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TRIP REPORT

CAIRO, EGYPT

March 18 - April 4, 1985

NUTRITION INTAKE AND FUNCTION (CRSP)

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see all of transmitted letter.

## TRIP REPORT

Norge W. Jerome, Ph.D.

03/18/85-04/04/85

### A. Purpose of Trip

1. Overall project management;
2. Consultations on specific functional areas as documented in Kansas contract with Nutrition CRSP;
3. Assist in resolving problems associated with local data entry and processing;
4. Assist in resolving problems associated with capture of food intake data;
5. Assist in designing a systematic method for identifying missing data;
6. Assist with data resolution matters between the Kansas and Nutrition Institute Data Management Units.

### B. Major Accomplishments

1. Assisted the Egyptian P.I. and Project Coordinator in overall project management, particularly in developing a structure and system for coordinating and reporting the field research activities of multiple teams on the same target individual/household. The problem was particularly acute with reproduction - lactation - anthropometry. A system was designed to include the Project Coordinator as the link between the two field research teams. Although this was not the best solution to prevent slippage, it appeared to be better than the existing non-system where communication between teams was virtualy absent and contributed significantly to data loss.
2. A systematic method was developed for capturing and reporting missing data and for demonstrating new analytic problems linked to missing data. This method was used for recording and communicating missing data in the Egypt project's 6-month report and its report to the EEP. To some small extent, the senior investigators who participated in the exercise could project the significance of the missing data on analytic procedures.
3. Validation studies of food intake, planned with George Beaton during the January '84 meeting in Cairo had not yet begun. Dr. Wafaa Moussa had been involved in numerous unexpected activities associated with measuring food intake and processing the data, locally. She anticipated beginning the validation studies (CRSP method with short-term recall) in July, 1985 and continuing through the end of the study.

In another attempt to further identify problems with capturing and processing food consumption data, I initiated a review of the food intake manual with Dr. Wafaa to compare the "Manual Method" with the "Field Method". Significant

discrepancies were found between the two methods. The "field method" was "pencilled" in on the appropriate pages of the manual by Dr. Wafaa for further resolution and typing. (Unfortunately, I did not receive the typed copy of the updated pages of the Manual for follow-through activities until July 7, 1985).

Basically, the "field method" differed substantially from the "manual method". Of greatest importance is the addition of an invisible "new column" to the data capture instrument to record pre-prepared ingredients of "mixed" cooked dishes. Column titles, per se, were not changed. However, the data in some columns did not reflect the actual column titles. For example, the "Amount Consumed" column sometimes reflected food in its pre-prepared state, and at other times, food in its prepared state. Thus, the "amount" column did not always refer to amount consumed; it sometimes referred to the amount prepared. We believe that this problem can be resolved by algorithms, once the full nature of the problem has been comprehended. I am not so confident about the other problem related to "amount consumed", however. The "field method" derives information on individual food intake proportionately, using the target female as reference. Errors in this approach probably diminish with time due to indirect training of the respondent; however, early on, these data should be viewed as gross estimates of individual food intake. For example, for any given household, month 3 should provide better estimates than month 1, and month 5, better estimates than month 3. Fortunately the seasonal factor of months 5, 6, and 7 (winter vs. summer) should not further increase reporting error, since the major sources of energy intake remain relatively constant throughout the year.

In situations where family members assemble around communal serving vessels containing food mixtures, i.e. soups, stews and casseroles, it is extremely difficult to quantify the amount of food consumed by each individual during family mealtime. Kalama is no different. Family mealtime is a group affair; the individual appears to be of secondary importance.

Most dishes served at mealtime consist of at least two foods, presented to the group in a "common pot". Consumption by the individual cannot be easily quantified, since prepared dishes are not first placed in personalized, standardized or standardizable utensils, such as bowls, cups and spoons. Rather, the food mixture is conveyed to the mouth dipped with, or enveloped by, bread.

Deciphering the intricacies of the Kalama food distribution and consumption patterns is a complex task. For cultural reasons CRSP ethnographers have not yet been able to observe food distribution patterns during family mealtime because mealtime in Kalama is extremely secret and well guarded. Outsiders are not permitted to participate in regular family meals, although Kalamans are generally very hospitable, generous and giving of themselves. They usually do not hesitate in giving time, tea and talk, thus providing brief opportunities to observe eating etiquette and some of the rules of food distribution when serving guests.

Interviews with Kalama residents provided a glimpse into the complexities of the food distribution and consumption patterns. The following is an account of several of my observations.

When socializing, if tea, soft drinks or coffee is served, women never partake of the beverage. Only men do. However, women prepare and serve tea to guests. They may also serve soft drinks. Coffee was prepared and served on one occasion only by a man - who was head of a nuclear household.

On another occasion, at an "outdoor roast" in a dora (corn) field, a young man (approximately 18 years of age) assumed responsibility for preparing and serving tea after the roast. Men (including teenagers) and guests sip tea during the social hour, which could take place any time through the day. At these times, toddlers and very young children are always given something to eat or drink. I have observed sugar sweetened water, roasted corn, sweetened tea and raw vegetables (carrots, peppers, eggplant, tomatoes, and cucumbers) being served to them. If present, infants are breastfed by biological mothers or by a lactating woman in the group. The structure of these activities indicate that there are rules governing the behavior of each person in the commensal group; other rules must exist during family mealtimes.

Specific rules governing distribution and satiation are not clear. These include distribution of bread and meat, catering to the weak and dependent, deferring to the strong, fast and powerful, ensuring equity, etc.

The ethnographic record indicates that food distribution patterns during family mealtime are complex and especially influenced by family structure (nuclear vs. extended), gender (male dominance), and stage in the life cycle (toddlers are favored). However, given the unknowns to date, food distribution and consumption during meal preparation are still being investigated.

Current field methods of estimating individual food intake appear to have some merit, however, without knowledge of the complete set of rules, the interviewer is unable to design and structure an appropriate and productive food intake interview.

4. Assisted, as needed, an aspects of data entry and processing, and on various functional areas of the project. Refer to Calendar of Activities, pp. 4 - 5 for day-to-day activities.

C. Calendar of Activities (3/1885-4/2/85)

Monday March, 18, 1985	Left Kansas City for Cairo
Tuesday March 19, 1985	Arrived in Cairo
Wednesday March 20, 1985	Work at the Nutrition Institute - Orientation meeting with Project Coordinator, Ms. Nancy Meyer and Data Manager, Dr. Saneya Wabah.
Thursday March 21, 1985	Work with Drs. Hekmat Aly and Saneya Wabah on missing data issue. Weekly CRSP meeting.
Friday March 22, 1985	Holiday and Day of Worship. Continued work on missing data at home all day.
Saturday March 23, 1985	Work with Dr. Hekmat Aly on Time Allocation and Child Care research and with Dr. Wafaa Moussa on food intake matters.
Sunday March 24, 1985	Work with Mr. Raggia on Socio-demographic data update.
Monday March 25, 1985	Work with Mr. Frank Peters and Ms. Nancy Meyer on RMR issues; with Drs. Saneya Wabah and Ghada Fouad (liaison with Al-Ahram Computer Center) on data entry and processing; with Dr. Wafaa Moussa on food intake and Drs. Osman Galal and Farouk Shaheen on general CRSP matters.
Tuesday March 26, 1985	Preparation of reports for the USA (Sent by Dr. James Cook).
Wednesday March 27, 1985	Meetings with (a) Drs. Ahab Hegazi, Wafaa Moussa and Ahmad Dakroury concerning food analyses of Egyptian foods, (b) Dr. Wafaa Moussa concerning sampling for quality control in reviewing food intake data, (c) Dr. Hekmat Aly and her assistant concerning time allocation records, (d) Dr. Saneya Wabah concerning the status of the CORE households.

Thursday March 28, 1985	Vacation - Compensation time for Friday, March 22, 1985 taken.
Friday March 29, 1985	Holiday - Day of Worship
Saturday March 30, 1985	Vacation Day - No per diem
Sunday March 31, 1985	Meetings with Nancy Meyer and Frank Peters re: RMR; and with the Cognition group, including Drs. Ted Wachs and Hissal Yunis, Mr. Hatem, the Programmer, and Dr. Ghada Foad on data cleaning, entry and processing.
Monday April 1, 1985	Kalama - all morning; Meeting with Dr. Hekmat Aly all afternoon.
Tuesday April 2, 1985	(a) Project meeting with senior investigators and data management personnel to finalize structure for coordinating research activities of multiple teams (b) Food Analysis Task force meeting with Drs. Ahab, Wafaa, Dakroury and Ms. Meyer.
Wednesday April 3, 1985	Nutrition Institute - Detailed review and discussions on current data processing steps and techniques at Nutrition Institute and Al-Ahram, viz. namely data preparation at Nutrition Institute, key entry and range checks at Al-Ahram, data review for detecting errors by the Nutrition Institute staff followed by error corrections at Al-Ahram. All agreed that the work performed by the Nutrition Institute staff took a very long time and should be evaluated for efficiency. Need to move ahead swiftly while paying very close attention to details in data cleaning process seemed to be appreciated by all.
Thursday April 4, 1985	Leave Cairo for the USA with a brief stop in Rome.