated that he would be very interested in continuing our work in Honduras. Tom mentioned that perhaps this could be done through a buy-in.

AID requested that JHU/PCS continue supporting ASHONPLAFA's CBD program and expand future communication support to the voluntary surgical contraception activities and other clinic services provided by ASHONPLAFA. AID is investing a great deal of money in ASHONPLAFA's expansion over the next four years and feels that the communication program must also expand at the same time.

AID would like to see the Ministry of Health continue their rapid involvement in family planning and suggested that in the future the Ministry pick up personnel costs which are currently being covered by AID. AID is willing, however, to fund the expansion of the Ministry's communication activities once the current phase of general awareness building among the public about the Ministry's services is completed.

AID is interested in IHSS continuing family planning activities and has requested that JHU/PCS maintain its support for IHSS and continue to attempt to institutionalize the family planning program.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In general, the JHU/PCS-supported communication projects in Honduras are moving forward. ASHONPLAFA's program is the most dynamic and is having an impact both upon the number of new users in the CBD program and also in reinforcing the CBD workers' knowledge and attitudes. The national radio campaign has begun, and print materials are being developed and redesigned for distribution throughout the country.

The Ministry of Health has made a great leap forward in its family planning communication activities since the last JHU/PCS visit in February 1985. The Ministry has developed a series of radio spots and radio forums to be used with community health workers and community leaders. The Ministry is also working on a poster and a Sunday newspaper supplement which will reinforce the radio messages.

IHSS has begun family planning information dissemination to auxiliary nurses and nurses under the JHU/PCS-sponsored project. The IHSS service delivery personnel's attitudes towards family planning have changed remarkably in pre- and post-evaluations. The personnel are much more enthusiastic about the need for family planning programs once they have participated in the course and are better informed themselves about family planning.

The inter-institutional coordination sessions are continuing, and each session brings the three groups, ASHONPLAFA, MOH and IHSS closer together. Some collaborative efforts have begun.

AID continues to support the JHU/PCS-sponsored activities in Honduras. AID has requested that JHU/PCS continue supporting these activities and may provide the financial support which is necessary for this continuation.

It is recommended that JHU/PCS:

- 1) continue to support family planning communication activities in Honduras after the current projects end;

- 2) provide the MOH with rapid approval of their communication materials; and
- 3) continue working with IHSS to develop their family planning program.

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