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TRIP REPORT:  
MONITORING OF  
HONDURAS COUNTRY PROJECTS

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Dates of In-Country Work:  
February 10-16, 1985

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## Executive Summary

The Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) Regional Program Coordinator, Patrick L. Coleman, and Assistant Program Coordinator, Alice I. Payne, visited Honduras from February 10-16, 1985. The scope of work included: 1) review the first year progress of the Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia (ASHONPLAFA), Instituto Hondureña de Seguro Social (IHSS) and Ministerio de Salud Pública (MOH) projects; and 2) discuss the workplans and budgets for Year II with the aforementioned organizations.

ASHONPLAFA will shortly complete an evaluation of the radio spots and print materials developed during the pilot phase of the project. Beginning March 1st, the radio spots will be broadcast nationwide. After the existing materials have been reproduced, new print materials also will be developed both for the community-based distributors (CBD) and for users. Later in the year, micro-radio programs will be created to address specific concerns voiced by users.

Due to frequent changes in personnel at IHSS (four different coordinating teams in one year), the family planning communication project has progressed more slowly than expected. However, it is now hoped that one person will be permanently assigned to coordinate the project's activities. Training at all levels will continue, beginning with a one-day seminar for high level officials. The service delivery personnel will receive an orientation next, followed by the administrative and support staff. During this time, print materials will be developed to accompany lectures given in the IHSS clinics.

The MOH project has been at a standstill for the last six months. During a meeting with the Vice Minister of Health, he reiterated the MOH's commitment to family planning and promised IEC activities would begin in early March.

It is recommended that:

- 1) JHU/PCS transmit funds to ASHONPLAFA in the most expedient manner;
- 2) JHU/PCS work with ASHONPLAFA to facilitate the availability of transportation for project personnel;
- 3) IHSS staff receive ongoing technical assistance; and

- 4) MOH staff receive technical assistance to support them in their commitment to family planning.

## Introduction

The Johns Hopkins University/Population Communication Services (JHU/PCS) Regional Program Coordinator, Patrick L. Coleman, and Assistant Program Coordinator, Alice I. Payne, visited Honduras from February 10-16, 1985. The purpose of the trip was to meet with the Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia (ASHONPLAFA), the Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social (IHSS) and the Ministerio de Salud Pública (MOH) in order to review the second year budget and discuss future workplans with each organization.

## Asociación Hondureña de Planificación de Familia

The Communication Project Director, Lenin Flores Anduray, reviewed the first year's accomplishments with us. Four radio spots and jingles were aired for four months in the pilot regions of Choluteca and Copan. These spots were produced in order to support the activities of the local Community-Based Distributors (CBD) and the regional supervisors ("promotoras"). In addition to these radio spots, Lenin developed a special radio spot and jingle in celebration of the Christmas season. (This spot used elements of the previous spots and jingles and was well received.) Other materials developed to support the local efforts of the distributors included: 1) a new plaque designating the distributor's post (usually her house); 2) a color poster; and 3) a smaller black and white flyer of the same design. The print materials were given to the distributors and regional promoters to post at local gathering points and to hand out to clients. Lenin explained that ASHONPLAFA is presently in the process of evaluating the radio spots and print materials developed during the pilot phase of the project. This evaluation was designed in conjunction with the JHU/PCS consultant, Lawrence Kincaid.

After reviewing the status of the project, Lenin outlined his workplans for the coming year. In March, when the evaluation has been completed, the four radio spots and jingles will be broadcast nationwide over approximately 31 radio stations (20 times a day) for seven months. Lenin negotiated substantially discounted rates with the radio stations, thereby increasing the air time available for the radio spots without increasing the overall budget allocation for this item. In addition to the motivational spots and jingles previously developed, the name and address of each distributor will also be aired in order to help potential clients locate the CBD posts per Patrick's suggestion and the hearty endorsement of the CBD personnel. Lenin also plans to

develop micro-programs with more specific family planning messages. Based on Patrick's technical advice, the micro-programs will consist of a variety of short dialogues and testimonials from current users.

In terms of print materials, Lenin plans to launch the following series of new materials:

- 1) Houseplaques - re-designed to include the phrase "puesto de distribución" (distribution post) along with the ASHONPLAFA logo;
- 2) Flip charts - to be used by the regional supervisors during their visits with the distributors;
- 3) Personalized Reference Cards - designed to include the distributor's name in order to give them further acknowledgment and prestige, and at the same time, to assure new users that they will be "personally" attended to;
- 4) Pocket Calendars - bearing ASHONPLAFA's logo and project slogan, "Ahora es un derecho de todos" (Now family planning is everyone's right) to assist the distributors and supervisors in disseminating the existence of the CBD program;
- 5) Pamphlets - describing how to use the pill, condom and vaginal tablets (the three contraceptive products used in the CBD program) properly for the distributors to refer to when answering client's questions;
- 6) Checklist - to serve as a guide for the distributors in advising their clients regarding contraindications for pill use; and
- 7) Poster - designed for local distribution.

We then discussed a variety of administrative details. Patrick requested that any subcontracts larger than \$5000 be sent to JHU/PCS to assure that the content agrees with AID regulations. We also talked about the money remaining in the 1984 budget, due primarily to Lenin's negotiations in developing the radio and print material. Lenin mentioned several ways that he plans to utilize these funds. Of primary concern is the need for an assistant, particularly to help out in the evaluation phase and with the increased activities planned for 1985. In the past, a person from the evaluation

department (Anibal Melgar Ascencio) had been collaborating with Lenin. However, this position was eliminated due to the recent IPPF cutbacks. Patrick agreed that an assistant was necessary and approved the position; the assistant will begin immediately. Lenin added that this year's printing costs will be higher than projected, thus the additional monies also could be used in this area.

Lenin also mentioned the difficulties he had encountered in arranging transportation for his monitoring visits to the distributors and the radio stations. His travel time will increase as the program expands to a national level. He requested the use of project monies (approximately \$1500) to repair a vehicle and maintain it. It will be used exclusively for the JHU/PCS project. He stated that ASHONPLAFA does not have the funds to repair the vehicle since they are operating on a reduced budget for 1985. Patrick said that he would have to check into the AID regulations regarding vehicles, but agreed that Lenin needed greater access to transportation. We agreed to follow up and respond on this issue immediately.

Patrick, Alice and Lenin held a short meeting with the Financial Director, German Cerrato, and his assistant, Oscar Bonilla. We went over the fourth quarterly report for 1984 to clear up several matters. Patrick explained that the payroll voucher did have to be used with national consultants and requested that the forms include the correct address, project number and signatures. German requested JHU/PCS support in repairing a vehicle for the project and noted that in the past year ASHONPLAFA had been absorbing these costs. Patrick pointed out that ASHONPLAFA had agreed to this in the subagreement, but that he was cognizant of ASHONPLAFA's tight funding situation this year and would look into the matter. The financial department is correcting the outstanding quarterly report and will send it on.

German expressed his dismay about the late arrival of the checks and suggested that it would be more expedient to send the checks directly to ASHONPLAFA or to send them to ASHONPLAFA's CITIBANK account in New York and telex them the exact amount of the deposit, at which point they would withdraw the funds and deposit the money into a separate account in Honduras for the project. German noted that other cooperating agencies follow this procedure without any problems. We promised to look into the different options to avoid any future delays.

We met with Juanita Martinez, Director of the Information and Education Division, to which the communication project reports. Juanita agreed that Lenin needed an assistant and greater access to transportation. Patrick expressed his satisfaction with the progress of the project and the close working relationship between her department and the CBD department. We mentioned several ways that PIPOM, also a part of the I & E division, might collaborate with the JHU/PCS projects in the MOH and with IHSS.

In a meeting with the Executive Director of ASHONPLAFA, Alejandro Flores Aguilar, Patrick stated that he was pleased with the project activities and reviewed what had been discussed with Lenin. Don Alejandro approved hiring an assistant for Lenin and also inquired about the matter of repairing a vehicle. Don Alejandro said that ASHONPLAFA now had an established overhead rate and Patrick replied that the Year II budget could be modified to reflect these costs if ASHONPLAFA could provide documented justification for the overhead rate.

A field trip was organized to the province of Choluteca in order to ascertain, albeit in an informal manner, what type of impact the communication efforts are having at the local level. Dr. Maria del Carmen Miranda, the Population Advisor at AID/Tegucigalpa, and Oscar Viganó the PRASSAR (AED) Advisor, accompanied us on the trip.

Seven distributors were interviewed in the town of San Marcos de Colon and in the peri-urban section of Choluteca. We conducted informal "soundings" with each distributor by asking them a variety of questions regarding the radio and print materials and by checking their user records over the time period that the radio spots were aired. All the distributors responded very positively to the radio spots, posters and flyers. The distributors had given out all of their print materials to clients and had posted them in frequented locations in their neighborhoods. They felt that both forms of communication had supported their work in several ways, by: 1) legitimizing their role as distributors in the community; 2) legitimizing family planning which is often associated with a multitude of myths that often scare men and women; and 3) rebutting the rumor that the Honduran government had banned family planning and made the use of contraceptives illegal.

Lenin explained to the distributors his plans to expand the radio spots to include their names and addresses in order to give them more exposure and to help potential users locate their homes. The women were very pleased with this idea and agreed that this addition would make their role in the community more prominent.

The distributors commented that clients had approached them requesting "Perla," the pill being advertised over the radio by ASHONPLAFA's Contraceptive Social Marketing Program (CSM). The distributors reported explaining to the clients requesting "Perla" that they carried the same pill, but at a much cheaper price. Consequently, it would appear that, at least in part, some of the social marketing radio ads have motivated clients to purchase pills from the distributors. Although the increase in contraceptive users is being tabulated under the CBD/Communication project instead of the CSM project, the overall goal of increasing the number of users is being accomplished. (It is necessary for the ASHONPLAFA CBD supervisors to explain to the distributors the need not to denigrate "Perla," as it is part of ASHONPLAFA also.) The distributors also mentioned that more men had been coming to them requesting both condoms and pills for their wives. This is an unexpected, yet welcome, outcome of the radio spots. However, it must be noted that the CSM project has recently begun transmitting radio ads for "Guardian" (condoms). This may have a motivational effect on the men who purchase contraceptives from the local distributors. The rural health workers from the MOH are also called "Guardian." As a result, the new CSM condom campaign is having a negative effect on the rural health workers themselves, the MOH officials and the CBD program. The Guardians know that the CSM program is part of ASHONPLAFA and in retaliation they are withdrawing their support for local CBD promotional activities.

We met with Juan Ramón Aguilera, the owner and general manager of "Radio Victoria," the highest rated radio station in Choluteca. He also is a leading journalist and political figure in the region. Mr. Aguilera was very supportive of the radio spots and the communication campaign in general. He is interested in continuing to broadcast the spots and jingles, and also expressed an interest in broadcasting information regarding maternal/child and family health. We agreed to send him pertinent articles and Population Reports to use as background information for his public service announcements and programs.

The progress of the ASHONPLAFA project is excellent and Lenin is doing a commendable job directing the activities. Improvements such as: creating an assistantship position, eliminating unnecessary financial delays, funding vehicle repairs and more precise quarterly reports will enhance the effects of the project's second year.

#### Instituto Hondureño de Seguro Social

This trip found that IHSS had again undergone personnel changes resulting in the project's fourth coordinating team during its one year of existence! Consequently, meetings were held with the new people assigned to the project to ascertain how the personnel changes had affected the progress of the project and to redo the second year workplans.

During the first visit we met with Dr. Carlos Godoy Arteaga, recently appointed to the position of Chief of Medical Services, Alicia Paz Meza, from the Training Division who hopefully will coordinate the JHU/PCS-sponsored project, and Dr. Miranda. Dr. Godoy acknowledged the problems caused by the frequent personnel changes which have delayed the project's progress. Alicia described the activities which had taken place to accomplish the first phase of the workplan (to orient the IHSS personnel at all levels of family planning). Sixty-six people were trained in three areas who can now act as multipliers of information for other IHSS personnel.

Dr. Godoy said he felt that there was a lack of integration among the different divisions regarding this project, which he attributed to the fact that the division heads were not very familiar with the content of the project. He stated a need to orient the personnel at a high level in IHSS to get their support and collaboration, as well as the support from staff members of their departments. Dr. Godoy stated that Alicia has shown a high level of initiative and commitment to the project, although it was only one of her duties with IHSS. We discussed the desirability of having her assigned permanently to the project, given the clear need for a coordinator. Patrick mentioned that both Oscar and Lenin could serve as resources to the IHSS project, since both have extensive technical expertise in the field.

Dr. Godoy mentioned that he is very interested in the relationship between breast-feeding and family planning. We agreed to do a POPLINE search for him and extract pertinent articles for him. We will send Alicia Population Reports as well as other background and prototype materials on family planning.

A second meeting was held with Alicia and Oscar to discuss specific workplans for Year II. We began by discussing the best manner to accomplish Phase I, giving all IHSS personnel an orientation to family planning. A one-day seminar was planned for all the high-level IHSS directors and the Governmental Ministers. Patrick suggested inviting Dr. Jorge Martinez-Manautou, of the Mexican Social Security Institute, as a speaker. He also could assist in the orientation of the doctors and nurses (mid-level personnel) during the same week. The administrative and support staff will participate in training courses from April through June.

Alicia would like to produce print material to accompany bi-weekly family planning talks which will be given in the IHSS clinics beginning in April. A timetable was drawn up to produce pamphlets which will follow the JHU/PCS approved methodology. Oscar will advise Alicia on the one-day seminar for high level IHSS Directors and assist her in developing the pamphlets.

It is hoped that the new IHSS project coordinating team will be allowed sufficient time in their positions to implement the new workplan.

#### Ministerio de Salud Pública

The JHU/PCS team met with the recently appointed Vice Minister, Dr. Juan de Dios Paredes, and Dr. Miranda. Although Dr. Paredes is new to the position, as the former Director General of the MOH, he is familiar with the JHU/PCS-sponsored project and expressed concern about its slow progress. He mentioned several political problems, both within and outside of the agency which had affected the project. Until this year, the MOH had not clearly defined its policies on family planning activities, nor had the government defined its role in terms of family planning on a national level. Dr. Paredes stated that the MOH has now defined its policy concerning family planning and that 1985 has been designated as the year actively to begin family planning programs. However, it must be noted that this also is an election year, which may have some repercussions on the MOH. Dr. Paredes spoke very enthusiastically about the project. He stated that he felt the project would make greater progress in the coming year.

We took advantage of the field trip to Choluteca to visit briefly with Dr. Wilfredo Alvarado, Director of the Health Education Division at the MOH, and Jose Ignacio Mata, PROCOMSI advisor, who were attending a planning seminar in Choluteca. They said that the KAP survey has yielded interesting results and they were ready to begin other activities. They stated that they are not at all pleased with ASHONPLAFA's "Guardian" Campaign. The radio spots advertising the condom had made the task of their rural health workers' (also called Guardian) more difficult. Dr. Alvarado feels the radio spots have damaged the reputation/effectiveness of the rural health workers as well as the working relationship between the MOH and ASHONPLAFA.

Patrick met with Dr. Alvarado in Tequigalpa to discuss the specific workplans for 1985. The MOH family planning unit plans to begin this year's activities with a series of radio spots focussing on responsible parenthood as a base for their family planning activities. A second set of radio spots will include maternal/child health, breast-feeding and family planning messages. Dr. Alvarado also is planning a March seminar for journalists who report on health issues, in order to address some of the major health issues facing Honduras. (Family planning is one of the major topics included.)

After these initial activities, the family planning unit will develop the following materials:

- 1) Audio-visual modules to be used in the prenatal clinics (Dr. Alvarado mentioned that it is difficult to obtain all the chemicals necessary to produce the slides.);
- 2) A flipchart for service providers; and
- 3) A poster for the general public.

The MOH project has started very slowly for a variety of reasons, but Drs. Paredes and Alvarado were confident that the project would now move forward.

## Inter-Institutional Coordination

The monthly meeting of the groups involved in family planning communication took place during our visit. Oscar Viganó, who coordinates these meetings was present, as well as the three JHU/PCS-sponsored project directors from ASHONPLAFA, IHSS and MOH, the coordinator for ASHONPLAFA's CSM project, Jeronimo Larios, and Dr. Miranda. Patrick reiterated the goal of this type of regular collaboration by stating that it is beneficial for all the participants to exchange ideas and reactions to communication strategies and actual project materials. Although each project has different activities, all are working towards the same goal of increasing awareness and use of family planning in Honduras. Therefore, an exchange of thoughts from a committee of communication experts can enhance all of the projects and at the same time avoid and resolve problematic issues. Patrick and Oscar stressed that the group did not pass final approval on each other's projects, but rather served to facilitate comments from colleagues.

The issue of the "Guardian" radio spots was brought up by several people who were highly dissatisfied with the campaign. They pointed out that although the social marketing group did baseline research before making the unfortunate selection of the brand name, the research was focussed on the middle/urban class. However, the radio spots also can be heard in the rural sector where the majority of the lower socio-economic population live and the MOH rural health "Guardians" work. Previously the MOH health workers had coordinated with ASHONPLAFA's promotoras and distributors; however, many no longer feel inclined to do so due to the inappropriate use of the name "Guardian." The health officials at the MOH do not feel kindly disposed towards ASHONPLAFA either, as a result of these radio spots. Had the campaign been reviewed by this committee, the conflict of names would have surfaced before any damage and confusion had been done. Since Jeronimo is new to the CSM team, he could not respond specifically to the complaints. He said that he would convey the comments to the Project Director and agreed that "Guardian" was an inappropriate choice.

The question of the condom brand name provided a good example as to how the committee should ideally work. The participants were in agreement that regular meetings would be beneficial to each one of their project's and family planning efforts in general. The meeting concluded with the Project Directors summarizing their projects as an update on current activities. Each participant, except Jeronimo,

promised to share ("pretest") their media plans and materials with the group in the future. (Only Lenin had done this in the past.)

#### Agency for International Development

Two meetings were held with Dr. Maria del Carmen Miranda. (Tom Park, AID/Health, Population, Nutrition Officer, was out of the country during our visit.) During the first meeting, Dr. Miranda addressed changes which had occurred within the different organizations and other details relating to the status of the three JHU/PCS projects.

A second meeting took place to discuss the outcome of our week's work with the three organizations and to review their workplans for this year. Patrick expressed concern over the lack of progress in the MOH project. Dr. Miranda assured us that the Mission would continue to support JHU/PCS in this project and was encouraged by the workplans the MOH had drawn up. We requested that the Mission strongly support Alicia Paz Meza as coordinator of the IHSS project, particularly with regard to the upcoming seminar for high-level officials. Patrick requested that JHU/PCS have input into the AID/Honduras Project Paper regarding communication activities.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

Of the three JHU/PCS sponsored projects, only ASHONPLAFA has made steady progress, while IHSS has made some progress and the MOH appears to be at a standstill.

Lenin has foresight in planning and many creative ideas, both of which are evident from the high quality of work produced under ASHONPLAFA's communication project. He is able to work well with: the CBD Department and with the distributors themselves; the radio stations; publishing houses; and creative talent. All these factors will positively affect the project as it expands to a national level.

The IHSS project has moved slowly due to the almost continual personnel changes at IHSS. Alicia has a great deal of energy to coordinate the project and has formulated plans to get the project back on track. It is hoped that she will be named to coordinate the activities and thus be able to lead the project through its second year.

To date, little has been achieved under the MOH project, other than a KAP survey. However, various MOH officials stated that they are committed to implement family planning activities fully this year. Given their past internal and external political difficulties, it would seem that this year's election year politics may prove to be a constraint.

It is recommended that:

- 1) JHU/PCS facilitate the transfer of funds to ASHONPLAFA in a more timely fashion;
- 2) JHU/PCS permit ASHONPLAFA to repair and maintain a vehicle for project use;
- 3) IHSS receive technical assistance in materials development and for the high-level leaders seminar;
- 4) MOH staff receive technical assistance to assist them in their commitment to family planning; and
- 5) AID/Tegucigalpa invite JHU/PCS to contribute input concerning the communication section of the Project Paper now being drawn up for ASHONPLAFA's expansion.

ANNEX A

LIST OF CONTACTS

ASHONPLAFA

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Lenin Flores Anduray	Social Communicator
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Jeronimo Larios	Marketing Manager
Mike Machuca	Social Marketing Advisor
Nelson Valenzuela	PIPOM Coordinator
German Cerrato	Financial Director
Oscar Bonilla	Accountant

Radio Victoria

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