

PD-ABA-188  
1989/1/13

**AN EVALUATION OF  
THE PROGRAM OF EDUCATION  
FOR PARTICIPATION (PEP)**

**Grant No. LAC-0003-A-00-5103-00**

**August 1989**

***Prepared for:***

Office of Democratic Initiatives  
Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean  
Agency for International Development  
Washington, D.C. 20523

**MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL**

600 Water Street S.W., NBU 7-7  
Washington, D.C. 20024

telephone: (202) 484-7170  
telex: 499C821MANSY fax: (202) 488-0754

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY . . . . .	i
I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	4
III. COSTA RICA . . . . .	14
IV. HONDURAS . . . . .	19
V. GUATEMALA . . . . .	24

### ANNEXES:

1. Projects of PEP/Costa Rica
2. Projects of PEP/Honduras
3. Projects of PEP/Guatemala

### APPENDICES:

- A. Itinerary of Robert Arnove in Central America
- B. Publication of PEP/Costa Rica: Como Formar Un Comité Ecológico
- C. PEP/COECE Coloring Book: El Niño, El Agua, El Bosque
- D. Publication of PEP/Honduras: Informaciones Para Pobladores y Sus Comunidades
- E. Publication of PEP/Honduras: Aprendiendo a Elaborar un Plan de Trabajo
- F. Overview of PEP Training Manual
- G. Checklist of Ideal Project Characteristics
- H. Examples of Training Content in Three Countries

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### AN EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM OF EDUCATION FOR PARTICIPATION

#### Grant Objectives and History

The Program of Education for Participation (PEP) was initiated in the spring of 1986 with the goal of developing in program participants "functional knowledge and skills which will enable them, working collectively, to understand and use democratic processes effectively." Among the outcomes envisioned were individuals taking concerted action to improve their life circumstances by a) making claims on public resources and services and b) engaging in local and national political life.

Democratic citizen participation is defined by OEF as an aggregate of knowledge and skills used by citizens to act collectively to promote or defend shared interests. Closely related to the objective of strengthening democratic processes is the use of innovative and participatory nonformal educational methods. Participatory education is at the heart of OEF International activities in developing countries. According to the grant document, "Central America/ Training for Citizen Participation," participatory education "provides new tools so that people can actually solve their own problems."

OEF received one of two grants in FY 1985 under the Central American Regional Strengthening Democracy Project. The grant of \$2,268,316 was for the three-year period October 1, 1985 through September 30, 1985. Supplemental funds in the amount of \$415,000 extended the life of the project from April 1, 1989 through September 30, 1989.

In essence, PEP is a program of participatory community education and action. It involves out-of-school teaching and learning that emerges from the daily concerns of people and enables individuals and communities to more effectively address their most pressing problems. This is civic education at its best: it is education for informed citizen participation in civil life that does not involve indoctrination.

The program structure consists of a Regional Team and three country staffs in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala. The Regional Team (composed of the Regional Director, Lidieth Madden, and Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink of OEF International in Washington, D.C.) selected the national coordinators and has provided continuing direction and technical assistance to the program. The regional office is based in Costa Rica. Each of the three country staffs has a national coordinator and a staff of from 3-8 trainers who work with groups throughout the country.

#### Purpose and Methods of the Evaluation

The purpose of this end-of-project evaluation is to determine the program's: 1) effectiveness in achieving stated program objectives; 2) effectiveness of the grantee in administering technical and financial resources; 3) degree to

which training and managerial capacities have been institutionalized and are likely to be sustained after the project ends; and 4) potential replicability or application of materials, methodologies and institutional relationships to the design and implementation of future civic and community education programs in the LAC region.

The evaluation of the PEP is based on a fourteen-day visit to Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras, June 20-July 4, 1989. The evaluator was Dr. Robert Arnove of Indiana University. During this time, the evaluator had the opportunity to interview at length members of the country staffs; visit projects in the field; meet with a number of project participants in their communities and homes; and gather reports prepared by the different PEP offices.

The objectives for the program provide the standard against which the progress of the various country subprojects was measured. Among the indicators of program effectiveness were to be: examples of more active citizen involvement in local affairs, an increase in women's roles in groups (mixed and all-women's), the preparation of community leaders, better networking among groups, and a multiplier effect.

The evaluator was guided by two requests from OEF International. The first was to determine the consistency of program objectives within and across countries. The second was to examine not only the extent to which the program was successful in implementing participatory education activities, but also what were the outcomes of such education? Did education in fact permit people to participate outside of the learning environment? The ensuing country descriptions and analyses examine these questions in relation to the overreaching grant objectives and those formulated by the country staffs.

### Attainment of Objectives

The evidence gathered for the mid-term evaluation of November 1987 and the final evaluation of June-July 1989 indicates that the program has accomplished its major objectives and in some respects has surpassed expectations. Despite setbacks and the difficult contexts in which the projects operate, the program has helped strengthen grassroots organizations in dozens of communities in Central America where opportunities for citizen participation in local communities and in national public life are becoming a reality. The PEP country staffs in the three countries consist of highly qualified professionals with a shared vision and common commitment to building more just societies and a knowledge of democratic educational methods that will contribute to that end. The institutional bases for the sustainability of the program at the level of the PEP country staffs and the community groups with which they work have been established.

The impact of the PEP program can be seen on a number of levels: the individual, organizational, community, and national levels, and in institutional development.

**Individual:** A principal outcome of the program has been the training of representatives from grassroots groups to share the knowledge, skills, and insights acquired in PEP training sessions with their respective organizations and communities, and extend or "multiply" the educational philosophy and

organizing skills to other groups and communities. As of the spring of 1989, PEP had trained over 350 community members as "promotores."

Many of the most remarkable gains for individuals are those achieved by women. They have a more positive image of themselves and recognize the importance of being equal participants in community change processes. Men also have commented on their changed values and the newly gained appreciation they have of the strength that skilled socially aware women bring to their organizations and efforts at social reform.

An estimated 2,500 to 3,000 people have participated in training sessions, seminars, conferences, and educational and cultural events organized by PEP. The number of indirect beneficiaries (or organizational and community members who were likely to have been reached by PEP's educational activities) would easily increase the above figures four or fivefold. PEP/Costa Rica alone estimates that it has reached over 6,000 indirect beneficiaries. Thus, it can be said that the grant objective of training 400 group facilitators who would train on the average thirty members of their respective groups for a total of 12,000 individuals has been accomplished.

Group: Among the most significant outcomes of PEP educational activity on the institutional level is stronger, more participatory and democratically run organizations in over three dozen communities, urban barrios, and rural settlements. They engage in collective action to improve their communities and make claims on local and national governmental agencies for improved public services. Many of these local groups are linked through collaborative efforts to organizations in other communities. Over 160 groups have received training in the three countries.

Community: The PEP program has also affected community standards of living. There are numerous instances of urban and rural communities building schools and health clinics and requesting teachers, physicians, and other personnel and resources from the appropriate state institutions to ensure adequate provision of basic social services to the adults and children of their locales. These basic services are reality in such communities due to their increased ability to negotiate and collaborate with governmental entities.

National: After three years of work, PEP's national impact is primarily in the distribution of educational materials - slide shows, videos, educational pamphlets and guides. The PEP country staffs and collaborating organizations have produced a number of useful resources and publications that have been widely distributed. PEP/Honduras has produced two publications: a Citizen's Handbook on how to gain access to social services and obtain important civil documents, and a manual to assist community groups in drawing-up work plans that specify objectives and strategies for achieving them. The publications have been in great demand by governmental and nongovernmental agencies and universities. In Costa Rica, PEP developed a guide for groups that wish to organize through the formation of local committees. The staff also published 12,000 copies of a coloring book designed to educate children about the importance of the environment. Moreover, PEP/Costa Rica assisted in the production of a video that examines legal and economic issues surrounding street children in San Jose. It has been used in urban communities and by governmental and nongovernmental agencies.

The PEP intervention has made a significant difference in the lives of scores of individuals. The testimonials of beneficiaries and the evaluation sessions conducted with PEP staff, repeatedly underscore the beneficiary gains in self-confidence, in ability to speak up in public; in an increased awareness of the role that they, as ordinary citizens, can play in decision making within their organizations and their right to press claims on public entities for services that are due all citizens; in their recognition of the strength that comes from collective efforts and unity of organizations.

Institutional development: Other end of project intended outcomes were enhanced PEP country staff managerial capacities and sustainability of the program. In each country, a highly qualified team is in place and programmatic involvements are well suited to the national contexts. The teams are led by coordinators who share a commitment to the common program goals, but are capable of adapting them to national and local circumstances.

The Regional Team, consisting of Regional Director Lidieth Madden and OEF International staff Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink, played an instrumental role in providing a clear sense of direction and harmonizing the various country efforts within the framework of the grant.

The technical assistance from OEF International has been essential in ensuring overall adherence to the program, in the formation, in continued skill development of the PEP staff and in guiding efforts towards increasing local capabilities. These developments have provided the groundwork so that the project can eventually become a regional institution. By organizing three regional, week-long workshops for the staff during the course of the project's evolution, staff skills related to adult education activities were sharpened and consensus solidified as to the goals and methods of the program. In addition to these regional meetings, Washington, D.C. OEF staff members, Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink, visited the country staffs on a regular basis. With the exercise of more leadership responsibilities by the regional and country directors, OEF International assistance became tailored to specific requests. Most recently that support has been in designing and editing the PEP training manual, and in facilitating the move towards organizational autonomy and the attainment of multiple funding sources.

#### Problems, Constraints and Challenges

Many of the problems facing the country staff stem from the difficulties of the contexts in which they are working. All three countries face serious economic problems such as large external debts, accelerating inflation rates, and governmental policies that favor export-oriented, large-scale agribusiness to the detriment of small farmers and agricultural workers. In addition to the rural to urban migration that results from dire economic circumstances in the countryside, rural populations in Guatemala have been uprooted by decades of violence and brutal military repression. Honduras, which in recent years has undergone a marked militarization, is also experiencing unrest.

Urban populations are also characterized by high unemployment rates and transience. The illegal status of many urban communities, where people are squatting on land they do not own, affects the efforts of neighborhood groups to gain access to basic social services.

Almost all rural and urban communities have traditional authority structures. The leaders of the urban "patronatos" (governing councils) and rural "caciques" (leaders) are reluctant to share decision-making with newly formed groups. More modern organizations involved in political interest aggregation and articulation (e.g., labor unions and peasant federations) have leaders that often espouse the need for an expanded base of members, but who wish to use educational programs for purposes of indoctrinating or passing on a particular political line or agenda. Improving the status of women and expanding opportunities for women to participate in civic action and claim their basic citizen rights have been priority goals of the programs. Entrenched attitudes concerning the "proper" place and role of women have created tensions and male discrimination in a number of the projects.

The PEP country staffs also made a number of errors. Some of the collaborations designed were poorly conceptualized and the staffs failed to see warning signals that they were off track. In some cases, the wrong individuals were assigned to work with a specific group - frequently they were so involved, or committed to the group that they could not distinguish PEP's objectives from the organization's goals. In addition, some of the training activities designed fell short of intended goals because the groups selected did not focus on addressing a particular community problem or issue. Thus, the training offered was not related to a specific civic activity; instead, the PEP staff tried to develop this orientation within the group.

### Conclusions

An Action Memorandum of March 31, 1989 from LAC/DI to the LAC Assistant Administrator, requesting extension of the grant, states: "In formulating and refining A.I.D.'s strategy for democratic development in the LAC region, we have concluded that assistance to strengthen the major institutions of governance (the judicial, legislative and electoral processes) must be balanced by increased assistance to empower individual citizens to participate fully in these processes, as well as to deal effectively with problems and issues that arise in daily life" (p. 2).

The PEP program has effectively put that aspiration into practice, in the process indicating elements of a strategy or model which can be applied and adapted in other settings to promote a more effective grassroots citizenship. These elements are derived from a review of both the past successes and mistakes of PEP activities in the three countries, and include the following components:

- **A participatory nonformal education program that enables community organizations to define their problems and design action strategies.** While emphasis is placed on developing organizational, communication and inquiry skills to make more effective claims on their society, the program ultimately involves changing people's perceptions of themselves and their citizenship rights so that they work to improve their communities and to make their societies more just.

- **A regional programmatic thrust.**  
The regional framework joins the various country efforts into a coherent whole. Systematic interaction between country staffs leads to more coherent programs, to mutual learning and reinforcement of technical assistance activities, and to efficient use of limited resources.
- **A national team of individuals committed to a set of common goals related to education for democratic participation and action.** Although the national teams work within a regional framework, they also adapt the program's objectives and methods to their specific local circumstances. These adaptations are possible because the country coordinators have a strong background and experience in community education and development issues. In addition, the staff has ongoing opportunities for professional development and the interchange of experiences with the other countries.
- **The linking of local self-help efforts to national policies and institutions.** The educational and action thrust must go beyond helping local groups strengthen their internal and community capabilities, to linking their needs and problems to broader issues, be they national policies, legislation or governmental responsibilities.
- **A networking orientation.**  
Within countries, both communities and organizations are linked in mutually reinforcing self-help efforts. The program's efforts are multiplied by working with in-country regional and national organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental. The organizations must be committed to educational processes that empower people to shape their own futures, fostering an open-ended process of change rather than the imposition of a particular agenda or political line.
- **A multiplier effect through the preparation of local, grassroots educators.** Educational efforts are broadened by preparing community and group representatives to serve as educators and "promotores" who share knowledge, skills, and insights gained in training sessions with their associates, neighborhoods, and surrounding communities. This approach also strengthens local capacities for problem-solving and reduces dependency on outside institutions.
- **Employment of staff conversant with local and indigenous cultures.** This is especially important in countries like Guatemala with large indigenous non-Spanish speaking populations.
- **Flexibility in working with both mixed and single sex groups.** While the program seeks to strengthen mixed sex groups that bring men and women together to work on common problems, it is often necessary to work in the initial stages of a project with single sex groups. Women need opportunities to gain skills and

insights, to articulate concerns in associations and meetings that are not dominated by men. Effective women's associations and self-confident, articulate women with organizational skills are an asset to any larger association, their communities, and society at large. Recognition of women's needs and roles form an integral part of any organizational efforts to create more equitable communities and more just societies.

- **The production of easy-to-use educational materials.**  
Print and audiovisual materials provide both a learning tool and a means to document and extend the impact of civic education efforts. Well-designed training manuals and guides in a variety of formats (comics, videos, slideshows) are invaluable resources in educational and organizing efforts.
- **A variety of funding sources.**  
Diverse funding is desirable to ensure the financial stability of a program like PEP. These sources are likely to be both international and national, governmental and nongovernmental. Where possible, the program can also charge fees for its training activities. For example, in each country, several governmental ministries and institutions are likely to have the interest in and funds to pay an organization like PEP for its services.

At present, PEP is putting together a training manual that summarizes the philosophy and methods of the program, with case materials drawn from the various country projects. The book will be published in English and Spanish to serve as a guide for groups in other countries interested in initiating similar type activities or in improving their ongoing efforts. This manual demonstrates PEP's contribution in linking nonformal education, institution building and civic action.

### Recommendations

A major preoccupation of the country staffs is how to secure the continued vitality of the program beyond the termination of the A.I.D. grant on 30 September 1989. The project has the institutional potential, conceptual framework and educational methodologies that can make a significant contribution to the strengthening of grassroots democratic institutions and processes in Central America.

As this is an end of project evaluation, I will address the question as to whether A.I.D. made a wise decision by investing in the Program of Education for Participation (PEP), and whether the program merits future assistance. The answer to the first question is yes, for the reasons detailed above. The second question prompts the following two recommendations:

- (1) A.I.D. should fund for a period of two more years the Program of Education for Participation so that the country staffs have time to consolidate their efforts to become an independent regional foundation. The funding plan should allow them to move gradually towards autonomy by providing full funding the first year, and 50% funding for the second year.

Discussion: At present, the PEP Regional Director and the country coordinators have approached several North American and European foundations and international technical assistance agencies to solicit grants and to explore the possibilities of collaborative efforts. The Washington-based OEF/PEP staff is assisting in the formulation of their funding proposal and contacts with potential funders. The legal work that is needed to acquire corporate legal status for the newly proposed regional foundation, Fundación ANDAR, and its country affiliates is likely to take at least one year. In addition, at the present time the country staffs, and particularly Costa Rica (the regional central office) do not have the managerial or administrative capacity to assume full direction of the project. However, this institutional capacity can be achieved over the next one to two years.

(2) OEF-International should be supported in exploring the potential of this project and model for replication and adaptation in South America and the Caribbean.

Discussion: The PEP experience merits attention in a broader geographical context given the elements for a model or strategy presented here, the regional orientation of such a program, and the existence of a resource (the training manual) which documents the methodological approach. This could be accomplished by a regional conference, by distribution and testing of the training manual and by workshops in a variety of settings.

In conclusion, the Program of Education for Participation has fulfilled the objectives of the A.I.D. Central American Peace and Democracy Initiative, which had as a principal goal "to empower individual citizens to participate fully in ... [democratic] processes, as well as to deal effectively with problems and issues that arise in daily life." Over the past three years through its educational activities the Program has contributed to strengthening grassroots groups and collective efforts that promise to improve the status of low-income and disadvantaged populations and open opportunities for civic action within the most difficult of contexts. By doing this, PEP has made significant contributions to the opening of democratic spaces in Central America.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Purpose and Methods of the Evaluation

The purpose of this end-of-project evaluation is to determine the program's: 1) effectiveness in achieving stated program objectives; 2) effectiveness of the grantee in administering technical and financial resources; 3) degree to which training and managerial capacities have been institutionalized and are likely to be sustained after the project ends; and 4) potential replicability or application of materials, methodologies and institutional relationships to the design and implementation of future civic and community education programs in the LAC region.

This evaluation of the Program of Education for Participation (PEP) is based on a fourteen-day visit to Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras from June 20 to July 4, 1989. The evaluator was Dr. Robert F. Arnove of Indiana University (Bloomington). During this time, the evaluator had the opportunity to interview at length members of the country staffs; visit projects in the field; meet with a number of project participants in their communities and homes; and gather reports prepared by the different PEP offices. The program is extraordinarily well documented.<sup>1</sup> The documentation facilitated the writing of this evaluation and contributed to its great length.

This final external evaluation of PEP incorporates data from interviews, observations, and office documents into a narrative of the program's activities. The second chapter summarizes main points of the evaluation and lessons learned that may guide future project development in Central America and the Latin American/Caribbean region. A set of recommendations is made for future A.I.D. support of the program. The last three chapters are country sections starting with the first country selected for programmatic involvement, Costa Rica, and ending with the most recent, Guatemala. Each country section describes the country staff and its objectives, the context within which PEP engagements and transactions take place, possible future directions for PEP, and recommendations. Descriptions of the various country projects and assessments of their strengths and weaknesses are presented in three separate annexes. In general this report conveys the nature of PEP activities and the impact of projects on individuals and communities.

In gathering field data for the report, the evaluator was guided by the scope of work prepared by A.I.D. Briefly, the guidelines state that the evaluation will build on the mid-term evaluation the evaluator conducted in November 1987 and internal evaluations carried out by the staff in each country. This final evaluation was to involve analysis of the following areas:

---

<sup>1</sup> The documentation consists of field notes and community surveys; monthly and quarterly country reports; minutes and "diaries" of planning and training sessions; evaluations of workshops, including poems and drawings by participants; position papers and analyses of the national contexts; consultant reports; and a useful set of internal evaluations of the first three years of the project, prepared in the spring of 1989. In addition, Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink of OEF International have prepared excellent periodic overviews of the progress of the program.

- attainment of objectives for the program as a whole and for each country subproject;
- program results in each country - particularly in regard to different levels of program beneficiaries, from the individual to the community;
- PEP's institutional viability and the strength of its staff; and
- the value of the project as an approach and model for building grassroots democracy.

Among the indicators of program effectiveness were to be examples of more active citizen involvement in local affairs, an increase in women's roles in groups (mixed and all-women's), the preparation of community leaders, better networking among groups, and a multiplier effect.

The objectives for the program provide the standard against which the progress of the various country subprojects was measured. A concise statement of the grant objectives is found in the September 1985 "Proposal for a Cooperative Agreement between OEF International and the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, United States Agency for International Development". It reads:

...the program will develop in the participants. . . functional knowledge and skills which will enable them, working collectively, to understand and use democratic processes effectively to promote their objectives. Democratic citizen participation is defined by OEF as an aggregate of knowledge and skills used by citizens to act collectively to promote or defend shared interests (p.4).

Integrally related to this goal are educational methods used by PEP staff. As the document "Central America/Training for Citizen Participation" states:

OEF has carefully designed and implemented a fundamental approach to working with Third World women, one which embraces participatory education and training methodologies to develop organizational capabilities . . . . In order to provide new tools so that people can actively solve their own problems, innovative, nonformal education techniques are essential (p.8).

In addition, to these general objectives and methodological orientations, the PEP staff at the May 1988 regional meeting in San José, formulated a set of five specific objectives to guide their activities. They are the following:

- 1) To facilitate the development of critical thinking skills among participants, especially women, in order to enhance their potential for effective participation in society.
- 2) To assist participating organizations in the definition of needs and problems and in the formulation of action strategies aimed at resolving them.

- 3) To strengthen democratic relations within community groups as well as their capacity for organizing and mobilizing constituencies.
- 4) To develop skills among participants which enable them to influence political decision-making and access governmental institutions and services within their countries.
- 5) To ensure that participants acquire the skills, knowledge, and means to exercise their inalienable rights.

In conducting the mid-term evaluation, the evaluator was guided by two requests from OEF International. The first was to determine the consistency of program objectives within and across countries. The second was to examine not only the extent to which the program was successful in implementing participatory education activities, but also what were the outcomes of such education? Did education in fact permit people to participate outside of the learning environment? These same questions guided the final evaluation. The ensuing country descriptions (Chapters III - V) and analyses examine these questions in relation to the overreaching grant objectives and those formulated by the country staffs.

## II. CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes basic findings concerning PEP's effectiveness in: a) achieving stated program objectives, b) institutionalizing training and managerial capacities that are likely to be sustained after the grant ends and c) demonstrating elements of a model for promoting civic involvement through training on the grassroots level. A central question that will be addressed is the potential replicability or application of materials, methodologies and institutional relationships to the design and implementation of future civic and community education programs in the LAC region.

### History and Objectives of the Grant

OEF International received one of two grants forming part of the A.I.D. Central American Regional Strengthening Democracy Projects made in FY 1985. The initial grant of \$2,268,316 was for the three-year period October 1, 1985 through September 30, 1988. An additional allocation of \$415,000 extended the life of the project from April 1, 1989 through September 30, 1989. As the Action Memorandum of March 31, 1989, from LAC/DI states: "In formulating and refining A.I.D.'s strategy for democratic development in the LAC region, we have concluded that assistance to strengthen the major institutions of governance (the judicial, legislative and electoral processes) must be balanced by increased assistance to empower individual citizens to participate fully in these processes, as well as to deal effectively with problems and issues that arise in daily life" (p.2).

The objectives of PEP (also known as "Training for Citizen Participation") have been precisely those mentioned above: to develop in program participants "functional knowledge and skills which will enable them, working collectively, to understand and use democratic processes effectively." Among the outcomes envisioned were individuals taking concerted action to improve their life circumstances by: a) making claims to public resources and services and b) engaging in local and national life. Closely related to the goals of strengthening democratic processes was the use of innovative and participatory nonformal education methods.

### Attainment of Objectives

To what extent has the program met these objectives and more specific project objectives related to equipping individuals and their organizations to participate more effectively in community life and civic action? The evidence gathered for the mid-term evaluation of November 1987 and the final evaluation of June-July 1989 indicates that the program has accomplished its major goals and in some respects has surpassed expectations. Despite setbacks and limitations in a number of projects and the difficult contexts in which the projects operate, the program has helped strengthen grassroots organizations in dozens of communities in the Central American region where opportunities for citizenship participation in local communities and in national public life are becoming a reality. The PEP country staffs in the three countries (Costa Rica, Guatemala, and Honduras) consist of highly qualified professionals with a shared vision and common commitment to achieving more just societies and a

knowledge of democratic educational methods that will contribute to that end. The institutional bases for the sustainability of the program at the level of the PEP country staffs and the community groups with which they work have been established.

The impact of the PEP program can be viewed on various levels: individual, group, institutional, community, and national.

Individual: A principal outcome of the program has been the training of representatives from grassroots groups as "promotores" or "facilitators" who would share the knowledge, skills, and insights acquired in PEP training sessions with their respective organizations and communities, and extend or "multiply" the educational philosophy and methods to other groups and communities. As of the spring of 1989, PEP had trained over 350 community members as "promotores".

A conservative estimate of the number of direct beneficiaries (that is individuals who participated in training sessions, seminars, conferences, and educational and cultural events organized by PEP) would be in the range of 2,500 to 3,000 people. The number of indirect beneficiaries (or organizational and community members who were likely to have been reached by PEP's educational activities) would easily increase the above figures four or fivefold. PEP/Costa Rica alone estimates that it has reached over 6,000 indirect beneficiaries. Thus, it can be said that the grant objective of training 400 group facilitators who would train an average of 30 participants in their respective groups for a total of approximately 12,000 individuals reached by the program was met - and most likely surpassed!

A.I.D. allocations to the program total \$2.6 million (including additional funding of \$415,000), resulting in a cost of between \$100 and \$200 per direct or indirect beneficiary. The cost is probably closer to \$100 because the total number of beneficiaries is likely to be over 20,000. This calculation includes among the beneficiaries members of the communities who now have access to potable water, literacy classes, health services, and access roads that did not exist prior to civic action by PEP-assisted groups.

Indicators of the success of the program, however, are not to be found in easily quantifiable benefits like profits derived from an economic investment. The real indicators are changed self-concepts, newly opened roles and enhanced statuses for groups previously discriminated against, especially women, and the existence of more democratic organizations that can more cogently articulate group interests and effectively achieve improvements in their communities.

Other significant outcomes and indicators of achievement include the substantial number of women and men who have enrolled in literacy classes so that they can participate more effectively in their grassroots association, and the number of participants who have also assumed the role of literacy instructors.

Organizational: Among the most significant outcomes of PEP educational activity is the existence in over three dozen towns, urban barrios, and rural settlements of stronger, more participatory organizations that engage in community action to improve their communities and make claims on local and national governmental agencies for improved public services. Many of these

local groups are linked through collaborative efforts to organizations in other communities. Examples of such outcomes include the environmental action group CODECE, and the Integrated Community Development of the Atlantic Region/Jiménez and Camarón projects in Costa Rica; the Women's Groups and Literacy Monitors joint project with CEPROD in the region of Nuevo Progreso, and the urban squatter settlements of Tegucigalpa (especially the barrio of Israel Norte) in Honduras; and the Canoas, Quixaya, Rio Bravo, La Cumbre, and San Andres Semetabaj community projects in Guatemala. Over 160 groups have received training in the three countries.

Community: There are numerous instances of communities building schools and health clinics and requesting from the appropriate state institutions the teachers, physicians, and other personnel and resources to ensure adequate provision of basic social services to the adults and children of their locales. PEP training has increased the ability of communities to articulate their needs, negotiate with governmental agencies, identify internal and external resources, and mobilize through a variety of means in order to obtain needed goods and services. Among the examples described in this evaluation are those of Tayutic and Grano de Oro in the province of Turrialba, and the rural settlement of Camarón near Jiménez in Costa Rica; several communities in the CEPROD project surrounding the town of El Progreso and the ANACH project in the region of Choluteca in Honduras; the Quixaya, Rio Bravo, La Cumbre and San Antonio in Guatemala.

National: The PEP country staffs and organizations with which they worked have produced a number of useful publications that have been widely distributed. PEP/Honduras has produced two publications: a Citizen's Handbook on how to gain access to social services and obtain important civil documents (such as birth certificates and marriage licenses), and two manuals for community groups to assist them with drawing-up work plans that specify objectives and strategies for achieving them. Nearly 500 copies of each of the publications have been requested by governmental and nongovernmental agencies and by universities who prepare social workers. The Committee for the Defense of the Hills of Escazu (CODECE) has published 12,000 copies of a coloring book designed to educate children about the importance of the environment. The committee has also developed a guide for community groups that wish to organize and be more effective in their claims on the society. Moreover, PEP/Costa Rica assisted an urban adult education association ("VECINOS", Neighbors) with the production of a video that examines legal and economic issues surrounding street children in San José. There are short promotional videos on PEP that are used to acquaint funding agencies and community groups with the objectives and methods of the program.

The extensive and often self-critical evaluations conducted by the PEP country staffs and the evaluator's own field observations, consistently bring home the message that PEP intervention has made a significant difference in the lives of scores of individuals. Their testimonials and in-evaluation sessions conducted with PEP staff, repeatedly underscore the gains in self-confidence, in ability to speak up in public (compared with their extreme reticence to do so before); in an increased awareness of the role that they, as ordinary citizens, can play in decision-making within their organizations and their right to press claims on public entities for services that are due all citizens of the nation-state; in their recognition of the strength that comes from collective efforts and unity of organizations. Many of the most remarkable

gains are those registered by women, who have a more positive image of themselves and recognize the importance of their being equal participants in social change processes. Men also have commented on women's changed values and the newly gained appreciation they (men) have of the strength that skilled and socially aware women bring to their organizations and efforts at social reform.

Institutional development: Other intended outcomes at the end of the grant were enhanced PEP country staff managerial capacities and sustainability of the program. In each country, a highly qualified team is in place and programmatic involvements are well suited to the national contexts. The teams are coordinated by directors who share a commitment to the common program goals, but are capable of adapting them to national and local circumstances.

The Regional Team, consisting of Regional Director Lidieth Madden and OEF International staff Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink, has played an instrumental role in providing a clear sense of direction and harmonizing the various country efforts within the framework of the grant. Over the course of the grant, the Regional Director, as intended, has assumed greater responsibility for decisions concerning hiring and firing of staff and budgetary allocations. The country leaders themselves interact on a collegial basis to the point that they decided, in March of 1989, to divide the final supplementary A.I.D. grant funds equally among the three country offices, after setting aside funds for the regional office.

OEF International has contributed to the formation and continued skill development of the PEP staff by organizing two regional, week-long workshops in Guatemala (December of 1987) and Costa Rica (May of 1988). These workshops helped sharpen staff skills related to adult education activities that are participatory, dialogic, and problem-posing, and to forming a consensus as to the goals and methods of the program. In addition to these regional meetings, OEF staff members, Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink, visited the country staffs on a regular basis.

### Problems, Constraints, and Challenges

This section examines shortcomings and weaknesses of PEP's interventions and organizational collaborations. Many of the problems facing the country staff stem from the difficulties of the contexts in which they are working. All three countries face serious economic problems related to large external debts, accelerating inflation rates, and governmental policies that favor export-oriented, large-scale agribusiness to the detriment of small farmers and agricultural workers. In addition to the rural-urban migration that results from dire economic circumstances in the countryside, rural populations in Guatemala have been uprooted by decades of violence related to revolutionary groups pushing for structural social change and brutal military repression. Honduras, which in recent years has undergone a marked militarization, is also experiencing the beginnings of revolutionary activity in the countryside. Although there is a civilian government in Honduras, civil rights activists and union leaders routinely receive death threats, and an increasing number have disappeared or been killed. If "democracy" is a dangerous word in Honduras - one that community activists are reluctant to use for fear of reprisals -, "capacitación" (training) is considered a subversive concept and activity in

Guatemala. The military regularly stops people who carry paper and magic markers to rural populations because they don't want educational activities which try to deal with community needs and problems to take place.

Urban populations are characterized by high unemployment rates and transience. The illegal status of many urban communities, where people are squatting on land they do not own, conditions the efforts of neighborhood groups to gain access to basic social services. These problems are found in the PEP/Honduras projects in the hills surrounding Tegucigalpa, and in the PEP/Honduras community health project in the sprawling San Antonio sector of Guatemala City.

Almost all rural and urban communities have traditional authority structures. The leaders of the urban "patronatos" (governing councils) and rural "caciques" are reluctant to share decision-making with newly formed groups. Problems related to these structures have been encountered in the urban development projects in Tegucigalpa and in rural projects in Guatemala, notably in Canoas.

More modern organizations involved in political interest aggregation and articulation (e.g., labor unions and peasant federations) have leaders that often espouse the need for an expanded base of critically conscious and participatory members, but who wish to use educational programs for purposes of indoctrinating or passing on a particular political line or agenda. Similarly, the male leadership pronounce themselves in favor of increased participation of women at various levels of the organization, but fear divisive tendencies that might occur with a strong, independent women's association. This has been the case with the ANACH project in Honduras and the smaller farmers of the Atlantic Coast projects in Costa Rica.

Improving the status of women and opening expanded opportunity for women to participate in civic action and claim their basic citizenship rights have been priority goals of the programs. Entrenched attitudes concerning the "proper" place and role of women have created tensions in some of the projects, but there are also examples of resolving such conflicts in a manner that allowed for greater collaboration and increasing women's contribution to community life.

Other problems have resulted from attempting projects with governmental or nongovernmental institutions that did not share the values or commitments of the PEP country staffs. FINCA, for example, is an NGO committed to establishing community savings and loans "banks", but did not share the commitment of the Costa Rican country staff to fostering community civic action that might challenge public institutions. The Costa Rican Ministry of Public Health had in mind a program of training community health promoters and community-based associations engaged in preventive medicine and health education activities, but did not commit the personnel or resources to develop more than a pilot project in two towns.

However, all the above projects, whatever their programmatic and institutional shortcomings, also had many positive outcomes. Where parent associations (such as ANACH, the small farmers association of the Atlantic Coast, FINCA, and the Costa Rican Ministry of Public Health) did not produce all the outcomes hoped for, local groups, nonetheless, formed, grew in strength, and made effective claims on governmental entities for provision of basic services (potable water,

schools, health posts, public utilities). The strength of these organizations and the effectiveness of their claims can be directly linked to PEP educational interventions. Even the most destitute of communities, like Camarón in Costa Rica and Israel Norte in Honduras, have successfully pressed their claims for improved services. Moreover, the acquisition of basic communication and organizational skills and the gains in self-confidence that have resulted from PEP training activities which represent a potential force for social change.

The country staffs have also made errors - in conceptualizing the collaborations, in the selection of groups, and in not always clearly distinguishing PEP's objectives from those of the local organizations. At times the staff did not adequately conceptualize certain training plans with regard to prospects for organizational development, community outreach, and civic action; and then they failed to heed warning signals that the projects were off target or amiss. In some cases, the wrong individuals were assigned to a subproject - frequently they were so involved in the work and so committed to the people/group, that they could not see its faults or limitations. The country staffs have matured in the process, evidenced by their self-critical evaluations and improved criteria for group selection. Their awareness of possible pitfalls in involvements with certain types of institutions has led to a much more realistic and viable programmatic strategy for future activities.

Some staff problems also emerged at the time of the termination of the initial grant in March of 1989 when tension and instability about the future were high. A number of staff were laid off and not reemployed. The turnover was especially acute in Guatemala, where four new staff have been hired recently. Three are quite young. However, they do have the advantages of being conversant with the indigenous languages and cultures of the areas where they will be working. They have also worked in adult and nonformal education for several years.

Two observations made in the mid-term evaluation still have some validity. The evaluator noted the frequent tendency of the country staffs to be overly critical of themselves; and a tendency to be so absorbed in their daily responsibilities that they do not have sufficient time to stand back and reflect on the larger picture concerning the ends and methods of their involvements. The self-critical nature of the team is also one of its strengths, by ensuring their rigor in evaluating and improving their own work. Still, the internal evaluations of 1989 helped rectify this situation by stimulating the country staffs to summarize their efforts over the two-to-three year period. These evaluations were also explicit in pointing out shortcomings of various projects.

#### The Future - Elements of a Strategy

In essence, PEP is a program of participatory community education and action. It involves out-of-school teaching and learning that emerges from the daily concerns of people and enables individuals and communities to more effectively address their most pressing problems. This is civic education at its best: it is education for informed citizen participation in civil life that does not involve indoctrination. As such, the PEP grant is a potential model for civic education in Latin America.

The model is a strategy of programmatic involvements aimed at: 1) strengthening democratic institutions and 2) opening up opportunities for civic participation on the part of the most discriminated against and disadvantaged. These elements are derived from a review of both the past successes and mistakes of PEP activities in the three countries.

The model includes these components:

- **A participatory nonformal education program that enables community organizations to define their problems and design action strategies.** While emphasis is placed on developing organizational, communication and inquiry skills to make more effective claims on their society, the program ultimately involves changing people's perceptions of themselves and their citizenship rights so that they work to improve their communities and to make their societies more just.
- **A regional programmatic thrust.** The regional framework joins the various country efforts into a consistent whole. Systematic interaction between country staffs leads to more coherent programs, to mutual learning and reinforcement of technical assistance activities, and to efficient utilization of limited resources.
- **A national team of individuals committed to a set of common goals related to education for democratic participation and action.** Although the national teams work within a regional framework, they also adapt the program's objectives and methods to their specific local circumstances. These adaptations are possible because the country coordinators have a strong background and experience in community education and development issues.
- **The linking of local self-help efforts to national policies and institutions.** The educational and action thrust must go beyond helping local groups strengthen their internal and community capabilities, to linking their needs and problems to broader issues, be they national policies, legislation or governmental responsibilities.
- **A networking orientation.** Within countries, both communities and organizations are linked in mutually reinforcing self-help efforts. The program's efforts are multiplied by working with in-country regional and national organizations, both governmental and nongovernmental. The organizations must be committed to educational processes that empower people to shape their own futures, fostering an open-ended process of change rather than the imposition of a particular agenda or political line.
- **A multiplier effect through the preparation of local, grassroots educators.** Educational efforts are broadened by preparing community and group representatives to serve as educators and "promoters" who share knowledge, skills, and insights gained in training sessions with their associates, neighborhoods, and surrounding communities. This

approach also strengthens local capacities for problem-solving and reduces dependency on outside institutions.

- **Employment of staff conversant with local and indigenous cultures.** This is especially important in countries like Guatemala with large indigenous non-Spanish speaking populations.
- **Flexibility in working with both mixed groups and all women's and all men's groups.** While the program seeks to strengthen mixed sex groups that bring men and women together to work on common problems, it is often necessary to work in the initial stages of a project with single sex groups. Women need opportunities to gain skills and insights, to articulate concerns in associations and meetings that are not dominated by men. Effective women's associations and self-confident, articulate women with organizational skills are an asset to any larger association, their communities, and society at large. Recognition of women's needs and roles form an integral part of any organizational efforts to create more equitable communities and more just societies.
- **The production of easy-to-use educational materials.** Both print and audiovisual materials provide both a learning tool and a means to document and extend the impact of civic education efforts. Well-designed training manuals and guides in a variety of formats (comics, videos, slideshows) are invaluable resources in educational and organizing efforts.
- **A variety of funding sources.** Diverse funding is desirable to ensure the financial stability of a program like PEP. These sources are likely to be both international and national, governmental and nongovernmental. Where possible, the program can also charge fees for its training activities. For example, in each country, several governmental ministries and institutions are likely to have the interest in and funds to pay an organization like PEP for its services. In some cases, national and international NGOs also are willing to pay for the type of assistance PEP offers.

At present, PEP is putting together a training manual that summarizes the philosophy and methods of the program, with case materials drawn from the various country projects. (See Appendix F for overview) The manual, which will be published in English and Spanish, will serve as a guide for groups in other countries interested in improving their current efforts at strengthening local institutions and developing action strategies. The staff identified eight key content areas; these themes offer a contribution to the field of development and civic education, and offer a component of the strategy discussed below. The steps or themes are:

1. Assessing Community Needs
2. Strengthening the Historical and Cultural Identity of the Community
3. Women's Role and Participation
4. Strengthening Grassroots Organizations
5. Developing Strategies for Mobilization and Action
6. Claiming Legal Rights

7. Disseminating Information: Using the Mass Media and Alternative Forms of Communication
8. Participatory Evaluation

### Recommendations

A major preoccupation of the country staffs is how to secure the continued vitality of the program beyond the termination of the A.I.D. grant on 30 September 1989. They rightfully believe that they have the institutional potential, conceptual framework and educational methodologies that can make a significant contribution to the strengthening of grassroots democratic institutions and processes in Central America.

As this is a summative evaluation, the main questions addressed here are: a) whether or not A.I.D. has made a wise decision by investing in the Program of Education for Participation (PEP), and b) does the program merit future assistance. The answer to the first question is yes, for the reasons specified above. The second question prompts the following two recommendations:

- (1) That USAID fund for a period of two more years the Program of Education for Participation so that the country staffs have time to consolidate their efforts to become an independent regional foundation. The funding plan should allow it to move gradually towards autonomy by providing full funding the first year and 50% funding for the second year.

Discussion: At present, the PEP Regional Director and the country coordinators have approached several North American and European foundations and international technical assistance agencies to solicit grants and to explore the possibilities of collaborative efforts. The Washington-based OEF/PEP staff is assisting in the formulation of their funding proposal and contacts with potential funders. The legal work that is needed to acquire corporate legal status for the newly proposed regional foundation, ANDAR, and its country affiliates is likely to take at least one year. In addition, at the present time the country staffs, and particularly Costa Rica (the regional central office) do not have the managerial or administrative capacity to assume full direction of the project. However, this institutional capacity can be achieved over the next one to two years.

- (2) OEF International should be supported in efforts to explore the potential of this project for application and adaptation in South America and the Caribbean.

Discussion: Given the components of a potential model previously laid out, and the upcoming publication of a Spanish training guide, the PEP experience merits attention for expansion into other countries in the region. This could be explored by means of a regional conference, distribution of the training manual and workshops in a variety of settings, or a pilot project in other sites.

In conclusion, the Program of Education for Participation has fulfilled the objectives of the A.I.D. Central American Peace and Democracy Initiative, which had as a principal goal "to empower individual citizens to participate fully in ... [democratic] processes, as well as to deal effectively with problems and

issues that arise in daily life." Over the past three years, the program through its educational activities has contributed to strengthening grassroots groups and collective efforts that promise to improve the status of low-income and disadvantaged populations and open opportunities for civic action within the most difficult of contexts. By doing this, PEP has made significant contributions to the opening of democratic spaces in Central America.

### III. COSTA RICA

Although Costa Rica is the oldest of the PEP country projects, dating back to May of 1986, it was not until the spring of 1987, when Margaret Schuler, Marcy Fink, and Lidieth Madden came together to form the Regional Team, that the program's various activities cohered and a clear sense of direction emerged. In addition to refining Costa Rica/PEP's focus, the team selected program coordinators and provided orientation for the Honduran and Guatemalan teams that ensured a greater consistency of programmatic thrusts across and within countries.

The leadership of the country staff also was solidified shortly after the forming of the Regional Team. Lidieth Madden, who became Regional Director in August 1986, also assumed leadership of the country staff in July of 1987. Although she inherited a staff selected by her predecessors, she was able to achieve considerable group solidarity. Her effectiveness is due in part to a democratic style that is appreciated by a spirited group of individuals. With some changes, a highly qualified core staff has been with the program since the fall of 1987.<sup>2</sup>

The staff currently consists of the following individuals: Ivania Ayales, a psychologist who has worked principally with the FINCA project; Paulina Chaverri, an historian who works with CODECE; Marco Palma, an actor/artist who assisted with the Health and Production Project and is now involved with the Atlantic Coast community development project; Odilia Matarita, a sociologist who has worked with the community of Camarón and will be responsible with Marco Palma for a regional development project; Evelyn Silva, a half-time consultant with a background in adult education who worked with the VECINOS project and assists with the formulation of the country staff's programmatic strategy; and Esperanza Moraga, office manager and secretary. Lidieth Madden, a social psychologist with considerable experience in organizational work related to women and development, has been intimately involved with various phases of all projects, acting as both Regional Director and National Coordinator for a period of time.

In March of this year, Romano Sanchez, a political scientist with extensive experience in community organizing and a leader in the PEP-assisted environmental project centered in Escazu, became coordinator of PEP/Costa Rica. Lidieth Madden continues with her primary responsibility as Regional Director, giving much of her attention to conceptualizing the objectives, organization, legal bases and financing of a regional, autonomous foundation named Fundación

---

<sup>2</sup> Marta Picado and Sandra Lopez, left the PEP staff in March of 1989, when projects were being phased-out; they had been involved with various projects: the 4-S homemaker clubs, Radio Turriabla, Health and Production on the Atlantic Coast and other activities of the association of small farmers of that region of the country. In the winter of 1988, Ligia Lopez, who had been involved with the same set of projects, as well as with the community health project in Turriabla and VECINOS, had her employment terminated.

ANDAR that would provide the local base to implement the project as it gradually becomes autonomous.

Over the past three years, PEP/Costa Rica has been involved in over ten projects. (See map included at the end of this chapter.) Although all have had a significant impact on many of the project participants - in imparting organizational and interpersonal skills and enhancing self-esteem -, not all have been consistent with the philosophy and mission of the PEP grant. Some projects have strengthened specific local organizations, but have fallen short of realizing the intended multiplier effect. Such is the case with the Health and Production, FINCA, and Ministry of Health projects. These projects have been terminated or not renewed.

PEP/Costa Rica also has provided short-term, focussed technical assistance to a number of organizations at critical points in their development. Assistance was provided to ASONOGAF, VECINOS, and CODEXA without there being a need for a continuing relationship between PEP and these organizations. The projects are described in Annex 1. Especially noteworthy is what appears to be PEP/Costa Rica's most successful project - CODECE, Committee for the Defense of the Hills of Escazu - and a project based in the town of Jiménez that represents a potential direction for PEP's expansion through de-centralization and regional development, which involves indigenous leadership and linkages among communities.

### Beneficiaries

The country staff conducted an exhaustive self-evaluation in the spring of 1989. It analyzed its activities in relation to the national context (which PEP/Costa Rica described as one of "crisis") and target populations in greatest need. The analysis indicated the following: PEP had concentrated its efforts in the provinces of Limón, Cartago, and San José - the first two regions being areas suffering economic depression and many social problems. The participants in PEP projects were principally peasants, agricultural workers, and individuals working in the service sector (for the most part, lower level employment in this sector); over three-fourths of their projects involved working directly with grassroots groups - in half the projects the staff worked with promoters and in the others, PEP was engaged in inter-institutional coordination. The Costa Rican evaluation data revealed a pattern different from Honduras and Guatemala in that a majority of the direct beneficiaries are men - although there are also more projects that involve both men and women working together.

Regarding the number of participants in projects of the eight projects in the Costa Rican internal evaluation, three had between 10 and 20 participants, four had between 21 and 49, and three had more than 80. The country staff estimates that it was directly assisting 200 men, 160 women and 100 children and youths (i.e., the Community Development Project based in Jiménez) in March of 1989. The estimated number of people directly benefitting from PEP activities during the first three years of the program is between 600 and 700.

### Accomplishments and Weaknesses

Overall, the staff believes that its major achievements with regard to the five goals defined in the May 1988 PEP regional conference in San José have been in the area of "capacitación" (training). This may be considered the first-step in empowering individuals and groups to make effective claims on their societies and participate more actively in public life. It also recognizes the contribution made toward strengthening grassroots organizations internally, particularly in terms of clarifying goals, developing workplans and carrying them out collectively.

The country staff views its greatest shortcomings in the area of materials production (CODECE is the only Costa Rican project which has made this a feature) and the development of a systematic model or set of strategies for participatory education work with low-income sectors of the population. Discussions with the Regional Team and individuals on the country staff indicate, however, that the group's work in May 1989 on developing an outline and authoring the PEP training manual was very useful in clarifying the evolution and components of their work, laying the groundwork for elaborating such a model.

In their internal evaluation the staff noted that a key factor in the success of its projects was the collaboration that was developed with the institutions with which PEP coordinated its efforts. While this is essential to effective interventions, the evaluator believes that it has also been a source of weakness for the PEP team. In some cases, they have not defined clear criteria for the selection of groups, hence spending an excessive amount of time working with groups that lack a clear problem-solving focus. In other instances, those staff members assigned to work with a group got so caught up with the group's issue(s), that they were unable to distinguish PEP's objectives and focus from that of the group they were serving.

These factors are significant in the thinking of the Regional Director, Lidieth Madden, and the country staff in planning their future course of action. The impression was that as of June 1989 PEP/Costa Rica had begun to achieve clarity with regard to the types of institutions and populations with which it was going to work.

### Conclusions

Over the past three years, PEP/Costa Rica has initiated over ten projects. All have had a significant impact on the individuals involved, in opening new vistas and imparting useful skills related to more effective participation in public life. However, a number of the interventions fell short of PEP goals related to strengthening organizations to engage in joint action to improve communities and make claims on public institutions for the provision of basic social services and the protection of citizenship rights (i.e., the 4-S Homemaker Clubs and Radio Cultural Turrialba). Some institutions that offered the promise of effecting social change (e.g., the Association of Peasants and Small Farmers of the Atlantic Coast) turned out to be elitist and not really committed to women's participation in their practices. Other institutions that had the potential to contribute to income-generating activities on the part of economically destitute populations (i.e., FINCA), essentially did not favor

cooperative economic projects and civic action, and also did not encourage their grassroots associations to be critical of policies of the parent organization. Other activities entailed assistance to isolated communities but did not have the effect of serving as a pilot project or model for more extensive action by a national level institution (e.g., the case of the Ministry of Public Health in training community health promoters in the region of Turrialba).

Among the striking achievements of PEP assistance is that of CODECE, the environmental group that attempts to resist the destruction of the hills and forests surrounding San José and has had a major impact on environmental awareness throughout the country. The environmental theme is an integral part of a broader program of civic action aimed at helping diverse sectors of the population negotiate with larger institutions like the government when they demonstrate little regard for either the environment or the livelihood of small landowners and agricultural workers.

Another very promising project is that of community development in the Atlantic Coast region. The project, with its base in Jiménez, combines traditional customs with civic action, and attempts to link local concerns with broader economic and national policies. The project also incorporates women and youth as key actors in efforts to revitalize the history and culture of the community.

In June 1989, the country staff began to formulate a strategy for future work that contains the following components:

- (1) a decentralized host country staff working in two or three regions, with a team of local leaders who would serve as facilitators ("facilitadores") to extend the outreach of PEP activities;
- (2) collaboration with international, national or regional institutions that share similar goals for community self-help efforts and civic action and that have a commitment to a philosophy of democratic leadership;
- (3) diversification of funding sources for its activities and, where appropriate, charging fees for its services (in June, PEP received its first payment of fees for assisting the Institute of Alcohol and Drug Dependency in producing educational materials).

The two regions that are already beginning to operate along these lines are those of Escazu and the Atlantic Zone. The country staff is exploring with Catholic Relief Services the possibility of a joint effort to revitalize some five fishing and farming communities in the Pacific Coast Region - Provinces of Puntarenas and Guanacaste. This project would comprise a third regional nucleus of activity. Another association with which PEP might work in that region is the UPA, the National Union of Small Farmers. PEP is already working with a UPA local in Escazu.

Another component of PEP strategy would be to maximize its involvement in communities like Camarón or Tayutic and Grano de Oro by documenting on videotape and in easy-to-read pamphlets the process by which local groups organized and made claims on society. One example of successful use of a video

to stimulate awareness of a social problem and civic action in response was the PEP-VECINOS joint project "Guila".

Although PEP/Costa Rica's involvements have been diverse over the past three years, a consistency of objectives across the various subprojects is discernible. This consistency is found in the commitment of the country staff to reaching the most disadvantaged populations of the society with necessary skills and knowledge, in focusing on the preparation of promoters (trainer/facilitators) who could assist others, in working at both the membership and leadership levels to develop organizational skills and outreach activities, and in bringing men and women together to resolve common problems. Consistency derives from the overall thrust of their activities which have been designed to support social change efforts in different fields--with change being a dynamic and flexible process.

Although a number of the collaborations did not have all the outcomes desired, they all promised to improve the life chances of not only the participants, but also of their families and communities. In addition to the over 600 direct participants in PEP/Costa Rica-organized activities, the country staff estimates that it has indirectly benefitted over 6,000 individuals. The actual number of indirect beneficiaries is probably much greater. Projects such as CODECE and the Atlantic Region Coast benefit their entire communities, regions, and the larger society.

A detailed description of PEP/Costa Rica projects is presented in Annex 1.

#### IV. HONDURAS

The Honduras/PEP team has been in place since June of 1987. The academic backgrounds (law and social work) and the field experiences of the team members have given a particular bent to PEP activities and institutional involvements within the overall framework of the regional project. Their stated goal is to contribute to the strengthening of democratic institutions and to prepare committed people with a broader vision of social change through training activities. These groups should gain the skills to resolve their own problems once the PEP project has come to an end.

In a November 1987 document prepared by PEP/Honduras for the December meeting of country staffs in Guatemala, the staff discussed its views of the nature of participation and development. They maintain that development at the community level should be determined by local groups. Their notion of participation centers on communities themselves defining their needs and structuring ways to meet them. According to the document, "Participation represents a means to transform society." At the same time the staff realizes that "the success of their work depends not only on the definition and clarification of concepts, but also on the social and political context in which they operate."

The Honduran context, although not characterized by a recent history of mass violence, repression, and social upheaval on the scale of Guatemala, is nevertheless a difficult one. Community groups are cautious, if not reluctant, about using terms like democracy in public. There have been selective kidnappings, disappearances, and assassinations of labor leaders, peasant organizers and human rights activists. Over the past seven years Honduras has undergone a marked military build-up disrupting existing community life and creating conditions that cry out for self-help organizations.

Since the midterm evaluation of PEP, the economic situation in the country has worsened. Honduras is the poorest country in Central America. Its external debt is over \$3 billion. Recommendations by the International Monetary Fund that the Azcona administration devalue the Lempira (which has not been devalued in 30 years) and impose austerity measures have been resisted by the government. Until the country receives IMF clearance, some \$70 million dollars in A.I.D. and another \$70 million dollars in World Bank financial assistance is being frozen. This situation means, among other things, that the national government often cannot be turned to as a source of financing and for providing what may be considered basic social services. Community groups often must look to external funding agencies from North America and Europe to assist with funds and materials for local improvement efforts.

Within this context PEP/Honduras has developed a strategy of assistance for urban slum areas that are attempting to gain access to basic social services and for rural populations that are trying to form strong organizations that will help them to become economically viable communities with adequate education and health services. PEP/Honduras first developed working relations with grassroots groups operating in six neighborhoods (barrios or colonias) in the hills surrounding Tegucigalpa. By June 1988, PEP had established assistance agreements with two new organizations: the largest peasant federation in the country, ANACH - Asociación Nacional de Campesinos Hondureños; and a national Nongovernmental Organization, CEPROD - Centro de

Promoción y Desarrollo - with headquarters in Tegucigalpa and with a program of education and community development in the state of Yoro-Atlántida, in the north of the country. PEP/Honduras also has established workshops for social workers of the Municipality of Tegucigalpa, for social work students of the National Autonomous University and for a number of community organizations interested in the philosophy and methods of PEP.

Country coordinator Narda Melendez, a last year law student, believes that Honduras is a country of laws in which it is possible to teach about the law and work within it. Not surprisingly, legal rights is one theme consistently running through the various PEP-hosted workshops and seminars. A closely related theme is the rights of the most vulnerable and discriminated against populations in the society.

Over the course of the project grant, Ms. Melendez has developed a qualified team of professionals who adhere to the general philosophy of the program and its particular Honduran thrust. In addition to Ms. Melendez, two core staff members have been with the program since the summer of 1987. They are Aminta Navarro and Rosa Aminta Ferrufino, with university backgrounds in social sciences and social work respectively. Both had worked previously for CEPROD on the Atlantic Coast. Telma Puerto, office secretary and manager, also has been with the program since its inception. In 1988 the staff expanded to include: Rubi Flores, a social worker, who works in urban communities; Meri Mejia, a social worker who assisted with urban projects until May when she left for family reasons; Marlon Portillo, an educator who worked with ANACH; Nelson Mejia, an anthropologist who worked with ANACH and in urban areas; and Pastor Umazor, an economics professor who serves as a consultant to PEP. One other staff member, Adrianna Espinal, worked with PEP from June 1987 to February 1988. In March 1989, when the initial grant period ended, Marlon Portillo and Nelson Mejia left PEP for work with other organizations in the field of education and development.

Annex 2 describes and analyzes PEP/Honduras involvements with urban slum areas in the hills surrounding Tegucigalpa, the Honduran Peasant Federation (ANACH), and the Center for Promotion and Development (CEPROD). Cooperation with CEPROD involves two distinct but complementary projects: Women's Groups and Literacy Monitors that are located in the area of Progreso, Yoro-Atlántica.

### Urban Communities

Selection of the urban neighborhoods and grassroots groups with which PEP would work was based on criteria established by the staff. The criteria required that the community group have at least a one year history of operation, be accessible by public transportation, have identified and implemented a collective project, have at least 10 members, and not be characterized by internal strife. The PEP country staff realized it would be difficult to find a community organization that matched all 6 criteria. Nevertheless, it was believed that the extent to which a group satisfied at least several of these criteria was a good indicator of the probability of a successful project. After exploratory visits to 13 urban communities and interviews with 36 heads of organizations, the PEP staff decided to concentrate their first efforts on five "barrios" on the outskirts of Tegucigalpa.

## Beneficiaries

For its final internal evaluation, conducted during the winter of 1989, the country staff estimated that its program had directly benefited 28 facilitators with ANACH, 168 facilitators and literacy monitors in their work with CEPROD in the district of Progreso, and 300 leaders of women's groups and patronatos in urban settlements in the capital. Of the approximately 500 direct beneficiaries, over three-fourths are women. If organizational members and participants in various PEP-organized activities are included as indirect beneficiaries, then, according to PEP/Honduras calculations, another 4,350 people have been reached.

These calculations are very rough indicators for judging the impact of a program. They do not take into account the improvements in community life, as in Israel Norte, or in family life as the result of participation in literacy and adult education programs. They do not take into account the people and organizations who might have benefitted from two PEP publications on how to elaborate work plans, and a guide on how to gain access to public services and cope with frequently encountered legal and bureaucratic problems (see Appendices D and E for samples). These publications are in a simple, readable format and provide very useful information. They are so popular nearly 500 copies of each publication have been distributed. Numerous governmental and nongovernmental agencies have requested the publications. Moreover, the Municipality of Tegucigalpa, the University of Tegucigalpa, and a number of other agencies have sent their adult educators, social workers, and extension agents to various PEP leadership training workshops to observe the methods the country staff uses to help form more democratic and active organizations. Among these groups is ODEF (formerly WIB/Honduras).

The PEP team in Honduras has also in progress additional publications and booklets on the Family Code and educational methods for group building. They clearly have a prolific and talented staff, and given sufficient resources, could make an important nationwide contribution through the design and production of educational materials.

## Conclusions

Over the past eighteen months, PEP/Honduras has extended its coverage to work with a national peasant federation in the south of the country, and an NGO operating in northern Honduras. A number of the groups with which PEP has been working have economic projects that generate employment and needed income. These groups also have community outreach and improvement dimensions that are related to better health, access to education, and making local and national governmental agencies more responsive to the needs of disadvantaged Hondurans. PEP assistance has resulted in the strengthening of over a dozen grassroots organizations and in scores of more confident and capable individuals, who are actively engaged in improving their communities and making claims on public entities for their fair share of societal resources. These individuals and their associations also are more successful in approaching private organizations and international technical assistance agencies and donors.

There also have been a number of setbacks. The difficulties of working in urban squatter settlements and with a national association, such as ANACH, are discussed in Annex 2.

PEP/Honduras, as is typical of PEP country staffs generally, is perhaps its own most severe critic. In reviewing the five objectives that the various country staffs determined in Costa Rica in May of 1988, the PEP/Honduras staff notes that it has concentrated its efforts on objectives #2 and #3, respectively related to a) strengthening the capacity of grassroots groups to identify problems and formulate strategies for resolving them, and b) helping establish more democratic, effective community organizations. The country staff has engaged in efforts to raise the critical awareness of program participants, especially women (objective #1) so that they can be involved more effectively in public life at all levels of the society; but they consider these efforts to have been secondary to their focus on strengthening community groups. (Indeed one of the weaknesses noted in the mid-term evaluation was the need to probe issues raised in meetings and workshops at greater length; this need to more systematically explore various dimensions of an issue is especially pertinent with regard to themes related to the status of women.) With regard to objectives #4 and #5 - providing grassroots groups with the means to influence political decisions and to exercise their rights as citizens - PEP notes that they have done little. One reason for this is the difficult political context, which was briefly described in the introductory section; another is the perceived need to respond to more immediate organizational requirements and demands, with the sense that accessing rights is much more difficult or unattainable. Although Coordinator Narda Melendez has legal education skills, the rest of the staff could benefit from more preparation in this general arena.

The description of some of the achievements and advances of the various PEP projects in Honduras diminishes the severity of the staff's self-criticisms. Both the country staff and the Regional Director, Lidieth Madden, have noted areas for improvement and the need to take steps to further elaborate criteria for determining the appropriateness of involvement with a national or local group. During his visit to Honduras, the evaluator reviewed with the country staff the checklist of institutional/programmatic characteristics designed during the mid-term evaluation. The checklist delineates features that, if present, are likely to make project involvement more desirable. For example, ANACH is desirable from the standpoint of having collective economic, political, and cultural projects; but, it does not appear to be committed to individual and collective consciousness-raising as much as it is to passing on a particular line of action and set of partisan messages. On the other hand, working with an organization like CEPROD, which is committed to participatory education and has a number of collective projects, does appear to be fruitful. This is especially the case when the organization systematically mobilizes its clients and does follow-up activities to complement PEP efforts. For the future, it makes sense for PEP/Honduras to concentrate its efforts in a region like Progreso, working in conjunction with CEPROD.

PEP/Honduras has made a significant start and has achieved some notable results in achieving an initial goal of the country staff - to equip individuals and their organizations with the skills to resolve their most pressing problems. As further noted in the mid-term evaluation, at times, the level of poverty, the societal constraints, and the political climate appear to be overwhelming

obstacles that prompt the team to question what they can accomplish with so few resources and so little time. However, they also know that they are having an impact and that even the most destitute of communities, such as Israel Norte, are willing to pressure government authorities and claim their rights (see, for example, the poem in Attachment IV-B). With PEP assistance such communities have been empowered to make their claims more effectively--and by more participatory and democratic means. But the process has only begun . . . .

As mentioned above, a detailed description of PEP/Honduras projects is presented in Annex 2.

## V. GUATEMALA

The last country to be included in the PEP grant was selected after careful consideration of the national context. In May of 1987, the Regional Team of OEF (Marge Schuler, Lidieth Madden, and Marcy Fink) met over a three-day period with representatives of various technical assistance agencies and Guatemalan governmental and nongovernmental entities to explore the feasibility of a nonformal education and action program there. As the September 14, 1987 memo from Marge Schuler and Marcy Fink to Roma Knee (A.I.D.) points out: "...given the newness of the civilian government and the legacy of the military's response to community education and organizing, we felt there were prospects for the project to develop in interesting ways, given the right staff and links with other organizations."

The selection of staff that could work effectively in this context took place over the summer of 1987. The final candidate pool was narrowed down to three people during a visit to Guatemala by Regional Director, Lidieth Madden. Following this visit the Regional Team held the final round of interviews August 10-12.

Alma Irene Chavez, an agricultural engineer with extensive field experience, was selected as OEF/Guatemala director. Ms. Chavez came highly recommended by two nongovernmental agencies involved in community development work; they are CAPS (Centro de Autoformación de Promotores Sociales of Landivar University in Guatemala City), and CIF (Centro de Integración Familiar). Immediately prior to her appointment to PEP, she had been an analyst with the National Institute of Commercial Agriculture. She also has worked for a number of other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). She is presently writing her thesis for a "licenciatura" in Agricultural Engineering with a strong minor in rural sociology.

In the spring of 1989 there were significant staff changes that followed insecurity about the availability of funding to continue the project. However, Ms. Chavez quickly assembled a group of qualified, dedicated Guatemalans with strong local ties to the indigenous community and community development projects. At least three of the staff speak two or more indigenous languages, which is an advantage when working in the Indian communities where PEP/Guatemala has a strong presence. At present the staff consists of Pascuala Morales Calel, who had worked in nonformal education prior to her employment with the country staff in January of 1988; Aura Isabel Palanco Recinos, an educator who has worked with PEP since February 1988; and Antonieta Castro Abaj, an educator who worked with ASECSA (the Association of Community Health Services) as a researcher into women's problems. Prior to being hired on a full-time basis in June, she had served as a part-time consultant to PEP.

In June, three more individuals were hired: Josefina Mutzutz, who worked with the National Literacy Commission; Sinforoso Cojtin Tax, an educator working in the municipality of San Lucas; and Amilcar Morales, a community developer and youth leader in Rio Bravo. The new staff were all recommended by Marco Azurdia, Program Director of CAPS who serves as an advisor to PEP/Guatemala, or by local education and social service community agencies where PEP/Guatemala is working. In addition to these "facilitators", the program employs Angela de Salcedo as a Secretary-Accountant and Ricardo Martinez as an office assistant.

The present country staff strategy is to decentralize program activities and have team members live in the field and be responsible for several communities within a geographical area. The areas are indicated on the map of Guatemala found in the appendices. They are San Lucas Toliman, Rio Bravo, San Andrés Semetabaj, and Tecpan. All are in the Western region of the country. The country staff originally had thought that it would work in the eastern part of Guatemala with a predominantly Spanish-speaking population, a region with fewer development programs and a lower level of insurgency activity. However, the western region, precisely because of the conflict and social change that have occurred there, offers greater potential for working with groups that have organized to cope with the traumatic transformation that communities have had to endure.

Indeed, a number of the groups with which PEP is working in Guatemala consist of widows, many of whom lost their husbands to the violence the country has experienced over the past decade or more. They are attempting to organize into groups or cooperatives that will enable them to earn a living and gain access to much needed social services.

One of the distinctive features of PEP/Guatemala, has been its focus on groups involved in economic activities. This feature is found in several of the other country projects. For example, PEP/Costa Rica has an involvement with FINCA and PEP/Honduras with women's groups in El Progreso, but in neither case to the same extent as with PEP/Guatemala. Given the difficulty of the Guatemalan context, where even community health workers may be considered subversive and the word "capacitación" (training) is viewed as a radical concept that threatens vested interests, the country staff has opted for small-scale projects that involve tangible improvements in the lives of destitute and marginalized groups - notably women.

Raising personal and social awareness and the strengthening of community-based organizations are definitely an integral part of PEP/Guatemala activities. These goals complement the concerns of grassroots groups to produce and market goods, establish a consumer cooperative, and build decent housing.

From its inception, PEP/Guatemala has preferred to work with NGOs. Ms. Chavez' assessment of the value of working with NGOs, as well as her preliminary thoughts on what would comprise feasible and worthwhile projects for PEP/Guatemala, are expressed in a document of November 11, 1987, entitled "Reflections Concerning some Initial Concepts for the Work of OEF in the Economic Field in Guatemala" ("Reflexiones acerca de algunos conceptos iniciales para el trabajo de OEF in el campo económico en Guatemala"). The line of her argument is this: while it is desirable for PEP to work with nongovernmental agencies because they are more flexible and efficient in delivering social services than public sector institutions, certain criteria have to be taken into account in undertaking projects with them. Important considerations are: 1) the projects not involve an imposition from above or outside; 2) they reach truly disadvantaged populations and address real needs identified by a community; and 3) projects be a means to the end of continuous community development and self-determination.

The clear preference of Ms. Chavez is that PEP/Guatemala link-up with NGOs that have demonstrated a capacity to effect concrete improvements in communities. Ms. Chavez also wants to make sure the objective of PEP to provide training in organizational skills, accords with the stated preferences of NGO's and grassroots groups for the types of technical assistance they wish to receive.

The country staff has chosen to coordinate its programmatic involvements with CAPS (Center for the Formation of Social Promoters) of Rafael Landivar University. Founded in 1962, the center receives much of its funding from European Catholic organizations involved with Third World development. In addition to having a resident training center at the university in Guatemala City - where PEP/Guatemala has held three workshops - CAPS has 16 extension agents working in 12 departments of the country. With the exception of San Antonio, an urban slum area in Guatemala City, and Rio Bravo, where there is no CAPS involvement, the two organizations have worked closely together and complemented one another's extension and training efforts.

PEP involvement in the communities of Canoas, Quixaya, Rio Bravo, and Tomás Kavanaugh as discussed in Annex 3 provides an excellent example of a country staff's intervention which has produced tangible improvements in these communities since the mid-term evaluation visit in November 1987. The validity of the country staff strategy, as well as some of the limitations and challenges of working within the Guatemalan context will be discussed in the following sections and in Annex 3.

### Beneficiaries

As with the other country staff figures, it is difficult to determine the specific number of individuals who have benefited either directly or indirectly from PEP activities. The same individuals may be counted several times if they attend more than one activity. Sociocultural events may attract large numbers who have only a superficial contact with the program. Nonetheless, the Guatemala figures are impressive in that the country was the latest to begin operations and the tense political/military situation does not favor large public gatherings. All the evidence indicates that PEP/Guatemala has mobilized large numbers of women, and their children, in at least half a dozen communities; and that the impact of the program has extended to three to four times that number of communities through systematic efforts to regionalize its activities. The program does not reach only women, for men usually comprise about one-fifth of the participants in any quarterly period of activities. Counting just direct beneficiaries (those who participated in planning and training activities), PEP/Guatemala worked with at least one thousand individuals, of whom at least 180 to 200 were men. Moreover, child care and educational activities were scheduled for at least 250-275 children. Indirect beneficiaries (adult women and men) are likely to be, at least, double that number, taking into account what other community organizations and their members may have gained from PEP educational activities. This is especially the case given the country staff's efforts at linking up communities.

## Conclusions

Since the mid-term evaluation of the program, PEP/Guatemala has developed a coherent set of community educational activities that are well suited to the country context. The country staff has incorporated a number of suggestions that have enabled it to be more effective in reaching indigenous language populations, especially women, and facilitate the networking of communities interested in forming cooperatives and strengthening existing grassroots organizations for purposes of community development and civic action. Their educational methods also are better adapted to working with a large number of illiterate adults. PEP/Guatemala is moving steadily towards a strategy of decentralizing and regionalizing its activities, with a staff that resides in the field. The staff increasingly are recruited on the basis of their familiarity with the regions and the languages of the people with whom they are working. They all have experience with working in nonformal education and community development in the areas to which they are assigned.

The mobilizing, outreach, and follow-up potential of PEP/Guatemala is further enhanced by working with a national organization (CAPS) in all but two of the communities where it has involvements. In one of the two communities (Rio Bravo) there are strong local organizations. In the remaining community without a unifying organization (San Antonio) PEP has had difficulties and is contemplating terminating activities.

Concerning constraints, challenges, and possible pitfalls: of the three project countries, the Guatemalan context is the most difficult for this kind of work. The civilian government of Vinicio Cerezo was threatened by two military coups between May 1988 and May 1989; there is widespread labor strife and civilian discontent with the economic situation in the country; politically related deaths and disappearances have been increasing to over 300 per month; and it is dangerous to even discuss "capacitación" (training). The society consists of many "micro" cultural contexts, with languages and customs differing greatly within even small geographical areas. The weight of tradition is heavy, especially with regard to gender roles.

Some of these problems are addressed by PEP/Guatemala by means of decentralization of activities and working with other Guatemalan institutions that have many years experience in community development. There is also a potential problem of PEP/Guatemala overextending its resources by going into too many communities. PEP, in response to requests from CAPS and other NGOS, plans to work in some 12 communities in the coming year.

The newly recruited staff, not unlike the personnel hired in the fall of 1987, has many strengths. Staff members are also very young and likely to be in need of further opportunities to acquaint themselves with the theory of adult education to guide their practical experience and to learn, through exchange with the other PEP teams and regional conferences, about similar efforts in other countries.

In conclusion, economic, housing, and education projects which are designed to make tangible improvements in community life fit the PEP leadership's notions of what is viable in the Guatemalan context. Similarly, the team's emphasis on training and organization-building activities that reach the most disadvantaged groups and that eventually bring men and women together in joint efforts to

advance the interests of all certainly are congruent with the philosophy and goals of the PEP regional grant. Given the Guatemalan context, the PEP team has done remarkably well.

## PROJECTS OF PEP/COSTA RICA

### 4-S Clubs and Radio Turrialba

For most of the first year (1986-87), the greatest part of the PEP/Costa Rica staff's time and energy was devoted to the development of one project. At its height, the 4-S Clubs, as that project was known, involved four of the PEP/Costa Rica staff in training and organizing activities with over a dozen representatives of seven communities in and around the city of Turrialba.

The project, which ended in December of 1987, passed through two distinct phases. During the first phase, four PEP team members met frequently (33 times between January and April) with the group of representatives and concentrated their efforts on the preparation of these women as "promoters", or individuals who would promote/facilitate organizational and community development. (In the somewhat dated literature on diffusion of innovations, promoters are called "change agents" or community developers.) In the second phase, two PEP team members met once every two weeks with the core group of promoters and greater attention was given to working directly with the club members in their weekly meetings. During this phase, group discussion focused on the decoding of the everyday existence of these women and analyzing women's roles in the household, the community, and society at large. The specific goal of various group exercises was to raise the level of consciousness of approximately 140 women in the seven clubs concerning the value of their work and the rights to which they were entitled. The project aimed also to equip the women and their associations with the program planning and implementation skills. Unfortunately, the agenda was set more by PEP than the clubs themselves. Although the clubs enjoyed the sessions, the training areas did not reflect the group's focus, which was primarily social and craft-oriented. After this extensive relationship with the clubs, PEP phased out its work, gaining some important lessons concerning the need to select groups who were actually organizing around a specific problem or issue.

Another closely related project in the same region, Radio Cultural of Turrialba, trained 5-10 women from the 4-S Clubs in program production to broadcast twice daily, 2 to 6 minute programs on topics of concern to members of the clubs, their communities, and women in general. This work offered low-income women the opportunity to gain technical skills in using this medium, as well as learn how to translate community concerns into a radio format. Over time, however, the PEP staff came to realize that their involvement with the radio project was limited in terms of its prospects for organizational development, community outreach, and civic action, some of the basic elements or criteria for implementation of PEP.

The mid-term evaluation notes a number of difficulties associated with the project. Even if the unique qualities of radio had been used expertly by project members, the problem remains as to whether radio can do more than exhort, motivate, or disseminate information and knowledge. By itself, radio cannot resolve problems. Only well-organized groups with a sense of purpose can put into practice ideals related to equal rights for women in a more just society.

By November of 1987, PEP decided to phase-out its involvement with the radio project.

PEP involvement, however, did not come to a complete halt. During the first half of 1988, PEP worked with a core group of six to ten women to train them as "correspondents" for the radio station. The women formed an independent group to prepare a weekly program called VOCERO COMUNAL ("Town Crier"), which airs for 30 minutes on Saturdays. Some 50 people in and around Turrialba have supplied material for programs. The first broadcasts of the programs were in February of 1988, and by April the group of women correspondents had begun an exchange relationship with a similar group in Guanacaste affiliated with Radio Chorotega.

PEP's involvement in these two projects is regarded by the country staff as a learning experience, demonstrating the need for PEP to work with community groups that have a clearer vision and mission related to community development and social change.

Association of Peasants and Small Farmers of the Atlantic Coast, FINCA, and Ministry of Health

By the end of 1987, PEP/Costa Rica had begun to work with two organizations (The Association of Peasants and Small Farmers and FINCA) which appeared to have either political or economic projects that were integrally related to the improvement of communities and disadvantaged populations in two regions of the country. PEP also received a request from the Ministry of Health to assist in a project designed to train community health promoters.

The project with the Association of Peasants and Small Farmers of the Atlantic Coast was designated by PEP/Costa Rica as the Health and Production Project of Guacimo. It had the positive feature of growing out of the organizing efforts of people to make claims on state institutions and gain their fair share of national resources. Like the environmental project CODECE (which will be described below), it linked several issues, and had the goal of joining men and women in efforts to improve their livelihoods in a neglected region of the country.

Since the mid-1970s, peasants who owned small parcels of land and rural workers on the Atlantic Coast region of Costa Rica have been involved in a broad social movement aimed at access to land, credit, and stable commodity prices that guarantee a decent living. In the zone of Guacimo, an association of small agricultural producers formed that was dedicated to improving the livelihood of farmers and increasing opportunities for participation in the formulation of public policies that affect the region. Beyond the struggle for increased production and higher prices for their commodities, the association is concerned with the preservation and promotion of indigenous forms of artistic expression that provide a sense of identity to inhabitants of the Atlantic Coast region. Another component of this rural movement for popular democracy on the Atlantic Coast is the improvement of the status and situation of women.

In 1987, with this last goal in mind, the association formed a women's committee to focus on health and production. The association employed several

community members to work with women and men in the cultivation of medicinal plants, both as a means of inexpensively curing common illnesses and as a source of additional income. Also under consideration by local groups was an appropriate technology project that would commence with inexpensive deep-well pumps to help alleviate the drudgery of securing safe water in an area that lacks the most basic public utilities and services.

In May 1987, PEP began assisting the project. A PEP staff member, Marta Picado, worked with the promoters from the association, training some 26 "capacitadores" in nine (originally 13) communities. In turn, they were to serve as trainers/promoters in their own locales as well as neighboring areas. The training sessions for these "capacitadores" initially broached a number of topics, including women's rights and the right of small land owners.

Despite this auspicious beginning, there were problems inherent in the project. In the February 1988 evaluation of PEP, the evaluator pointed out a possible danger in working with the association. Among the possible pitfalls of the project was the danger that the farmers' movement, which until then had been dominated by men, would attempt to use the women's group for its own ends--that is, women's issues would be subordinated to the push for prices or credit.

This concern proved to be well-founded. Over the following 18 months, the male leadership of the organization systematically refused to incorporate women into leadership positions, and, much to the dismay of its membership, began to substitute outside technicians for local, less schooled organizers in key positions in the organization.

In spite of these trends, in February 1988, the national leadership of the organization, requested that PEP train its governing board members in skills related to planning and organizational development, which PEP proceeded to do over the ensuing four months. Then, in May, the country staff responded to a request from the national leadership to train local leaders in similar skills. Over the next four months, PEP established workshops for eight grassroots groups. As a consequence of this training, the base leadership became critical of the authoritarian style and technocratic decisions of the national leadership. Subsequently activities were suspended.

To compound some of these tensions, some poor choices were made by the PEP staff person working most closely with the Health and Production project. Marta Picado began to focus more on the technical or health content of training rather than on the organizational aspect of the educational process, which is PEP's orientation. According to the PEP country and regional director, Marta Picado became increasingly more concerned with transmitting specific health information than helping the women to organize to engage in activities which could enhance their status and improve their communities.

In October of 1988, PEP decided to respond to a request to train local leaders on the agrarian reform law and other legal issues related to land ownership. With the assistance of Carlos Bolanos, a lawyer who has worked as a consultant to PEP/Costa Rica, the country staff organized eight sessions on pressing legal issues. At the insistence of PEP, half the twenty participants in the legal program were women. This timely assistance on the part of PEP was

considered extremely useful to the local leaders who would relate the information they received to specific undertakings and claims of their organizations.

Although PEP involvement with the association terminated, a number of positive outcomes at the individual and collective levels can be identified. In addition to the specific legal and medical knowledge that were transmitted, some of the women's groups have continued as viable associations with economic and social projects. One group, APROFALUCHA has achieved legal status as a cooperative and is able to apply for loans from national and international entities. During the past six months, a local men's group has joined with the women of APROFALUCHA to engage in common economic projects to grow and market cash crops.

One of the lessons this experience provides is the need to differentiate PEP's goals and the interests of an organization formed to advocate on behalf of a particular sector of the population. Clarity over their needs and the ways in which a training assistance project like PEP can be supportive, needs to be clearly defined and re-evaluated throughout the process. In addition, PEP's commitments should be more focussed, that is, they should respond to specific needs or problems--such as the case of the legal training--be implemented, evaluated and attain closure. Short-term, focussed assistance is a valuable support for most groups and the PEP staff needs clarity about the role they can play.

The economic dimension of projects, which has been a major concern of the Guatemala country staff, also began to be addressed by PEP/Costa Rica at the end of 1987. PEP involvement with FINCA points up the strengths and limitations of working with organizations whose primary focus is on income-generating activities of local communities.

FINCA, which was started in Costa Rica in 1958 with funding from a U.S.-based foundation, provides small loans towards the formation of community savings and production cooperatives. FINCA also has provided technical training in areas such as health, but it has not tended to emphasize civic/organizational support.

As of November 1987, 90 different groups had formed around the loans; the "community banks," as they are known, involve some 15- 30 people on the average; by the spring of 1989, there were over 125 such banks. A recent concern of FINCA has been to strengthen the banks organizationally by building a group orientation into their economic activities at the local level, and by creating four regional councils to which the various communities send four representatives each to form a federation.

In August of 1987, FINCA invited PEP to assist with organizational and communication skills training, and, generally, to help develop cooperative attitudes on the part of the various share holders or individual entrepreneurs. In October, PEP began training activities in two communities in the area surrounding San Isidro de General, in the canton of Perez Zeledon. Eventually, five communities were assisted by PEP staff member Ivania Ayales, who visited them for one-half day workshops once every 15 days. Training sessions initially focused on human relations and communication skills, as a majority of the participants in some of the local groups were women who had never spoken up in

public; similar inhibitions characterized the few males who also had joined the groups. But even when men were in the minority they tended to dominate the leadership positions.

The following cases, offered by Ms. Ayales, illustrate some of the positive outcomes of PEP work with the FINCA base groups. The bank in the community of Lagunas de Daniel Flores consisted of 18 women and 1 man who held the position of director. A collective drawing by the women, who were asked to depict their organization, shows a number of small stick figures around an imposing male figure in the top center of the page. This was the situation. But the women called a general assembly of the membership to elect a "new coordinator" who would be more responsive to concerns of the membership. A woman was elected director. The women then proceeded to encourage more men to join the organization and to integrate the past director into the organization as one individual among equals. As one member noted: "Although this group began as a women's group, we now incorporate our male companions. We wish to continue showing the community that we leave our houses and that we are capable of managing a group and contributing to the development of the community." Indeed, one of the female members of the group is now on the national governing board of FINCA, and is an effective spokesperson for the local groups. Moreover, the women of Lagunas de Daniel Flores have organized visits to other groups, where women's participation is weak or nonexistent, in order to share their experience and promote more active involvement of women in the community banks.

The other example comes from the community of Las Brisas de Cajón. A common problem confronting individuals was that the period for planting certain products is only 15 days; but few individuals, because of various demands and constraints, had this amount of time available to dedicate exclusively to planting. Members of the community bank decided to resolve this problem jointly. As was traditionally done, they worked collectively to plant the crops of one small landowner at a time. Thus, twelve members worked to plant all the crops in twelve days.

Later, the group of Las Brisas de Cajón worked together to build recreational facilities for the community on land they donated. Another problem resolved through joint efforts had to do with transportation. The town had no bus service; the nearest access point was over an hour away on foot. Moreover, tractors and construction vehicles which were removing sand from the shore of the town's river (without the prior approval of the town's citizens) were contributing to the further deterioration of the only road into town. The members of the group blockaded the road to impede the tractors from entering or leaving the town. The municipal authorities, in response to this protest, met with the members of the community group to hear their grievances. The result was that machinery was sent to make the road accessible to buses.

These outcomes are encouraging. They demonstrate the positive impact of training activities that enhance the self-esteem of individuals and develop the organizational and communication skills of grassroots groups. The enhanced self-concepts and skills of the base group leaders reached the point where they began to criticize the national leadership of FINCA. This is especially the case with 10 promoters that PEP was helping to train who questioned the small size of FINCA loans and the higher interest rates being charged (they had risen from 15 to 19%). The promoters believed that the loans were difficult to pay back and

Indeed a number of the community banks were going bankrupt. The response of the national leadership was to fire four of the ten promoters; and another four quit. It also appears that FINCA, at heart, is really more interested in developing individual entrepreneurs than in strengthening the groups overall.

As the evaluator pointed out in his mid term evaluation, FINCA needs to be viewed in a comparative perspective. In comparison with the other projects, FINCA had the unique strength of providing economic resources to participants. Potentially, the project had even greater coverage than the others, as it has affiliates in over 100 communities throughout the country. Unlike CODECE and the Health and Production Project, FINCA was not based in a community movement that has a long-term strategy of making claims for resources and services or opening opportunities for greater citizenship participation in political processes. In some respects, PEP involvement with FINCA parallels that of its work with the 4-S Clubs: many of the activities undertaken concentrated on changes at what the educational literature in calls the socio-psychological level: changes in self-perceptions, in concepts of self and one's relation to others, in attitudes that prevent individuals from being self-actualizing and taking action that may eventually promote social change. The broader framework, however, was in the loose federation of community banks and in FINCA's efforts to strengthen regional groupings by developing, through the PEP training seasons, the skills of the community representatives to the four councils. The potential to effect social change was not realized because it did not accord with the basic thrust of FINCA.

One other PEP/Costa Rica involvement that promised to have an impact on a major national institution, the Ministry of Health, also had mixed outcomes. In the fall of 1987, the Ministry of Health manifested an interest in establishing a community health project. The idea was that the Ministry's health workers (primarily nurses and auxiliary nurses) would train local organizers who would assist community-based committees in identifying common problems and helping with a program of integral (both preventive and curative) health. The Ministry selected two communities, Tayutic and Grano de Oro, in the region of Turrialba to conduct a pilot project.

Having heard about PEP/OEF's work in neighboring communities, the Ministry of Health requested PEP support in providing the organizing component to this project. PEP would train health promoters of the Ministry in methods to reach and effectively assist the community organizations and their promoters in developing the campaign in the most participatory way possible and ensuring that local needs and problems were taken into account in design and implementation. The project offered PEP the prospect of contributing timely and valuable input with a small number of people who potentially could train many more in knowledge and skills. PEP assigned Ligia Cerda to be the principal contact with the Ministry of Health.

Unfortunately, the ministry assigned only one promotor to the project. Inadequate interest manifested by the Ministry and the difficulty the PEP staff encountered in negotiating with the Ministry for further support, doomed the project at the institutional level. At the level of the two communities, however, there have been positive outcomes. One community, Tayutic, built a health post and has acquired the ongoing services of a medical technician who is competent to diagnose the most common illnesses, take blood pressure,

administer injections, and dispense medicine, which is in short supply. A doctor visits isolated communities once a month. Although the communities are some three to four hours apart by foot, members of the two health committees meet regularly to exchange ideas and provide mutual support; Layutic initially provided guidance to Grano de Oro in the formation of its community health committee. Altogether, some twenty-five people are involved with the health committees, which emphasize preventive approaches to health - water boiling, latrine building, and immunizing against common diseases. Hence, PEP intervention with the Ministry of Health turned out to have a limited impact on the Ministry, but a positive effect on two communities.

Other PEP interventions, from the outset, have intended to respond to specific needs and be of limited duration. They include involvement with a national women's federation, ASONOGAF; an urban popular education association, VECINOS (Neighbors); CODEXA, the national export consortium for the Atlantic Coast zone; and the rural settlement of Camarón.

#### ASONOGAF, VECINOS, CODEXA, and Camarón

ASONOGAF (The National Federation of Associated Women's Groups) brings together some 400 local women's groups; the GAFs are largely micro-economic enterprises, but, as a brochure prepared with the assistance of PEP points out, they may also be comprised of civic minded and educational associations. The stated purpose of ASONOGAF is to improve the socio-economic status of women involved in small enterprises by overcoming their isolation and coordinating resources.

PEP assisted the national leadership of ASONOGAF in planning the 1987 constituent assembly of the national federation. Because of the success of the assembly, ASONOGAF requested PEP collaboration in elaborating a workplan, defining priorities, and preparing a regional assembly at the end of September 1987 for the women's groups clustered in the area of Chorotega. Participant evaluations of the national and regional assemblies reveal that the group discussion methods used by PEP were effective in developing a sense of group cohesiveness and purpose, promoting cross-community communication and sharing of information, and clarifying the nature of leadership and membership responsibilities and rights. While recognizing the strengths of its approach, PEP staff thought that some of its participatory methods did not work as well with larger groups (more than 50 people).

Overall, it is generally agreed that PEP provided timely assistance to a significant national association at critical points in its organizing efforts. Despite these successful collaborative efforts, plans for PEP to assist with the formation of other regional assemblies did not materialize. One reason is that another technical assistance agency which provides office space and some financial support for ASONOGAF has not been overtly responsive to further collaboration with PEP; the agency, COF (Centro de Orientación Familiar), according to team members, tends to be more traditional and directive in its educational activities than PEP. For its part, PEP, although receptive to future requests from ASONOGAF, has not actively sought further involvement with the association.

An association more in agreement with PEP goals and processes is VECINOS, an NGO dedicated to the practice of using popular education as a tool for building grassroots leadership and empowering disenfranchised social sectors. Its principal concern has been with the problems of urban populations. A major issue which it wished to address was the existence of school-age children who work in the streets to help sustain their families; many have dropped out of school or are not attending regularly. They are known as "children in the street" as compared with "children of the street"--youth who are abandoned or flee their homes.

VECINOS decided to make a videotape entitled "Guila" (slang for "kids" in Costa Rica), that would serve as a didactic medium for bringing together community leaders and representatives of public and private agencies concerned with child welfare to examine various dimensions of the issue of street children and explore reasonable responses to the situation. VECINOS requested PEP's assistance with the conceptualization, production, and educational uses of the movie. Iván Ayales of PEP helped prepare the script and Evelyn Silva assisted with the conceptualization and uses of the video.

The 25-minute video addresses a number of widely held misconceptions. One is that all street children are mistreated or abandoned. It points out that the minimum wage in Costa Rica is inadequate to meet the expenses of an average family: after deducting 7000 colones to pay for the basic monthly food basket, only 378 (less than US \$5) remains for all other expenses; not enough to meet schooling expenses of uniform, supplies, and meals. Income derived from children's labor is therefore a necessity. Another misconception is that existing state agencies and programs can resolve such problems. The movie skillfully explores the actual home and street situations of children who are working, what various laws state the rights of children are, and the effectiveness of existing public and private sector programs. Loopholes in national laws and the inadequacy or inappropriateness of existing responses are pointed out by the video.

Over 600 people have viewed and discussed the video in various community gatherings organized by VECINOS. The popular education association has its own "promotors", who have received some guidance from PEP staff in how to use the video for educational and social action purposes. The video has also helped bring together representatives of such agencies as the National Program for the Prevention of Crime, the National Children's Welfare Agency, the Center for the Diagnosis of Children's Problems of the Ministry of Justice, Children in Our Hands, plus concerned parents from urban neighborhoods with the highest incidence of street children. Alternative approaches to the phenomenon have been discussed, and in response to the problem of children who permanently live in the streets, VECINOS itself has established a shelter for some 8 youths. The VECINOS shelter and another program in Limon are considered to be organized along different lines from the approaches of the state agencies, which tend to institutionalize street children. The evaluator have suggested to PEP that it work with VECINOS in producing another videotape that examines these new models for responding to the problem of street children.

The VECINOS project underscores the usefulness of PEP's collaboration with other educational and community development agencies to produce educational videotapes and other resources. The recommendation to the Costa Rican country

staff is that it document on video and in print some of its involvement with community groups that started from scratch to form a cooperative or formal association and set out to establish a school or health post, legalize their claims to the land on which they have settled, and gain access to basic social services. Such would be the case of the community of Camarón, which will be described below, or of the two communities in Turrialba that established health posts. Documenting on videotape and in print the evolution of these organizations and their struggles for more decent living conditions, multiplies the efforts of PEP and these community groups.

CODEXA ("Consortio de Exportaciones de la Zona Atlantica S.A.) represents another case of a timely intervention on the part of PEP/Costa Rica. The Vice-President of the Exporting Consortium, Juan Jose Herrera, has a close working relationship with PEP. He is a regional leader with a realistic sense of what rural reforms are possible within the Costa Rican context, but who also is visionary in his plans to effect social change. With PEP assistance, a national assembly of CODEXA representatives convened to draft new bylaws for the corporation (the "S.A." in the CODEXA name stand for "Sociedad Anónima" or "corporation" in Spanish). The bylaws move CODEXA in the direction of a cooperative with greater participation of its local members in the activities of the organization. The new thrust of CODEXA includes a concern with all aspects of the production process--the availability of credit, the types of products grown, and quality control for exports. Previously, the executive officers of CODEXA had been concerned almost exclusively with markets and prices. Furthermore, with PEP assistance, CODEXA has developed loan requests to international donor agencies for start-up funds to raise vegetables demanded in national markets.

It was Juan Jose Herrera who brought to the attention of PEP/Costa Rica the plight of the community of El Camarón. This squatter settlement of 13 families (approximately 120 people) suffers many of the worst problems of rural populations in the most impoverished regions of Costa Rica. The town cannot be reached by public transportation as three access bridges have been badly weakened by flooding (the community itself has suffered from flood waters that have been at least five feet high); there is malaria in the area and the Ministry of Health may not fumigate until a dispute over land ownership is settled; there is no electricity; and until the community organized itself and began to petition the government for a school and doctor, there were no basic services.

Between October 1988 and March 1989, PEP provided needed assistance to a group of community leaders by helping them define their priorities and strategies for achieving them. The concrete results of a strengthened community organization, with a number of working committees, are a primary school with 25 children enrolled in grades 1-6, and medical attention--on Sunday June 25 a doctor was to visit the community for the first time. The school was built by the community members and the Ministry of Education provided the teacher, a recent normal school graduate from the neighboring town of Santa Rosa. (Seven individuals comprise the school committee, of whom two are women.) Various requests for access roads and agricultural development loans have been made to the municipal government, the Ministry of Development, and the National Agrarian Institute.

PEP also has put the community leaders in contact with its lawyer consultant Carlos Bolanos, who is representing the community in its legal dispute with the National Agrarian Institute; the land had been idle for a number of years and the community residents had been on the land three years before the previous owners made claims for compensation. Until the land issue is resolved, a number of public services are unlikely to be available. Moreover, the Ministry of Education, which pays the salary of the teacher, still has refused to recognize the right of the school to teach the sixth grade and give a primary school degree; this situation makes it very difficult for the older primary school age children in the community, who wish to graduate and continue on to secondary school.

While PEP assistance can have a significant positive impact on such a community, there is the risk that the staff could expend all its energies on isolated projects. There are hundreds of communities in similar dire straits. To maximize and multiply its influence, PEP, as the evaluator noted above, should document its strategy of intervention and the various stages the community went through in becoming an effective organization, making claims on the society, and gaining access to basic services and essential resources. The idea would be to present a model or guidelines for community organizing and civic action. The other approach to extending its area of work is for PEP to link-up communities such as Camarón with a regional network of organizations that have shared interests and who could provide mutual assistance to one another. This strategy is precisely what PEP/Costa Rica has in mind with its newly initiated project designated "Desarrollo Comunal del Atlantico".

#### Community Development Project in the Atlantic Coast Region

This project, which is based in the town of Jiménez, represents a potentially new strategy in PEP/Costa Rica aimed at decentralizing its efforts. Staff member Marco Palmo has resided in the town for the past two years. He is closely associated with a parish church group and a sports club that have constituted the bases for a community development movement that is reviving what was a moribund town. The sports group had received a grant of 1.5 million colones (approximately US \$20,000). Starting with this grant, parents and students began to form committees to examine ways in which they could improve their community. The number of committees grew from 4 to 14, addressing a broad range of topics, including health, nutrition, the quality of schooling, and economic forces plying on the town. Recently a Colombian multinational corporation has been buying large tracts of land in the region with the intention of converting them into banana plantations--a move that would displace many small farmers. Other areas of economic interest include the formation of a consumer cooperative.

Marco Palma and Odilia Matarita are in the process of setting up a regional office over the town's public library. In addition to their work in Jiménez, they will be expanding their efforts to include surrounding towns that are considered part of the zone known as the "old railroad line" which ran from San Jose to the port of Limon. Camarón will form part of the community development efforts in the region. A third staff person, Humberto, will be hired as a part-time facilitator; he is active in the parish group and will be paid travel expenses and a small gratuity. Another person likely to be employed part-time

as a facilitator will be Juan Jose Herrera of CODEXA, who, as mentioned earlier, has worked closely with the settlement of Camarón and other communities in the area.

A key component of the project is cultural revival. Marco Palma is an actor-director with great talents in diverse artistic fields. The project has led to a number of traditional events for example, evening musical and theatrical get togethers known as "veladas", in which any member of the community may perform spontaneously. One such event was held one late afternoon before the election of a community council which was to coordinate various local development projects; over a hundred people attended the cultural event and town meeting. A related project aimed at researching their history, involves some twenty-five people who, through the collection of old photographs and other historical material, are preparing a people's history of the town and region.

The evaluator had an opportunity to attend an evening session held in the parish church. Marco Palma had obtained from another church-related nonformal education association in San Jose, a video concerning alcoholism and the role of the mass media and advertising in the promotion of alcohol. Approximately 90 youths and adults attended the community assembly. At least 20 to 25 of the youths and adults had opportunity to role play situations related to alcoholism and express their opinions about who was responsible for the widespread incidence of alcoholism. Among the issues probed were the impact of alcoholism on women, what is popular culture, and how alcohol consumption is related to sociability. The discussion, which Humberto facilitated, eventually led to discussion of opportunities which the community is offering for cultural expression and personal development. The assembly was one of the liveliest group meetings the evaluator had ever witnessed, with children as young as ten raising questions and engaging in discussion with the adults.

In order to move from critical consciousness-raising to civic action, other steps are being taken by the country staff. They are attempting to strengthen the organizational bases and outreach of the movement by working with national institutions with similar interests in the development of the region. PEP has been exploring with DINADECO (the National Directorate of Community Development), IDA (the Institute for Agrarian Development), and IAFA (the Institute of Alcohol and Drug Dependency, which works especially with youth) the possibility of training their local extension agents and promoters in the philosophy and methods of participatory education. Although national agencies such as DINADECO and IDA pose the problem of any public institution closely affiliated with a governing party being used to transmit partisan messages, particularly with national electoral politics starting up, PEP/Costa Rica believes that the extension agents of these institutions tend to be local people (sometimes leaders) more concerned with the welfare of their communities.

If the area of the "old railroad line" represents one nucleus of the decentralization effort, the other is centered in the town of Escazu in San Jose Province. CODECE (Committee for the Defense of the Hills of Escazu) represents a regional project that has not only national but international dimensions and repercussions.

CODECE (Committee for the Defense of the Hills of Escazu)

According to the Costa Rican magazine *Aportes* (August 1987, p.7), it all began when "One day upon opening the taps instead of water, mud came out . . . . The next day mud didn't appear, but it also wasn't water." In the hills of the southwestern perimeter of San Jose, construction of a religious shrine and tourist center had caused landslides into the reservoirs which supply the capital and its surrounding cantons. In addition, widespread deforestation had been going on for years. The problems of the cantons adjacent to San Jose were symptomatic of a national problem: between 1950 and 1980 the percentage of national territory accounted for by forest had dropped from 64 percent to 33 percent, and the percentage of land given over to farming and cattle had risen from 36 percent to 62 percent (according to a study conducted for the UN/Food and Agricultural Organization by Michael Junkov). By 1981, it is estimated that 680 million tons of soil were being lost to erosion annually. Despite a decree passed in the 1976 national legislature to protect the wooded hills surrounding San Jose, and despite millions of dollars spent by the municipality to clean up its water and \$3 million dollars spent by the Costa Rican Electricity Institute to bolster a vital telecommunications tower that had been sliding down the hill due to erosion, other national and municipal agencies had either been looking the other way or actively assisting private enterprise activities (cattle ranching, logging, tourism) that were posing serious ecological threats to the over 300,000 residents living in the southwestern hills of San Jose (a number which represents over 10 percent of the population of Costa Rica).

In the spring of 1986, a committee of concerned residents of Escazu formed to confront the problems that were threatening the life of the community. The group consisted of professionals, manual laborers, and farmers who saw themselves as having a common purpose. Since then, the committee has launched an educational campaign, formed an inter-cantonal committee to integrate the efforts of the six affected communities, supported the formation of intra-cantonal coordinating committees of various organizations (e.g., farmers' association and women's groups), and undertook a petition campaign to pressure the national legislature to pass a law extending the area of protected forests by over one-third to 80,000 hectares (1 hectare=10,000 square meters) in the southwestern section of San Jose.

Although PEP/Costa Rica first made contact with CODECE in May 1986 when it was exploring possible projects, it was not until one year later that PEP began to assist the committee. Since May of 1987, PEP team members have helped CODECE complete an educational slide-sound show concerning the ecological problems facing the residents of the area; the show has been projected to over 50 groups and more than 2,000 people. It has assisted with program planning that involves specification of organizational objectives, resources, indicators of progress, and tasks of individuals and subcommittees, and it has helped the Escazu group organize and conduct the first inter-cantonal meeting that brought over 35 representatives from surrounding communities together (following the meeting in mid-August the committee met on a regular basis throughout the first half of 1988). In addition, the PEP team has trained the coordinating committee in group dynamics methods related to the conduct of participatory meetings.

Since the evaluator's visit of November 1987 to Escazu, CODECE has been an active self-reliant association that has extended its educational, community

development, and lobbying efforts with considerable success. Its educational activities have included a painting competition related to the nature of Costa Rica, visits to all the schools of Escazu and the sponsorship of schools in over a dozen tree planting activities, the production of 1,000 coloring books specifically elaborated to raise consciousness about the environment (see Appendix), funds for the coloring books being provided by the national Social Security Institute. Its educational promotional activities also involve the updating of the sound-slide show and the production of a video with features related to preserving both the ecology and culture of the region. By far CODECE's most significant promotional activity was the organization of an all-day, nationally broadcast telethon ("maratónica" in Spanish) on the theme "Water and Woods for Costa Rica, Escazu Today", in November of 1988. The telethon raised 3 million colones in cash (850,000 cs.) and kind (e.g., saplings) that will be used to establish a nursery to grow trees especially appropriate for the hills surrounding San Jose and for reforestation projects.

Preparation for the telethon consumed most of CODECE's energies between September and November of 1988. During this period, activities related to organizing the intra-cantonal committees were not given as much attention. In the spring of 1989, staff member Paulina Chaverri directed her efforts to revitalizing the community organizations in the cantons of Acosta, Guaitil and Santa Ana. A community leader from Escazu, Francisco, has been employed as a part-time facilitator to assist with organizing the intra-cantonal committees in the communities of Alajuelita, Santa Ana, and Mora.

In March 1989, Ms. Chaverri presented a slide show on CODECE's campaign at the annual meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society at Harvard University and a conference on grassroots development sponsored by the Overseas Development Network in Boston. Following her participation in the two conferences, she went to Washington, D.C. to meet with various organizations, among them was the Inter-American Foundation and the World Resources Institute. The upshot of her visit was a grant of \$35,000--up to a possible \$50,000 over two years--to CODECE to establish an environmental legal defense office. CODECE, for its part, achieved corporate status ("personería jurídica") in 1988.

Over the past three years, CODECE has coordinated its activities in defense of the environment with at least eight other major national environmental groups and institutions, including the University of Costa Rica and state agencies such as SINART, the General Direction of Forestries, and the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mines. These institutions have helped design mass media messages on the environment and were especially helpful with programming for the national telethon, an event which mobilized some 100 people in collaboration with PEP to provide an examination of environmental issues in Costa Rica.

International agencies also have been interested in supporting the work of CODECE. The government of the Netherlands donated over 1 million colones (approximately \$12,500) to the environmental projects proposed by CODECE during the telethon. Greenpeace has manifested strong interest in maintaining a continuing relationship with CODECE, as have a number of North American-based appropriate technology and environmental defense organizations.

A new national law, designed to codify existing legislation and strengthen enforcement procedures, is a unifying focus of the various environmental groups.

CODECE believes that the proposed law is too radical, in the sense that it wishes to remove all residents from the proposed national forest area, and offers no means of compensation to landowners. Needless to say, the proposal has engendered strong opposition from landowners of the cantons of Acosta, Mora, and Santa Ana. To propose alternative legislation, CODECE has formed a technical commission consisting of a lawyer, chemist, forestry engineer, a representative from CODECE, a representative from the Inter-cantonal Committee; the proposal also has been developed in conjunction with the General Direction of Forestries.

The legislation proposed by CODECE accords with its present mission to work with small landowners in setting aside part of their land to be replanted with indigenous trees appropriate to the hilly terrain and deep-rooted trees that will retain moisture in the soil and help prevent erosion. The trees would be made available through a nursery which is now being planned for a piece of land measuring 20,000 square meters. CODECE's educational and organizing activities are beginning to show results. Already eight land owners have committed themselves to setting aside some 25 acres of terrain for reforestation; and on June 15, 1989, thirteen "jornaleros", agricultural workers in the area, volunteered their labor to plant trees. On the morning of June 25, the evaluator accompanied two members of CODECE and Eduardo Ureno Sandi, a small farm owner, to his property high up in the hills, where he had agreed to set aside 1 manzana (approximately 2 acres) of his land for the planting of over 200 trees and shrubs. He had attended one of the educational events organized by CODECE and considered reforestation to be in his own self-interest as well as generally good for the area of Escazu.

The work of CODECE has been described in detail because it has a number of strengths that many of the other PEP-assisted groups lack. CODECE brings together people, communities, and institutions around a multi-dimensional issue that affects the quality of their communities and the livelihoods of large sectors of the society. The efforts of CODECE include collective action to influence municipal policies and the agendas of national ministries and institutes concerned with the environment, health, and agriculture.

As a cross-class movement it has brought together individuals from different occupational categories who previously had little to do with one another; as a cross-sectoral movement it has joined different communities and different associations within the cantons affected. It is also cross-institutional in that it has brought together concerned individuals from different higher education institutions, and governmental and private institutions working to protect the environment.

The issue is multidimensional, because as CODECE, consistently points out in its educational activities, ecological problems are integrally related to economic and social policies: that is, policies of financial institutions that give priority to making loans to large cattle ranchers and commercial agricultural enterprises that produce for export, while the 70 percent of the people who derive their livelihood from small-scale farming are squeezed out of the credit markets; and the policies of municipal and national governments concerning the provision of services to powerful vested interests. The civic action that ensues from these concerns involves petition campaigns to enforce existing legislation and to pass additional laws to guarantee the preservation

of natural resources. Beyond this, CODECE is planning appropriate technology and employment generating projects.

There are, however, some weaknesses and constraints. An admitted weakness is that women's issues, although on the CODECE agenda, have generally been neglected. This is an area which the organization plans to address in the near future. As noted above, a number of cantons have not been as active in taking up the environmental issue; and the proposed national legislation has engendered hostility on the part of important constituencies. CODECE, as pointed out in the mid-term evaluation, confronts formidable economic interests. The strength of CODECE and related groups is going to be a factor in how social change can be effected; it is to this end that PEP has provided assistance to CODECE.

### PROJECTS OF PLP/HONDURAS

The communities and organizations initially selected for PEP training activities are the following:

- The Organization of Women of Colonia 14 de Marzo, with 142 members participating in 8 committees of the Christian Children's Fund involved in health, education, housing, and income-generating activities;
- Women's Organization Promesas del Futuro of the Colonia San Francisco with 250 members participating in 5 committees of the Christian Children's Fund involved in activities similar to those listed above, plus the building of a community center;
- The Club de Amas de Casa (homemakers association) of the Colonia Modesta Rodas Acuerdo #2 with 14 members who are involved in a nutrition program for 100 children under the age of 7;
- The Club de Amas de Casa of Colonia Brisas del Valle with 25 members also engaged in a nutrition project;
- The Organization of Mothers of the Lactario Infantil (a child nutrition program) of the Colonia Roberto Suazo Cordoba serving 94 children;
- Health Volunteers of the Colonia San Francisco who concentrate on childhood diseases and overall community health.

In November 1987, a group of women interested in forming an organization in Israel de Norte, the most destitute of all the urban settlements, requested that PEP assist them. Eventually, (as will be described below) Israel de Norte was to become one of PEP's more successful interventions in the hills surrounding Tegucigalpa. By the spring of 1989, PEP had stopped working with Colonial Brisas del Valle due to noncompliance on the part of the homemakers association members with the agreement reached with PEP, and instead had decided to assist one other community--San Buenaventura.

All of the above communities are squatter settlements formed in the hills around Tegucigalpa over the past five to ten years. In Spanish they are termed "clandestino" because they are not legally recognized or are unincorporated with only tenuous claims on municipal utilities and services.

The strategy of the PEP team, in broad terms, was to first work with grassroots women's groups who would acquire skills in participatory democracy and collective action and help incorporate them into the General Assembly of the local community's governing bodies. In Honduras, governing bodies that represent community interests are known as "patronatos". In some cases, where

there was no extant women's group, PEP agreed to assist with the formation of one, as was the case with Colonia Israel Norte.

Each local group selected two members to be trained as community organizers/facilitators, or "promoters" ("promotores" in Spanish). Similarly, the boards of directors (juntas directivas) of each community patronato agreed to send two or more leaders to attend PEP training workshops (see the February 1988 evaluation, in which the evaluator describe the November leadership workshop). In some cases, those receiving training as promoters also have been members of the patronato's governing board.

The PEP staff, during the first year of activities, attempted to meet on a weekly basis with the promoters, community leaders, and group members. To ensure regularity in community visits, two teams (of two PEP facilitators) were assigned responsibility for three communities each. The PEP teams also participated in monthly meetings of the patronatos to discuss PEP philosophy and methods, answer concerns of community members, and promote collaborative efforts.

PEP visits gradually diminished to once every three weeks and, by the spring of 1989, to once a month. This schedule of visits was designed to reduce dependency on PEP. The goal of the project staff was that the community promoters share their training with other members of their associations and interested parties in the community.

Over the course of two years, PEP/Honduras gradually focused its efforts more on the base or community associations and less on the leaders of the patronatos. The authoritarian structure of the patronatos and the unwillingness of the traditional male leadership to share decision-making with a larger group of people, especially women, created problems in project implementation. Difficulties also arose from concentrating too much effort on the promoters. Despite the good intentions of many to share the knowledge and skills they acquired from the PEP-organized workshops, many of the promoters were unable to impart their training in a meaningful way. The country staff's hope that the promoters would internalize what they had learned to the point that they could apply insights and principles to an interpretation of their specific community, did not fully materialize. In many instances promoters were not able to define their most pressing issues and delineate strategies, which were appropriate to their circumstances, for resolving them. In some cases, the traditional patronato leadership as well as that of the women's associations misused funds or demonstrated an elitism that was not consonant with the goals and spirit of PEP.

Despite these shortcomings, there are success stories to report from most of the barrios and the case of Israel Norte will be discussed in greater detail as it provides an excellent example of improvements brought about through PEP intervention. As the March 31, 1989 internal evaluation by the project staff notes, the principal support which PEP has offered in urban areas has been in providing organizational development skills and strengthening women's self-confidence as leaders and educators. Of the six groups with which PEP worked intensively, five have achieved organizational stability, and three, in PEP's opinion, are able to confront and resolve community problems on their own; these three are San Francisco, Modesta Rodas Acuerdo, and Israel Norte. In San

Francisco, a consumers' cooperative has been formed, along with a child care and nutrition program; moreover, an older group of boy scouts (many of them 16 to 20 years old) are involved in a variety of projects to improve their "barrio." To a greater extent than in other communities, the promoters have effectively shared their training with others. Overall, there is a general questioning of policies and practices of the traditional leadership of the community. In Modesta Rodas Acuerdo, a large number of women have been actively involved in their association, and in the construction of a children's nutrition center. Even in the fourth barrio, 14 de Marzo, not one considered to be a model community, there has nevertheless been a health campaign with emphasis on latrine building and securing an adequate water supply by means of community wells.

Moreover, PEP has provided information about the rights of women to all the direct participants in its workshops and seminars, by means of sessions that acquaint them with the Honduran Family Code. These sessions have generated requests by the women for further counseling concerning the rights of abused women. These activities have incurred some hostility on the part of a number of male companions of the participating women. This is a source of concern and discussion among staff and participants. While there are cases in which women have been forced or chose to drop out due to spouse pressure, there are also examples in which men have come to respect and value their wife's contribution, despite initial resistance.

Israel Norte presents a particularly interesting case of women playing an active, indeed a leadership role, in community improvement. The barrio of some 235 families was the poorest of the communities the evaluator visited in 1987. As the evaluator described the community in the February 1988 evaluation, it had no public utilities. An army truck occasionally brought water to the residents of the barrio. Water, otherwise, had to be obtained in containers from a neighboring community some 15 minutes walk from Israel Norte; the adjacent barrio was also the site of the local primary school. The community had an all male-governing body (patronato) which opposed the formation of a separate women's association because they claimed it would be divisive. But, according to Dona Melba C., a mother in her mid-20s who completed primary school, the group of women in Israel Norte were aware that in other communities women's groups were addressing pressing concerns--such as limited educational opportunities and lack of water--that men on the juntas of the patronatos seemed to consider of secondary importance. The women had heard through acquaintances about PEP's organizing activities in a neighboring community and irrespective of patronato opposition, a group of 4 to 8 women had coalesced in the barrio and actively sought the assistance of PEP.

One week prior to the November 21, 1987 PEP Leadership Training Workshop, members of the patronato's governing body decided to support the formation of the women's group, Asociación Femenina Hacia el Futuro, that would benefit the entire community. Three members of the patronato's leadership attended the workshop along with a delegation of women, including Dona Melba, who sold me a ticket for a raffle the association was organizing to raise funds to make wooden benches for the community center under construction.

That community center is now a reality. Moreover, the stated goals of women like Dona Melba who attended the November 1987 PEP-workshop have been

implemented to a remarkable extent. Dona Melba's objective was to use the skills, knowledge, and insights gained in the training sessions to motivate other women in her community to get involved, to raise their level of awareness, and to develop their organizational abilities in order to obtain access to public services.

Since November 1987, women have played a key role in improving living conditions in the barrio. Dona Vilma Palma de Ortega, a leader in the women's association, was elected president of the patronato in a well-attended (n-approximately 120) community meeting in early 1989. According to the two men on the governing board, the women in the community have been the driving force behind major improvements in Israel Norte over the past two years; women also have provided much of the labor involved in development projects. Among the improvements are a water storage tank that holds some 7,000 gallons of water (the tank was inaugurated the week before the evaluator's visit); construction of a retaining wall to prevent the collapse of the one access road into the community; designation of sites for a children's playground and a primary school, with a workplan for beginning construction of the school by October of this year; a health education, latrine building, and immunization campaign; and the opening of a new access road to the community the first week of July, that will eliminate the need for people to walk up a treacherous hill.

The active participation of women in community affairs has reached the point that Dona Vilma walks through the barrio with a megaphone berating men for leaving all the work to women. Other members of the community had apprised country coordinator Narda Melendez of this situation--which was engendering hostility on the part of many men and generally poor relations in the barrio; someone needed to talk to Dona Vilma so that she would tone down her rhetoric.

At the June 29 meeting held in the community center between Narda Melendez and Rosa Aminta Ferrufino with the governing board, the PEP staff indicated that their goal was to promote self-reliance in the communities in which they worked. The project staff had reduced its contacts with the meeting to once a month in early 1989, and had visited the community only once since that period. However, PEP was willing to consider some timely follow-up sessions to assist with skills development that would be useful to the board--skills such as agenda setting and the conduction of community meetings. But first the board had to resolve a matter of some 2000 Lempiras (US \$1,000) donated by a Swiss agency with which the past president had absconded. The board gave its guarantee that a letter would be sent to the Swiss donor agency indicating what steps would be taken to rectify the situation.

Israel Norte has been discussed in some detail because it illustrates the strengths and limitations of PEP intervention in the urban "colonias clandestinas". The illegal status of most squatter settlements contributes to uncertainty over the merit of self-improvement schemes, if the land is taken back from the residents. In the case of Israel Norte, seven, then eight, individuals now claim to be the rightful owners of the land. While this is being adjudicated, the community cannot legally obtain electricity. The high unemployment rate among the residents of these marginalized communities also leads to transience. Leaders like Dona Melba have left for other communities. While the traditional male-dominated patronato has given way to active women's participation in Israel Norte, this is not the case in most communities.

Moreover, women's active involvement in the patronato has led to a diminution of energy dedicated to the women's association. This is not necessarily an unfortunate situation as long as women's concerns remain on the agenda of the patronato.

The problem of women's issues being subordinated to the agendas of male dominated organizations is not unique to urban populations. However, rural communities, at least in Honduras, seem to offer the possibility of greater stability. Access to land has not been as pressing an issue in the countryside as is access to credit, technical assistance, markets, and, in certain areas of the country, adequate water supplies.

From its inception in Honduras, the PEP project staff was interested in working with a peasant association which was national in scope. In February 1988, the Country Director sent a letter of introduction to several peasant organizations, describing the Program of Education for Participation and inquiring as to the possibility of a collaborative arrangement. Within two weeks of sending the letter, PEP received a positive response from the National Association of Honduran Peasants (ANACH), inviting PEP representatives to address a meeting of regional directors that month. That was the beginning of PEP involvement with ANACH.

#### National Association of Honduran Peasants (ANACH)

By March of 1988, PEP and the National Directorate of ANACH had reached an agreement that PEP would work with 14 groups affiliated with the peasant association in the region of Choluteca, located in the south of the country. Many of ANACH's national leadership comes from this area, and there is a strong regional office based in the city of Choluteca.

Although ANACH has been in existence thirty years and has the largest membership (some 80,000 strong) of any peasant association, the national leadership considers its organizational base to be weak. Indeed, as the PEP staff soon discovered, many community groups did not know the objectives of ANACH and had little sense of their union local as a purposeful organization.

PEP was to work with the 14 groups (8 male and 6 female) to help them clarify their goals and devise realistic work plans. Two members were selected from each group to receive training as facilitators or promoters who would serve as multipliers of the knowledge and skills acquired in PEP-sponsored workshops. Guidelines were established for selection of promoters: they were to be selected by the membership of the ANACH local, they had to know how to read and write, and they should be individuals who had not benefited from previous ANACH-sponsored training.

Between April 1988 and March 1989, PEP organized more than six three-day workshops for 28 facilitator/promoters and a number of orientation and planning sessions with each of the 14 groups. Principal themes of the workshops included the policies of ANACH, functions of governing boards, identification of community and organizational problems, determination of organizational objectives and priorities, human relations, and effective group action strategies.

By the third training session, the promoters had formed their own education and training organization, designed as "UNION Y ESFUERZO" ("UNION AND EFFORT"). Women comprised one third of the membership of the group. A special focus of "UNION Y ESFUERZO" was the provision of literacy, as over half the membership of the union locals was illiterate.

The need for literacy skills was expressed by local members in Nuevo Progreso, one of the two communities the evaluator visited on June 27. Out of 20 families in the community, 25 men and 15 women are attending literacy classes. Dona Catalina Ochoa, a facilitator for the women's association, is working as a literacy instructor. Literacy is also a high priority in neighboring Nance Dulce, the other community the evaluator visited. However, funding for literacy materials has been frozen by an international agency that had provided start-up funds to the National Agrarian Institute for such classes.

The union local members the evaluator met in the communities, especially a larger group of some men of the Santa Fe de Nance Dulce association, all expressed appreciation for the skills that PEP had helped impart to strengthen their organization. They were in the process of trying to secure, together with other ANACH locals in the area, funds to rent an abandoned building, owned by a church, to establish a training center for neighboring communities.

In addition to the organization of literacy classes, the revitalized union locals and affiliated women's association have initiated improvement projects such as community wells and economic projects to generate greater income for both men and women. Many are in the process of formulating loan requests to national banks and grant requests to external funding agencies. Requests also are being generated for assistance from the Ministries of Health and Education in providing material aid and teachers and health workers to communities that are a long distance from available schools and health posts.

Furthermore, there has been a renewed interest in local cultural expression. Andrés Centeno, a facilitator with the Santa Fe de Nance Dulce cooperative, has been involved in organizing theatrical works and poetry readings. Local musical groups play at the various workshops and sessions held between PEP and ANACH, and there have been cultural exchanges between communities.

The 18 facilitators and 12 literacy workers who attended the March 1989 final evaluation of PEP, made comments such as the following:

"Because of the training, we have learned to discover our problems, to seek solutions and to better understand the social situation in which we live in this country."

Comments by the ANACH participants from the women's associations further indicate, according to PEP/Honduras, that the program has opened space for discussion and reflection among the women concerning their problems and the issues they face as an organized group. It has also contributed to the reinforcement of their leadership roles and the development of solidarity among women. Two women were elected to the governing board of "UNION Y ESFUERZO", and

a woman facilitator was named to be National Coordinator of Women's Affairs for ANACH.

According to ANACH Regional Director, Pedro Pablo Centeno, there is now greater interest in women's participation in the activities of the organization than at any other time in its history. As of June 10, the National Directorate of ANACH had decided to request that PEP continue its assistance to the organization on an expanded scale.

Continued collaboration with ANACH, however, poses concerns for PEP which merit attention and analysis. PEP/Honduras has confronted problems similar to those experienced by PEP/Costa Rica in its interactions with the association of small farmers of the Atlantic Coast. These associations have a national political agenda that is determined by a small leadership of men. Although the leadership talks about raising awareness and the desirability of an active, critical base of union affiliates, what they often desire, whether consciously or not, is a mass of militant associates which follows their directives. Similarly, although the male leadership talks about active participation of women in their organizations, this statement often translates into the practice of using women's groups as vehicles for mobilizing other women to engage in activities determined by the male leadership. This situation is compounded in Honduras, by an agrarian law that does not recognize women. ANACH has a women's association; but as is so often the case in the history of labor organizing, women are expected to form an auxiliary group to assist the men. So while ANACH locals can take pride in the fact that the women have been given one or two "manzanas" (about two acres) of land on which to grow crops for home consumption or sale on the market, the men have one hundred "manzanas". To these problems must be added traditional male attitudes concerning the role of women and interaction with the opposite sex. Some of the women who have been actively involved in PEP workshops as facilitators have encountered resentment on the part of their male companions; and in one case, a spouse of a female facilitator angrily went with a machete to the home of a male facilitator who had accompanied her home after an evening meeting.

The problem of facilitators sharing information and successfully translating their training into practice with other group members, noted with regard to the urban projects, also applies to the ANACH local leaders. In addition, the PEP/Honduras staff has detected several disturbing instances of what they call "elitism" among the facilitators. PEP has helped fund travel, food, and lodging expenses for participants attending its overnight or day-long training workshops in central locations like Santa Rosa.

The southern part of the country, especially the area surrounding Choluteca, is poor and in recent years has suffered from alternate flooding and excessively long dry spells. Paved access roads are few in number, making travel extremely difficult. When the rains come, rivers flood and travel may be hazardous. Because of these travel conditions, PEP decided to send two of its staff members, at any one time, to work in the region for periods of up to five days every two weeks. However, the teams often could not reach their destinations on schedule because of weather and travel conditions.

The difficulty of reaching sites and the fact that PEP works with only 14 of some 130 ANACH locals, prompted me to inquire why PEP did not concentrate its

efforts on training the regional leaders of ANACH in Choluteca to be facilitators. The regional staff represent a group with the potential to reach and mobilize a much greater number of locals; for that matter, the national staff represents an even greater point of leverage for training activities. The original agreement between PEP and ANACH had called for a number of national and regional staff to attend PEP workshops and activities as observers. Over time, however, the number dwindled from 4 to 1 to zero observers. The national and regional leadership of ANACH do not recognize the need for such training.

All of these problems--traditional male leadership, elitism, macho attitudes, difficulty of reaching rural populations--are not uncommon in Honduras, or the other Central American countries in which PEP is working. What makes continued collaboration with ANACH even more problematic is that 1989 is an election year. ANACH has aligned itself with a third party (social democratic in orientation). While this is likely to create problems for the organization when its representatives petition governmental offices for provision of basic services (including the hiring of teachers for areas with schools), the problem created for PEP is that over the last two months ANACH has been using the facilitators which PEP trains for primarily partisan political purposes--to mobilize ANACH affiliates, to campaign, and to vote for the third party. Partisan politics of this nature place PEP in a very difficult position--it also disrupts the intended activities of PEP. The June 10, 1989 follow-up meeting between Aminta Navarro, Rosa Aminta Ferrufino, and ANACH facilitators was interrupted without warning by the regional leadership entering the session with the local third party candidate for the national assembly. The candidate proceeded to give a political discourse of at least an hour. No apologies were tendered by ANACH staff.

Narda Melendez has protested to the national and regional leaders about such partisan activity occurring during PEP planning sessions and workshops. The ANACH leadership recognizes the legitimacy of PEP concerns and states that it will not occur again. However, PEP justifiably doubts ANACH's ability to refrain from using its facilitators for partisan purposes. At the July 17 meeting scheduled between PEP staff and ANACH regional leaders in Choluteca, it is probable that PEP will bring to a close its involvement with ANACH for the remainder of this year. Selective follow-up activities may occur after the elections.

PEP involvement with ANACH has been described in some detail because the case illustrates the potential advantages of working with an organization that is national in scope and has the goals of assisting some of the most disadvantaged populations in the country. The case of ANACH also points out the difficulties and shortcomings of working with an organization that has an agenda set by a small group of individuals. The tension between meeting their requirements and those of the base is one which may present some difficult choices for the PEP staff.

By contrast, CEPROD (Centro de Promoción y Desarrollo) represents an organization that has outreach and mobilizing strengths, which are mostly regional in scope, but that does not have a set agenda it wishes to transmit or impose on local communities. CEPROD represents an organization that is firmly committed to an open-ended process of change that will be determined by grassroots organizations themselves.

CEPROD (Centro de Promoción y Desarrollo): Women's Groups and Literacy Monitors

CEPROD was founded in 1987. Its national director, Guillermo Molina Chacano, is a sociologist who has been the director of the Latin American Master's Degree Program in Social Work at the University of Tegucigalpa. UNICEF is a principal funding source of CEPROD's activities, which are concentrated largely in the area surrounding the town of Progreso in Yoro-Atlántida. CEPROD maintains a staff of at least three workers in Progreso who work in two principal projects--one involving assistance to grassroots women's groups engaged in economic projects and community improvement, and the other involving the training of literacy monitors. The organization is influenced by the educational thought of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire concerning adult education as a means of empowering low-income populations to play an active role in society and in social change overall.

CEPROD, along with ANACH, was one of the groups that responded to the February 1988 PEP/Honduras letter of introduction seeking collaborative activities with other Honduran agencies. By July of last year, PEP and CEPROD had reached an agreement by which PEP would work with eight women's groups (with approximately 135 members) and some 33 literacy monitors in three of the five zones in the region of Yoro-Atlántida. Accessibility of the communities and general viability of the local organizations were considerations in selecting the communities.

Aminta Navarro and Rosa Aminta Ferrufino were assigned to the project. They worked out an arrangement by which they would meet with several communities in orientation, planning sessions, and workshops for 3 to 5 day periods, every fortnight. PEP was responsible for training two or more facilitator/promoters from each group and also assisting with the meetings of the women's groups, all of which have different names and organizing foci. Their work with the monitors consisted of intensive, often four-day workshops held for the most part in Progreso. The aim of the workshops with the literacy monitors was to deepen their knowledge of national problems, such as land reform and health care, and to offer them methods to be more effective adult educators who involved learners more actively in the process of using literacy to explore their social world and effect changes in it. The workshops and sessions with the women's groups followed the core set of PEP objectives: to impart organizational, communications, and human relations skills that would enable these groups to define their own objectives, develop work plans, effectively conduct meetings that included broad-based membership participation, and to use these skills and their capacity as a strengthened organization to gain access to basic social services and engage in civic action.

As is common in other PEP undertakings--and especially because of the presence of the complementary literacy monitors project--many of the women realized the need for literacy skills and enrolled in the adult education classes offered by the monitors. It also was obvious from the participation of the 14 facilitators in the March 28 meeting the evaluator witnessed in the community of Colorado, that PEP assistance to these groups had contributed to

building the self-confidence of a large number of women to speak out on a range of community and social issues.

Although there were torrential rains, 14 women showed up for the meeting with Rosa Aminta Ferrufino, Aminta Navarro, two CEPROD staff members, Delia Galindo and Esther Arita Aleyda Carcano, and the evaluator. This was the first meeting with PEP staff since the final evaluation session in March. During the three and a half month period, the women had initiated a number of economic and community projects. The very building in which the meeting took place had been completed the week before; a German NGO had donated the money for the building materials. In the community of Colorado the women were playing a key role in organizing residents to take action on the local river that yearly flooded its banks and destroyed nearby housing. The women were discussing a project involving sewer drains and means of channeling the river. In a number of communities, child care and infant feeding programs were being initiated. Guayamitas, as a case in point, had begun both a child care center and a vegetable growing project. In the community of Castellano, women had plans for purchasing equipment to grind and process cacao. In Brisas de la Libertad, a cooperative was being formed to market textiles; the project was joining the activities of women from five different communities. The association based in Brisas was applying for a 7 percent interest loan from the Small and Medium Business Corporation (commercial bank loans are at least 17 percent). Some of the communities had launched campaigns to boil water, build latrines, and vaccinate children.

Many of the women who before broke out in a cold sweat when they had to speak in a group, now felt comfortable in public situations. Several of them addressed women's issues. Doña Lillian, who is a midwife, pointed out, for example, that doctors charge 30 Lempiras (US \$15) for delivering a boy, but only 20 Lempiras for a girl--the message being that boys are worth more. One woman in the group objected vociferously, declaring that the women ought to organize a boycott of the local clinic for such discriminatory practices.

By far the most articulate group the evaluator interviewed during his visit to Honduras was the 10 literacy monitors who journeyed to the town of Mezapa to confer with the evaluator. Over 30 individuals in all, ranging in age from the early twenties to the late fifties, have been teaching and receiving instructional guidance for the past three years. They teach approximately 350 women and men basic literacy classes and follow-up adult education. Six levels of adult education are now offered, each level corresponding to roughly a semester of school work. The monitors are all volunteers, who occasionally receive a small gratuity. They teach in the late afternoon and early evening hours, often in circumstances resembling our meeting in Mezapa. The town has no public electricity and at 6:30 pm the features of the monitors receded into darkness in our meeting room: the private generator had not yet been turned on. Despite difficult circumstances for instruction, the retention rate is high in their literacy classes; the figures they shared indicate that between 50 and 60 percent of those individuals who started the classes are still studying.

The impact of the monitors extends beyond the individuals in their classes. As a result of the training they have received from both CEPROD and PEP, they claim to be active in the many producer/consumer cooperatives and agricultural associations they belong to. Many have challenged the leadership

of these organizations. One woman who was very articulate in the meeting confessed that prior to the training she had received with PEP, she would not have spoken up before an outsider. The gains in self confidence are complemented by a more critical and global analysis of Honduran society.

Twelve of the 33 monitors attended PEP's final evaluation session in March. According to their comments, PEP had played an important role in "affirming their knowledge of the national reality, the role of peasants in national life, and the identification of health problems in the communities and solutions to them." With PEP, the monitors had analyzed the national political scene, the history and platforms of the various political parties--without taking any partisan stance.

The expanded social vision of the monitors, as with the women's groups, had enabled them to reach the point where they were discussing collective efforts across communities to secure, for example, a hospital in their district and a public high school (the only secondary school in the Mezapa area was private). The women's groups were linking-up communities to secure loans for economic projects.

As noted earlier, the PEP staff systematically brought two or three communities together for workshops so that they could share interests and resources. This strategy was subsequently followed by CEPROD in its activities in the three zones of the Yoro-Atlántida region where PEP was working, plus two other zones of the region.

The CEPROD-PEP working relationship has been a fruitful one and represents attractive features for future PEP activities in the country and Central America in general. A responsible and responsive organization like CEPROD complements the training activities of PEP: it mobilizes representatives from the women's groups and literacy monitors for meetings and workshops, does follow-up on PEP activities, and extends the PEP training model to other communities. As the various members of the two projects pointed out to me, it is difficult for them to separate out what contributions each organization has made--independent of the other--to their individual and collective advancement.

## PROJECTS OF PLP/GUATEMALA

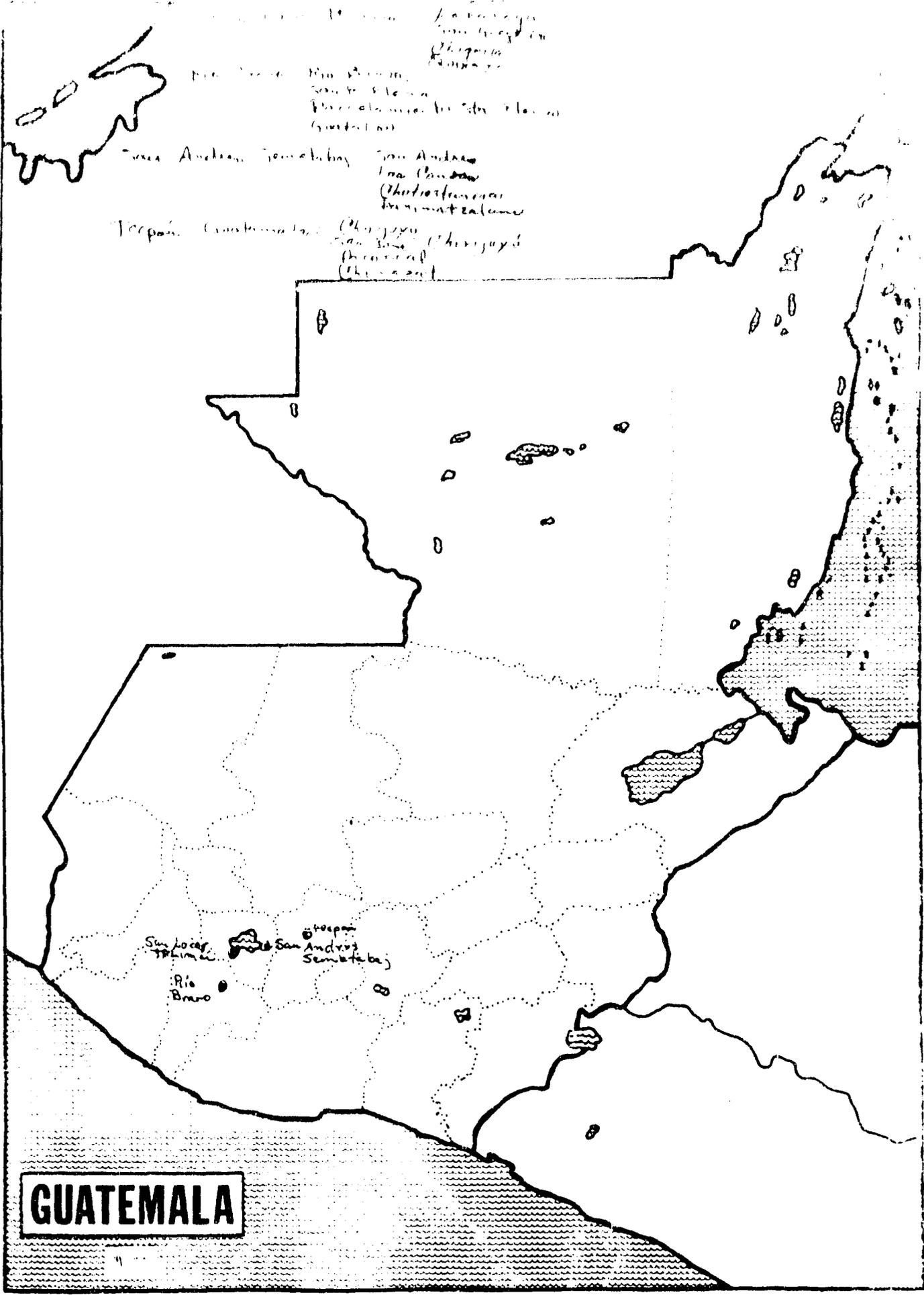
### Canoas, Quixaya, Rio Bravo, and Tomás Kavanaugh

The indigenous community of Canoas, consisting of some 1,500 people who derive their livelihood from small plots of land (minifundias), has formed a Committee for Family Development (Comité Pro-Desarrollo Familiar, CDF) in conjunction with CIF (Center for Family Integration) in Guatemala City. By November of 1987, when the evaluator first visited the project, the PEP staff had held several sessions with this committee to help its members--both men and women--identify priorities and the means of achieving them, as well as to facilitate linkage with other communities and organizations that share common interests.

In the community meeting the evaluator attended in November 1987, the assembled group of some 30 men and women, with the assistance of Alma Irene Chavez, identified as their number one priority the need for a community store--as most commercial stores were too far away. Although a land-owning member of the CDF offered a parcel of land free of charge to the community, the group decided to purchase it instead, expressing concern about the permanence of a gift. Nineteen months later the store is a reality. The land offered by Don Leandro Locón was purchased by the community for 250 Quetzales (approximately US \$90), and while funds are being raised to construct a permanent building, the store is operating out of a house adjacent to the property, donated free of rent to the community association. In one section of the house there is a newly purchased "molino" (mill) that grinds corn into a flour which is used to make tortillas and other staples of the local diet--at less than half the cost of grinding corn in surrounding communities. The equipment is run by women members of CDF.

IDEX (International Development Exchange), a California-based group which supports community-based economic development projects, gave this grant to the Canoas community after they prepared a funding proposal with guidance from the PEP staff. With PEP assistance, the community association is presently undertaking steps to incorporate itself as a cooperative with the National Cooperative Institute, and to secure funding for its projects from several sources, including the Inter-American Foundation and IDESCA (the Central American Institute for Economic and Social Development). The store itself, with limited merchandise, sells about 30 to 40 Quetzales worth of goods on a good day; profits are being used to further capitalize the store and expand its variety of offerings to the general community of 300 families. The association, as a consequence of these activities, has increased its membership from 34 to 44.

Another significant achievement, is the growing number of women participating in CDF. This is, in part, due to the PEP workshops and discussion sessions related to valuing the work of women, preparing women for leadership roles, and imparting basic knowledge and skills on how to achieve a more participatory and effective organization. Another factor that will contribute to greater participation on the part of women in Canoas, and other indigenous communities, is the use of the native languages, Cackchiquel and Quiché. Men tend to be more conversant in Spanish than women and past use of Spanish in PEP



**GUATEMALA**

San Andrés Semotabaj  
Ticapa  
San Andrés  
Tica Chucán  
Chololefucucal  
Ticapa Matzalam  
Ticapa  
San Andrés  
Chololefucucal  
Ticapa Matzalam  
Ticapa  
San Andrés  
Chololefucucal  
Ticapa Matzalam

activities inhibited women's participation. This situation, however, has changed. Over the past year, PEP has begun to use the indigenous languages and the assignment of Pascuala Morales, who speaks both Cackchiquel and Quiché, to work in Canoas as well as Quixaya and San Andrés Semetabaj is contributing to the greater involvement of women in community organizations.

However, a number of problems remain. Some derive from the strong military presence in the Western region of the country, others from traditional bases of authority and traditional expectations concerning gender roles. An example of the difficulty of the context is when in July of 1988, a contingent of some 10 soldiers surrounded the community meeting house in Canoas, where PEP was to conduct a workshop. Only half of the expected participants attended the seminar, and a lieutenant sat in on the meeting to observe what was taking place. Alma Irene, who had planned to discuss means for resolving community problems, deftly changed the theme of the gathering to discuss the statutes for the formation of a cooperative. The lieutenant commended the PEP country coordinator on the meeting and the incident passed.

While monitoring meetings may be only an occasional means of reminding the people of the power of the State, the military frequently stop educators who carry newsprint and magic markers to communities, as these are considered means of consciousness-raising and therefore subversive. For these reasons, PEP has often resorted to bringing community activists to residential workshops in Guatemala City on leadership skills in order to create a freer atmosphere of inquiry and engagement.

Concerning the weight of tradition, there is the example of the "cacique" or local authority figure in Canoas, who generally has supported PEP activities, but also expects a payment of some 50 Quetzales a month from the profits of the consumer store. He exercises his authority further by expressing his ideas in an "imposing" way in the community meetings. Generally, men are expected to exercise leadership roles, with women playing auxiliary, supportive roles. These patterns are changing, but the process is slow, as witnessed in even the more change-oriented community of Quixaya, which has been exercising a leadership role relative to surrounding towns.

In the community of Quixaya, some 30 to 40 minutes west of Canoas by car, a parish-based cooperative project, designated Cooperativa Quixampe Samjael, has begun to address the status of women and their role in community development. The community of several hundred people straddles a principal East-West highway, with the church and more established section of the community on the north of the road and refugees from the civil strife further to the west settling on the southern side of the thoroughfare. A parish worker, Jorge Bzunna Buch, an extremely knowledgeable and visionary autodidact with only three years of formal education is the leader of a cooperative movement that started as a community store. The movement has developed into a housing and appropriate technology project which promotes the notion of all community members advancing together. One of the first concerns of the movement's leadership was the degradation of women who traditionally kneaded flour and cooked at floor-level. With a grant from the Guatemalan Institute of Technology and matching local funds, the group designed and built a low cost, heat efficient oven and surrounding work area that prevents back-breaking stoop work in the kitchen.

The use of appropriate technology in forming a construction project first began in the more established section of the community and was subsequently extended to the area in which the refugees are settling. In accordance with the values of the parish committee, all houses are built in stages so that no set of houses is completely constructed before others.

As with the introduction of changes in the household kitchen, a group of men first envisioned what improvements would take place. Women, however, are playing an important role in assisting with construction work. A women's group was being formed at the time of the mid-term evaluation with the goal of engaging in individual as well as collective income generating activities, such as cattle raising and the production of dairy products. In November of 1987, PEP offered support in the form of a training program which initially would be for women only, to help build solidarity and group cohesion. The introductory workshop, as is the case with PEP projects in other countries, was to focus on personal relations and communication.

Since the mid-term evaluation in 1987, there have been noticeable improvements in the community. There is now a school with 220 students, pre-primary through the first cycle of secondary education (grade 9), instructed by 8 primary school teachers, 3 secondary school teachers and 3 assistants. Thirty-five houses for the displaced families living to the south of the highway have been constructed. The women's group actively attracts large numbers of women--and their children.

The evaluator had the opportunity to attend one of the meetings conducted by Pascuala Morales and to directly enter into conversation with an assembly of some 50 women and 20 children. As the evaluator spoke in Spanish, the evaluator's comments were translated into Cakchiquel by Ms. Morales or by Jorge Bzunna Buch (who was accompanying him on the visit along with Don Francisco, another community leader). A number of the women expressed their gratitude to PEP for what it had done to help them form an organization, identify problems, and seek solutions as well as have greater confidence in themselves and their ability to speak up in public meetings.

The evaluator probed to see what the group could do in the way of a community project without depending on male initiative. At first, several women indicated that the men decided community priorities. The evaluator asked what would happen if the men didn't agree with the grinding equipment they wanted to purchase to make corn meal so that they wouldn't have to get up at 4 AM or earlier during the harvest season. There was a murmur of disbelief that the men would dare go against the women's interests. Finally, one woman indicated that women didn't have to wait for men to take the initiative in development projects; she mentioned the case of a women's cooperative in Chichicastenango where the women made the bricks and hired masons and carpenters to finish whatever work they couldn't do. (It was later pointed out to me that the women's cooperative in Chichicastenango had been working with a CAPS extension agent.) As the evaluator spoke with the group, it appeared that some 5 to 10 of the 50 women in the room felt confident to articulate their interests and had leadership potential. Perhaps as many as 15 to 20 of the participants said something during the meeting. It was also apparent that it would take a long time, perhaps a year or more, before women and men would feel comfortable working together. Indeed, to gain the confidence of the women's group, Alma

Erene Chavez and Aura Isabel Palancos Reinos sat down to sew and weave with the women.

They used a more traditional lecture format at first, introducing various motivational techniques, such as role playing and simulation games only after establishing some rapport. Eventually, the women began to enjoy these innovative methods. One of the obstacles faced by the group, was the large numbers of children who attend with the women. They caused a tremendous amount of noise and interruptions that make group discussion difficult; and although a different space was found for the children with games and activities to engage them, the need for adequate day care facilities and systematic attention to the needs of the children still remain to be solved. Future meetings of the group, in conjunction with PEP, are to focus on the rights of women.

PEP works separately with the men's group developing the leadership skills of cooperative members. In addition to the more standard workshops it offers on project planning, evaluation and community organizing, PEP also has arranged sessions on analyzing the feasibility of small economic enterprises. Economic concerns are foremost. For example, the next session that the cooperative asked PEP to help them organize was on the rights of landowners, as different families of the community were attempting to purchase the land on which they were living.

PEP has played a supportive role in arranging exchanges between communities and providing travel expenses for Jorge Bzunna Buch and other leaders of the Quixaya cooperative to meet with members of the Canoas emergent cooperative and to travel to the Ladino (Spanish-speaking, mestizo) community of Rio Bravo to discuss how to organize a cooperative, appropriate technology projects, such as solar ovens, and how to obtain potable water with public assistance. The Quixaya leaders on the other hand, played an instrumental role in putting PEP in touch with the community development committee of Tomas Kavanaugh, in the municipality of San Lucas.

Rio Bravo, an hour's drive to the southwest of Quixaya, is in an area that has experienced rebellion and army reprisals. Since February of 1988, PEP has been working with the Grupo de Señoras Viudas de Costura (roughly translated as the Widow's Sewing Group). The area of Rio Bravo is unusual in the sense that a lot of women are employed as agricultural laborers on large estates producing sugar and soy beans, among other capital crops. Wages are below the supposed government regulated minimum of 10 Quetzales per diem. When a parish-based youth group worked with the area laborers to point out the growing disparity between wages and the prices of basic goods, leading to demands for a 1 Quetzal per diem increase in wages, a powerful landowner brought down enough pressure to disband the group. The group still functions, but in a different guise--the choral group of the Catholic church. The church has three North American religious workers of the Teaching Sisters of Notre Dame, who have been working in the town and surrounding area. The Widows Group meets on the grounds of the church.

The Widow's group originally solicited PEP assistance in the development of organizational skills for a cooperative related to poultry raising and the sewing/embroidery of textiles that would be marketed. Participation in PEP's training program has motivated a number of women to enroll in literacy classes, to acquire reading and writing skills necessary for more effective participation

in the association. The group, furthermore, has begun to analyze other community projects, including the need for a public high school in the town.

The appropriate technology project of the Widow's Group involves the production of solar ovens. It is estimated that the ovens could result in savings of 50 to 60 Quetzales (approximately US\$20) a month in wood/charcoal and gasoline (as starter). Another advantage of the ovens would be the elimination of the noxious fumes involved in open hearth cooking indoors. Three individuals, Doñas Luz and Cecilia and Luis (there are several young males associated with the parish who are members of the Widow's Group; Luis actually is Vice-President of the Group) are involved in the production of the ovens in a very simple workshop on the church grounds. Anyone who works along with the team, to learn how to make the ovens, can purchase the oven at cost--approximately 260 Quetzales. They are expected to share their knowledge with other members of the community.

Professor Bill Langford of George Mason University in Virginia visited Rio Bravo two years ago to introduce the solar ovens project. He had met two of the Teaching Sisters of Notre Dame, when they were studying Spanish together in Antigua. He has visited Rio Bravo three times to organize workshops on solar ovens. Jorge Bzurna Buch and other members of the Quixaya cooperative had participated in the workshops and decided to introduce the concept to their own community--but as is typical of the Quixaya community, it is intended that all families in the community will benefit from the project, rather than a few at a time. In any case, the project exemplifies the interaction and mutual assistance that has emerged among several communities, with different towns taking the lead in different projects.

The evaluator had an opportunity to discuss with Notre Dame Sisters Denay Ulrich and Judy Bourg their assessment of PEP's assistance to the Rio Bravo Widow's Group. In their opinion, the most remarkable outcome of PEP involvement has been a dramatic increase in the women's self-esteem and confidence to speak out on issues and participate in community affairs. They further pointed out that the PEP workshop/seminars offered in Guatemala City had opened up new worlds for the participants from Rio Bravo, some of whom had never been to the capital. To the query, "Was PEP intervention necessary?" the sisters noted that they probably would have been able to figure out how to motivate the group and build up the organizational skills and self-confidence of the women, but that it would have taken much longer. More importantly, PEP staff were Guatemalans who knew the local culture and who could tactfully raise issues and make points that they, as North Americans, could not and should not. As a result of the joint efforts of the North American sisters and PEP staff, group members are now beginning to analyze a whole range of issues--the nature and equality of schooling, gender differences in access to education, and the wage structure of the local economy. On their own initiative, members of the Widow's Group organized and conducted a meeting with other community residents to share what they had learned from participating in PEP workshops. The women positively impressed me as a group, in their ability to express themselves and address community concerns.

A similar group of highly motivated and articulate individuals has formed in the community, Tomas Kavanagh (named after a North American priest), on the outskirts of San Lucas. The Comité Pro-Mejoramiento (CPM, the Pro-Development

Committee), wishes to construct 65 houses in a community consisting of ramshackle houses, some constructed of cheap lumber, others with bamboo poles. There is no potable water or electricity in the community. The women have formed their own association to meet the need for a community store, a mill to grind corn, and an economic project involving raising poultry or pigs.

The men rate the priorities of the CPM as being water, housing, electricity. The 7 men with whom the evaluator spoke on Sunday, July 1 agreed that the women's issues dovetailed with theirs, and that, although there was a separate women's group, both men and women would work together in the construction projects. A joint project is likely to be the conversion of a shed, where construction materials are presently stored, into a two-story building, with the bottom floor serving as a school, and the top floor as a center for community activities. The CPM is in the process of forming a cooperative that will purchase the land, on which the community is living, from the parish church and soliciting funds for construction materials and skilled labor costs from both national and international Non-Governmental Organizations.

PEP is being asked to assist the group in its efforts to become a more cohesive and effective organization. Don Carlos, the community leader, noted that some skills could be acquired in CAPS workshops in Guatemala City, but the group preferred to receive training in situ. PEP staff member, Sinforsoso Cajtín Tax, has worked as a community organizer in the area and lives some 20 minutes from Tomas Kavanaugh. He has been working with the community since his employment with PEP in June of this year, and his efforts will involve assisting the Kavanaugh Pro-Development Committee in its efforts to work with surrounding communities in similar self-improvement projects.

The evaluator suggested to Alma Irene Chavez that there is a danger of PEP overextending itself by trying to serve every needy community in which a CAPS extension agent requests PEP assistance. The evaluator also pointed this problem out to the PEP/Costa Rican leadership. PEP involvement in Tomas Kavanaugh as with several of the other rural and small town communities described below, makes sense if it is limited to complementing the efforts of a regional/national organization such as CAPS, if it reinforces a network of small towns, and if it can be documented in print and other media as a model of how communities can be organized. The communities of San Andrés de Semetabaj, La Cumbre, and Chimaltenango/Tecpan prompt these concerns.

#### San Andrés, La Cumbre, Chimaltenango/Tecpan

In the municipal center of San Andrés de Semetabaj, 8 kilometers from Cancos, a group of 8 women (but now 14) are involved in forming a production and marketing organization. The women come from four communities around the municipal center. CAPS, working in conjunction with Acción Católica (Catholic Action) in San Andrés, asked PEP to assist the women with organizational skills so that the women could define their priorities, resources, and strategies more effectively. They had formed around sewing and weaving textiles for sale, but they are now considering the possibility of other economic activities, such as poultry raising or growing vegetables.

PEP has been engaged in providing similar skills to a group of approximately 35 women in La Cumbre. Alma Irene Chavez describes PEP assistance as focused and short term, being limited to several training sessions of two days each. Members of the Comité Avícola (Poultry Committee) further participated in the first and second women's leadership workshops in Guatemala City in August and October of 1988. Among the reasons given by the Country Director for PEP involvement in La Cumbre was the presence of strong local leadership, and the presence of a CAPS extension agent and a UNICEF/CONIDE (National Council of Development Institutions) project in the community. The Comité Avícola (it sounds better in Spanish) has participated in the construction of an all purpose community center adjacent to where the women meet to sew. PEP involvement in the community has coincided with a growing interest in literacy acquisition, and in January 1989 literacy classes were organized.

PEP involvement, similar to that in San Andrés and La Cumbre, is planned for the Municipality of Tecpan, in four communities (San Jose, Chirjuyu, Chimazat, and Chiriquyui) surrounding the city of Chimaltenango. PEP staff member Antquieta Castro Abaj, who lives in Chimaltenango, initially made contact with the group of women, who are involved in marketing strawberries. PEP team member, Josefina Mutzutz will have primary responsibility for working with the women in the four communities. Activities jointly planned for the group consist of training sessions on the rights of women and small entrepreneurs, and how to determine the feasibility of economic undertakings.

Although there have been positive outcomes of PEP intervention in all three communities, one concern is the small number of individuals involved and the extent to which the groups being assisted will have a multiplier effect on other groups. Another concern is that, with the exception of La Cumbre, the groups tend to have a narrow economic focus; to be congruent with PEP goals, this focus needs to be expanded to include involvement with community development projects or greater claims on the society for basic services.

### San Antonio

San Antonio, a sprawling slum area of more than 35,000 residents in Zone 6 of Guatemala City, represents PEP/Guatemala's only urban project. A number of groups (church, women, and municipal agencies) had coalesced around the need to improve the health of the community--it is a sewage dumping ground for the city--and to increase access to public services. A Belgian medical group, Medicos Misionarios (MM, Medical Missionaries) has been involved in a public health program, training health promoters to work in preventive medicine. Emphasis is placed on cleaning streets, disposing of garbage in receptacles, boiling water, and immunizing against common diseases. Two "facilitators" are employed by MM to train some 45 community health and community development workers (designated as the Grupo de Promotores de Salud). Training sessions for the promoters were scheduled from 2-4 PM, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from November 1988 through May 1989. PEP was called upon to assist the health and community development group with activities designed to enable its members to identify community problems and their sources, and to develop community approaches to resolve the problems. Other sessions focused on how to organize an executive board and working committees and evaluate their activities and the rights and responsibilities of an association's members. A number of the

promoters participated in the PEP organized women's leadership courses offered at Rafael Landivar University.

In 1988 PEP employed a physician, Dr. Rodolfo Mendizabel, to serve as a liaison to the San Antonio project. In addition, all PEP professional staff assisted with the training activities in the barrio; for any training activity, two staff members were usually present.

The project staff has decided that the project has not merited its substantial investment of time, energy, and resources. Generally, the team is wary of involvement in urban slum areas. With an unemployment rate of 80 percent, San Antonio, and similar urban barrios, have a highly transient population, and a high crime rate that makes it dangerous to enter the community after dark. A number of political, religious, and government agencies enter such communities to mobilize different factions for multiple ends--all of which makes organizing activities very difficult. Those outside groups which attempt to unite groups are viewed with suspicion. Moreover, since the 1976 earthquake, urban zones, such as San Antonio, are under military control.

PEP started work with a parish priest who has since been replaced by a priest transferred from Nicaragua; the new priest seems to be less interested in the project. The health group meets on church grounds, where there is also a Caritas (Catholic Relief Services) program and a health post with two physicians. The two physicians pose a problem as they charge consultation fees beyond the means of 90 percent of the population; free medical consultation by other physicians would be resisted by the two practicing doctors in the center.

These are serious constraints. At the time the evaluator left Guatemala, on July 4, 1989, Alma Irene Chavez was planning a meeting with the new priest and leaders of the health project to determine what follow-up by PEP might be merited.

#### Women's Leadership Workshops in Guatemala City

One of the unique features of the PEP/Guatemala program is that the project staff organizes workshops/seminars in Guatemala City. Three have been held at the CAPS conference center at Rafael Landivar University and two at ASECSA (The Association of Community Health Services). The reason for holding training sessions in the capital was as previously mentioned: conducting workshops that bring together leaders from different communities to discuss social issues is likely to be viewed as a security threat by the Guatemalan armed forces. Beyond this consideration, there are a number of advantages to having a residential conference facility that enables people from different communities and ethnic groups to come to live together for a period of 4 to 5 days and share their concerns in both formal and informal settings.

The sessions provide the opportunity for more systematic and intensive teaching and learning, for imparting knowledge and skills as well as for changing attitudes and behaviors. Approximately 45 women and men (women comprise between 90 and 95 percent of the participants) attend the workshops. They are selected by the members of the different community groups. Some

community representatives have attended as many as three of the workshops in Guatemala City.

The evaluator had an opportunity to view two 30 minute videotapes of the first Women's Leadership Seminar held at Rafael Landivar University. Notable aspects of the seminar were that indigenous and Ladino (mestizo) women and men, who normally would not interact in an intimate way, were working and living together as colleagues and socializing--dancing, playing basketball, sharing dormitory bunks, etc.; and, although the Ladino, and especially the urban, women were less inhibited verbally--to the point of often dominating discussions--their attitudes were no more progressive.

Through a variety of educational methods--role playing, simulation games, puppetry, interpretation of photographs and drawings--PEP/Guatemala has been able to raise a number of issues and facilitate exploration of resources and possible approaches to resolving social problems. Indeed, many of the techniques are well adapted to illiterate participants, in a country where over two-thirds of the adult population cannot read and write. While consciousness-raising was occurring, it was also evident from one episode--women arranging drawings concerning a man and woman meeting, marrying, raising a family, and the man becoming an alcoholic and ending up in bed in need of medical attention--that many traditional and fatalistic attitudes towards the women's family role remain very strong. Virtually all the subgroups that were formed to arrange the pictures and enact the story told by them reached the conclusion that although the man was an alcoholic and had caused problems, it was the role of the woman to forgive the man's transgressions and work to strengthen family unity. The project staff was disappointed with the results of the exercise and did some further probing and questioning of the women's conclusions in subsequent small group discussions. However, the episode does point out that week-long workshops, even multiple workshops, are only the beginning of a long-term process of attitudinal and behavioral change in the direction of greater equality of the sexes and towards a less fatalistic approach to life circumstances.

## ITINERARY

ITINERARY OF ROBERT F. ARNOVE

- 5/19 Indianapolis to Washington, D.C.  
 Morning - Meet with Allen Eisenrath and Mahlon Barash of Management Systems International.  
 Afternoon - Meet with Margaret Schuler and Marcy Fink for OEF-International and Roma Knes of USAID
- 6/20 Morning - Meet with Marge Schuler and Marcy Fink of OEF-International  
 Afternoon and Evening - Travel from Washington, D.C. to Miami, to San Jose, Costa Rica
- 6/21 All day meeting with PEP/Costa Rica staff
- 6/22 Morning - Meet with PEP/Costa Rica staff and review three promotional videos on PEP  
 Afternoon and Evening - Visit Cameron and Atlantic Region/Jimenez projects
- 6/23 Morning - Visit USAID, meet with Flora Ruiz and John W. Jones of the General Development Division
- 6/24 Morning - Visit Escazu reforestation project  
 Afternoon - Visit with Jorge Wertheim, Director of External Relations of OAS/IICA and Miriam Abramovey, UNICEF Consultant
- 6/25 Waited eight hours at San Jose for LACSA flight to Tegucigalpa, then, changed travel arrangements
- 6/26 Morning - Flight to Tegucigalpa, Honduras  
 Mid-morning through mid-afternoon - Meet with PEP/Honduras staff  
 Late Afternoon - Visit USAID, meet with Robert Murphy, Special Projects Officer
- 6/27 All day trip to PEP and UNICEF projects in the region of Choluteca
- 6/29 All day trip to PEP and PRGD projects in the region of Nuevo Progreso

65

6/29 Morning - Meet with PEP/Honduras staff, review documents  
Afternoon - Visit Urgan project in Israel Norte

6/30 Morning - Meet with PEP/Honduras staff  
Early Afternoon - Review internal reports  
Late Afternoon - Flight to Guatemala City, Guatemala  
Evening - Meet with Country Coordinator

7/1 Morning - Meet with PEP/Guatemala staff  
Afternoon - Travel to Chichicastenango

7/2 All day trip to visit projects in Canoas, Quixaya, Tomas Kavanaugh, and Rio Bravo

7/3 Morning - Meet with PEP/Guatemala staff and Marco Augusto Azurdia of the Center for the Formation of Social Promoters (CAPS) of Rafael Landiver University  
Afternoon - Visit to barrio San Antonio and review videos of first PEO-organized women's leadership training workshop and promotional video of PEP/Guatemala

7/4 Return flight Guatemala City, Miami, Indianapolis



## COMO FORMAR UN COMITE ECOLOGICO

Por medio de la  
organización de un Taller

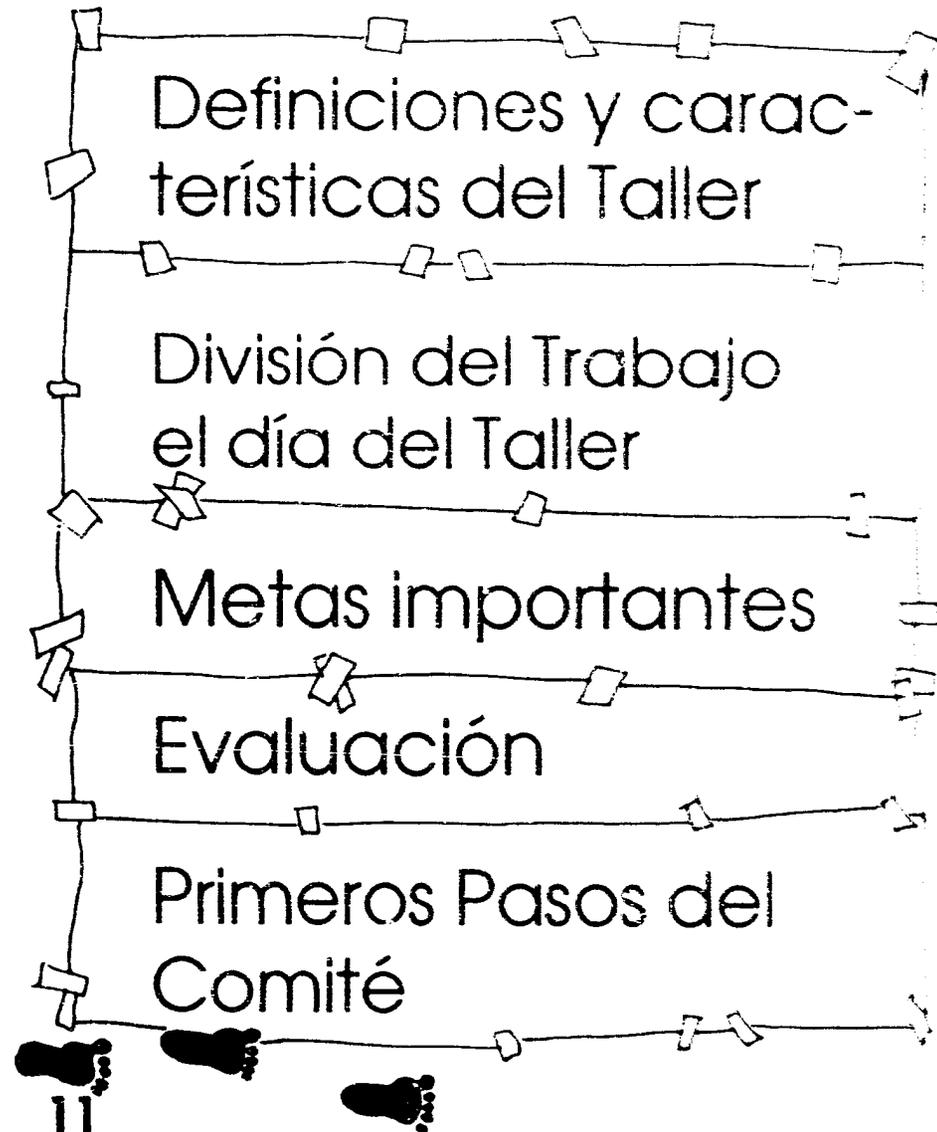
Preparado por:

- \* Asociación para la Defensa de los Recursos Naturales y el Medio Ambiente (CODECE)
- \* Programa Educación para la Participación (PEP) de OEF Internacional

1988



## *Pasos a Seguir*



# El Niño El Agua El Bosque

COLOREA  
Y APRENDE





- También puedes decirle a la maestra que hagan una excursión a la montaña y lleven arbolitos a sembrar en las partes más deforestadas: las laderas que bordean el cauce de los ríos.

; ¡Qué montón de cosas podemos hacer los niños. Mañana les contaré a todos en mi clase. Seguro que a todos les va a gustar mucho y van a querer sembrar muchos arbolitos!

# Informaciones para pobladores y sus comunidades



**OEF**  **INTERNATIONAL**

PROGRAMA DE EDUCACION PARA LA PARTICIPACION

Ba. La Guadalupe, Calzada la Virtud, Casa No. 120.

Tel. 31-11 23

## INDICE

	Pág.
INTRODUCCION	
DOCUMENTOS PERSONALES .....	1-19
SERVICIOS GENERALES .....	20-32
INFORMACION ADICIONAL .....	33-34
QUE ES O.E.F. INTERNATIONAL .....	35

### DERECHOS RESERVADOS

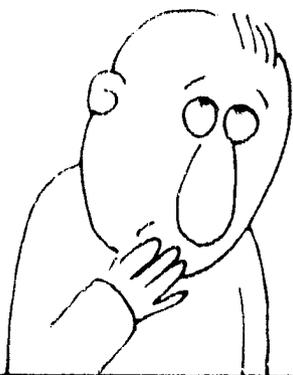
Textos: Lourdes Reyes  
Narda Meléndez

Caricaturas: Dagoberto Posadas

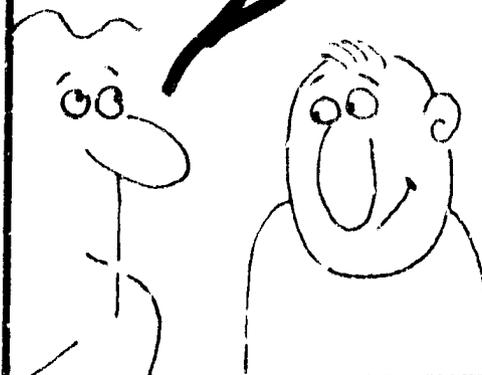
Colaboradores: Aminta Navarro  
Aminta Ferrufino  
Carmen de López

Colaboración Especial: Ricardo Puerta

PARA REALIZAR ESTOS TRAMITES  
NECESITA LOS SERVICIOS DE UN  
ABOGADO



AHORA VOY A EXPLICARLE QUE TIENE  
QUE HACER PARA SOLICITAR SU  
TARJETA DE IDENTIDAD, ESTE ES  
UN DOCUMENTO QUE, SIRVE PARA  
IDENTIFICARSE O SEA PARA QUE  
USTED HAGA CONSTAR, QUE REALMENTE  
ES QUIEN DICE SER



TODA PERSONA QUE CUMPLE  
LOS 18 AÑOS DEBE TENER SU  
TARJETA DE IDENTIDAD, PARA  
SOLICITARLA DEBE HACER LO  
SIGUIENTE:



SI ES POR PRIMERA VEZ QUE  
LA SOLICITA

- DEBE PRESENTARSE A LA VENTANILLA  
CORRESPONDIENTE, PERSONALMENTE,  
Y LLEVAR UNA PARTIDA DE NACIMIENTO  
ORIGINAL QUE LE DAN EN EL REGISTRO.  
RECUERDE QUE NO SE ACEPTAN FOTOCOPIAS.

- LLEVAR TRES FOTOGRAFIAS TAMAÑO  
CARNET, ESTAS FOTOGRAFIAS DEBEN  
DE SER TOMADAS DE FRENTE.

EN ESTA VENTANILLA LE HACEN PREGUNTAS  
SOBRE SU PERSONA Y LE TOMAN LAS  
HUELLAS DACTILARES O SEA LAS HUELLAS  
DE LOS DEDOS DE LAS MANOS, LUEGO  
LE DAN UNA CONTRASEÑA COLOR AMARI-  
LLO QUE LE SERVIRA, PARA QUE DENTRO  
DE 2 O 3 MESES REGRESE A RECLA-  
MAR SU TARJETA DE IDENTIDAD



**Aprendiendo**

**a**



**elaborar un  
PLAN DE TRABAJO**

ELABORADO POR:  
ROSA AMINTA FERRUFINO )  
ABRIL DE 1988

COLABORADORAS

MARY MORA

RUBI FLORES

ABINTA NAVARRO

MARDA MELENDEZ

CARMEN M. ESCOBAR

COLABORACION ESPECIAL

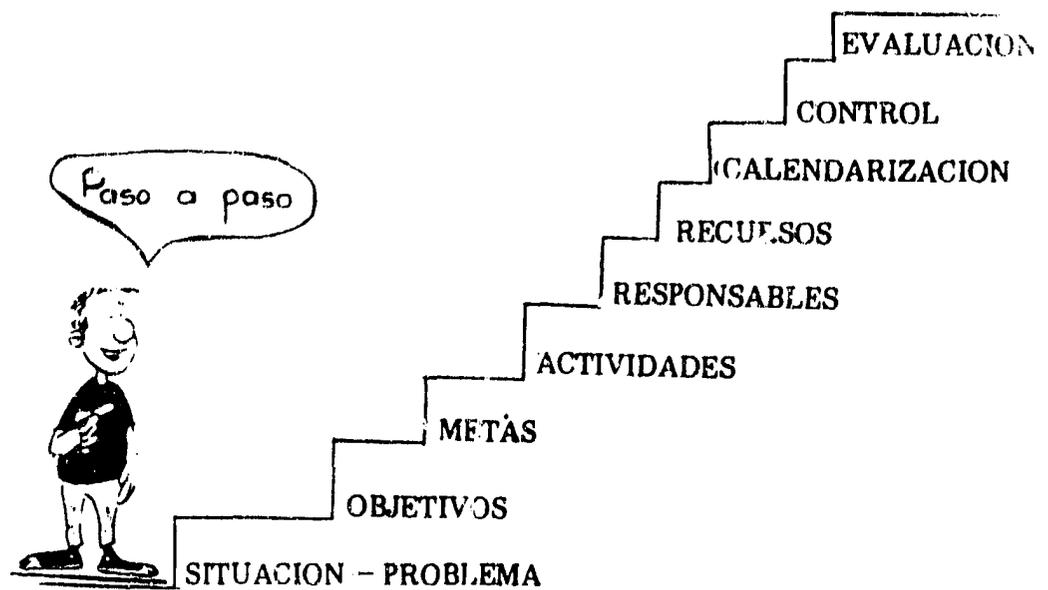
MARCELA JARA

**OEE**  **INTERNATIONAL**

Programa de Educacion para la Participacion P. E. P.  
Barrio La Guadalupe, Calzada La Virtud, casa No. 120  
al frente de Reposteria Suiza, Tegucigalpa, D. C.  
Telefono 36-1123

74-

Un PLAN DE TRABAJO deberá de llevar por lo menos, los siguientes pasos:



¡ Puestos estos pasos de otra forma, quedarían así:

QUE VAMOS HACER (OBJETIVOS)	PORQUE SE VA HACER	CON QUIENES (ACTIVIDAD)	CON QUE MEDIOS (RECURSOS)	CUANDO (CALENDARIZACION)

**OVERVIEW: PUBLICATION OF THE "PROGRAMA DE EDUCACION  
PARA LA PARTICIPACION"**

**TITLE:** To be determined.

**LENGTH:** Approximately 150 pages.

**CONTENT:** Each chapter covers a specific phase or dimension of education for participation at the community level.

**INTRODUCTION** (covers framework, methodology, and purpose of the book)

**CHAPTER 1: ASSESSING COMMUNITY NEEDS**

**CHAPTER 2: STRENGTHENING THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL IDENTITY OF THE COMMUNITY**

**CHAPTER 3: WOMEN'S ROLE AND PARTICIPATION**

**CHAPTER 4: STRENGTHENING LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:**

- DIAGNOSING ORGANIZATIONAL AND TRAINING NEEDS
- DEVELOPING DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP
- PARTICIPATION AND COOPERATION

**CHAPTER 5: ORGANIZING FOR ACTION**

- DEVELOPING A STRATEGY
- PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

**CHAPTER 6: CLAIMING YOUR RIGHTS**

- HOW TO INFLUENCE SOCIAL/GOVERNMENTAL POLICY
- DEMYSTIFYING THE SYSTEM  
(legal rights, social, economic and political institutions)
- ANALYZING THE LOCAL AND NATIONAL CONTEXT

**CHAPTER 7: DISSEMINATING INFORMATION: POPULAR COMMUNICATION AND USING THE MASS MEDIA**

**CHAPTER 8: PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION**

**FORMAT:** The book will have an easy-to-use format, with graphics and photographs. Each chapter will contain:

- A. Definition of the phase or dimension to be covered, eg. participatory evaluation, assessing community needs, etc.
- B. Why it is important to the full process of community participation.
- C. The steps or processes it entails.
- D. Case Study(s) from PEP, WLD or other projects which give specific contextual examples of its application.
- E. Exercises and instruments that can be used in its application.

**AUDIENCE:**

- \*\* National nongovernmental organizations (ngos) and churches of Latin America and the Caribbean
- \*\* U.S. ngos who have Third World community projects
- \*\* Trainers
- \*\* Community leaders and organizers
- \*\* Popular education organizations
- \*\* Women's groups

**LANGUAGE:** The book will initially be published in Spanish, with an English version planned for early 1990. The language used will be simple and direct, making it accessible to a range of users.

**TIMING:** Draft manuscript ready: August 1989  
Design and layout: August/September 1989  
Printing: November 1989

**NUMBER OF COPIES:**

Spanish edition: 2000  
English: 2000

## Checklist of Ideal Project Characteristics

### Project

Characteristic

#### **Consciousness-Raising**

Individual Level

Group level

#### **Skills Development**

Problem Identification

Planning

Organizing

#### **Collective/Political**

Local

Regional

National

#### **Collective/Economic**

Income Generating

Employment

Appropriate Technology

#### **Collective/Cultural**

Links Communities

Links Institutions

fb

Government

NGO

**Cuts Across Classes**

**Joins Women's Issues**

to larger Social Issues

**Composition**

Female only

Male and Female

**Includes Mass Media**

**Includes Multiplier Effect**

CUADRO 2

CONTENIDOS DE LA CAPACITACION POR ACTIVIDAD SEGUN PROYECTO  
 TODOS LOS PAISES  
 ABRI JUNIO 1988

ACTIVIDAD	COSTA RICA		GUATEMALA		HONDURAS	
	PROYECTO	CONTENIDOS	PROYECTO	CONTENIDOS	PROYECTO	CONTENIDOS
3. Talleres	PSP	- Asp. organiz. - Diagnóstico - Proc. judic. - Programación	Las Cañas	- Análisis socio-econ. de la comunidad - Elaboración de una propuesta - Objetivos del proy. - Elab. solicitud finan. - Elab. de un proyecto - Un día en la vida de la mujer - Valoración del trabajo de la mujer - Integración del grupo	Choluteca	- Definición de proble. - Definición de tipo de capacitación - Definición objetivos - Políticas de Anál. - Estrategias de tra- bajo con grupo - Evaluación a través de la ante - Objetivos y funciona- miento de la empresa
	Mujeres	-				
	Finca	- Evaluación proc. de capacitación - Det. problemas comu- nales - Técnicas participa- tivas				
	CODECE	- Técnicas participativas	Quixayá	- Relaciones humanas - Intercambio de exper. entre mujeres Las Cañas/ Quixayá - Conociendo nuestra Comun. antes y después y promovi- do sus mejoras	Progreso	- Salud comunitaria - Nuestro país - Evaluación a objetos - Planificación - Técnicas de grupo - Situación de la mujer - Importancia de la orga- nización
	DCA	- Evaluación - Problemática ecológica - Códigos problematizados				
	VOCERO	- Evaluación				
			San Andres	-		
			Rfo Bravo	- Problematicación de la rea- lidad comunitaria - Desvalorización del trabajo de la mujer - Realidad nacional - Realidad comunal		
			La Cumbre	-		
			Barrio Sn. Antonio	- Identificación de necesidades - Conociendo nuestra comunidad - Identificación de problemas		

20