

PD-AR-781 0127 D

A.I.D. EVALUATION SUMMARY - PART I

1. BEFORE FILING OUT THIS FORM, READ THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS.
 2. USE LETTER QUALITY TYPE, NOT "DOT MATRIX" TYPE.

IDENTIFICATION DATA

A. Reporting A.I.D. Unit: Mission or AID/W Office (ES# _____) <u>REDSO/ESA</u>	B. Was Evaluation Scheduled in Current FY Annual Evaluation Plan? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Slipped <input type="checkbox"/> Ad Hoc <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Plan Submission Date: FY ____ Q ____	C. Evaluation Timing Interim <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Ex Post <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>
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D. Activity or Activities Evaluated (List the following information for project(s) or program(s) evaluated; if not applicable, list title and date of the evaluation report.)

Project No.	Project /Program Title	First PROAG or Equivalent (FY)	Most Recent PACD (Mo/Yr)	Planned LOP Cost (000)	Amount Obligated to Date (000)
698-0435.07	East and Southern Africa Root Crops Research Network (ESARRN)	1987	3/90	\$943	\$943

ACTIONS

E. Action Decisions Approved By Mission or AID/W Office Director	Name of Officer Responsible for Action	Date Action to be Completed
Action(s) Required		
<p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u> -There are 20 specific recommendations of which major ones are enumerated here:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> IITA should prepare a revised annual workplan/budget and remaining LOP strategy and budget to determine funding requirements for on-going activities and availability of funding for expanded activity. Funds permitting, IITA should consider hiring an additional scientist with a background in extension and agronomy to join the coordinator's office. With the recent transfer of the mandate for sweet potato research to CIP, efforts should commence to integrate CIP support for sweet potato research into ESARRN. The coordinator should work with the ESARRN Steering Committee to develop comprehensive Terms of Reference and Operational Guidelines for Steering Committee operations. Subject to availability of project funding, IITA should submit a request for a no-cost PACD extension. 		
	IITA	4/89
	IITA	9/89
	IITA and CIP	6/89
	ESARRN Coord. and Str. Commit.	9/89
	IITA/REDSO	12/89

(Attach extra sheet if necessary)

APPROVALS

F. Date Of Mission Or AID/W Office Review Of Evaluation: _____ (Month) _____ (Day) _____ (Year)

G. Approvals of Evaluation Summary And Action Decisions:

	Project/Program Officer	Representative of Borrower/Grantee	Evaluation Officer	Mission or AID/W Office Director
Name (Typed)	R.E. MCCOLAUGH	M.N. ALVAREZ	MONICA K. SINDING	SATISH, P. SHAH
Signature	<i>[Signature]</i>	SEE ATTACHMENT	<i>[Signature]</i>	
Date	1/12/89		5/12/89	

ACTIONS (Continued)

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| 6. IITA should initiate the collection of baseline data on root crop production in the region. | IITA | 12/89 |
| 7. Economic and sociological studies should be included as part of the research effort on root crops production. | IITA | 3/90 |
| 8. B.Sc. degree training for diploma level root crop researchers should be supported by the project in addition to M.Sc. level training. | IITA | 3/90 |
| 9. Increase the training opportunities for national program staff in rapid multiplication techniques. | IITA | 3/90 |
| 10. Increase the use of IITA staff for short-term training, educational materials development and consulting. | IITA | 3/90 |
| 11. Increase the flow of new genetic material into the region for both cassava and sweet potato. | IITA/CIP | 3/90 |
| 12. IITA should assist NARS to develop improved extension and technology transfer systems at the national level that would contribute to increased farmer adoption of improved techniques. | IITA and NARS | 3/90 |
| 13. Project activity in support of post-harvest technology development should be expanded. Increased emphasis should be directed toward rural processing and storage of rootcrops. | IITA | 3/90 |
| 14. National governments should be encouraged to increase allocation of national resources for root crops research. | ESARRN and NARS | 3/90 |

ABSTRACT

H. Evaluation Abstract (Do not exceed the space provided)

The goal of the project is to increase root crop production and productivity in East and Southern Africa. ESARRN, a network of 11 national root crop research programs receiving technical support from IITA, serves primarily as a training and technical assistance mechanism to support root crop development. This project is being implemented by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and receives funding from IITA, AID, and the International Development Research Center (IDRC). The evaluation was conducted jointly by a team from IITA, USAID/REDSO/ESA, and IDRC. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the current status of the project relative to stated project activity in the grant agreement and to make recommendations relative to changes in project focus, management practices, and implementation procedures. The project has five specific objectives:

- o Encourage rigorous collaborative planning and evaluation of root crop research. ✓
- o Increase the useful genetic base for principal root crops and enhance its utilization in the root and tuber improvement programs in the region;
- o Improve root crop based farming systems through surveys, design, and methodology development;
- o Improved techniques for drying, processing, and utilizing cassava in rural areas;
- o Foster the establishment of effective systems for delivery of improved technology to farmers through institutional and human resource development.

ESARRN has initiated activities in seven areas which contribute to the goal, purpose and outputs of the project. These are (1) collaborative planning and evaluation of root crop research; (2) in-service and formal training; (3) development of training materials; (4) publication and dissemination of technical information; (5) technical assistance for improved root crop research; (6) exchange of improved genetic materials among national programs; and (7) provision of technical equipment and acquisition of network research and office facilities.

The project was slower than anticipated in starting due to protracted negotiations required to secure approval for ESARRN to locate in Lilongwe, but significant progress has been made in all project sub-activity. Increasing small-holder agricultural production is supportive of AID's agricultural strategy for East and Southern Africa and other USAID commodity research efforts in the region. The co-funded collaborative network approach was seen to be a cost effective means of in-service training and fostering cross border cooperation between national research programs. Some activity levels have changed from the original proposal, however, this was to be expected since a regional network must be able to respond to different initiatives and resource levels of its collaborators.

Major recommendations were: (1) development of a network baseline and benchmark data series to assist with evaluation of the present project and for guidance in design of follow-on activity; (2) conditional upon funding being available a second scientist should be added to the core ESARRN staff; and, (3) IITA invest more time of their headquarter's scientists and in the development of educational materials.

COSTS

I. Evaluation Costs

1. Evaluation Team		Contract Number OR TDY Person Days	Contract Cost OR TDY Cost (U.S. \$)	Source of Funds
Name	Affiliation			
Dr. Theodore Ferguson	Consultant	25	\$9,410	ESARRN
Mr. Andrew Ker	IDRC	20	n.a.	IDRC
Dr. Andrew Uriyo	IITA	25	n.a.	IITA
Mr. Gregg Wiitala	REDSO/ESA	25	n.a.	AID
Dr. K.B. Paul	REDSO/ESA	25	n.a.	AID
2. Mission/Office Professional Staff Person-Days (Estimate) _____		50	3. Borrower/Grantee Professional Staff Person-Days (Estimate) _____	
			25	

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A.I.D. EVALUATION SUMMARY - PART II

SUMMARY

J. Summary of Evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations (Try not to exceed the three (3) pages provided)

Address the following items:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose of evaluation and methodology used • Purpose of activity(ies) evaluated • Findings and conclusions (relate to questions) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal recommendations • Lessons learned |
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Mission or Office: REDSO/ESA	Date This Summary Prepared: February 28, 1989	Title And Date Of Full Evaluation Report: East and Southern Africa Root Crops Research Network Project Interim Evaluation - Dec.1988
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PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY - IITA has actively encouraged the development of national root crops research programs in Africa recognizing that root crops are a major food crop in many countries. However root crops were generally accorded low priority and a relatively small number of scientist work in this field. Interest in production was largely confined to small farmers who produced for direct consumption. By 1985 the heads of root crop research programs in the region reached the consensus that their interests would be better served through regional collaboration. IITA provided initial support and approached AID and IDRC for funding to support a regional root crops research network. IDRC approved a grant of \$379,000, AID provided \$943,000, and IITA contributed an additional \$237,000 bring total project funding to \$1,559,000 for a three year project ending March, 1990. The goal of the project is to increase root crop production and productivity in East and Southern Africa. The specific purpose of the project is to establish a root crop research network to foster cooperation and sharing of information and genetic materials among national agricultural research systems, to support and train scientist in participating countries, and to strengthen national root crop programs. The specific objectives of the project include the following: (1) encourage rigorous collaborative planning and evaluation of root crop research in the region; (2) increase the useful genetic base for principal root crops and enhance its utilization in the root and tuber improvement programs in the region; (3) improve root crop based farming systems through surveys, design, and methodology development; (4) develop improved techniques for drying, processing, and utilizing cassava in rural areas; and (5) foster the establishment of effective systems for delivery of improved technology to farmers through institutional and human resource development.

Primary project activities consist of the following: (1) establishment of a regional network for scientists working on root crops in East and Southern Africa; (2) short-, medium-, and long-term training; (3) development of training materials; (4) publication and dissemination of technical information; (5) technical assistance for improved root crop research; (6) exchange of improved genetic materials among national programs; and (7) provision of technical equipment and acquisition of research and office facilities. ESARRN, with its focus on collaborative research and training in support of improved root crop productivity for small holder agricultural production, is supportive of AID's agricultural strategy for East and Southern Africa and other USAID commodity research efforts in the region. Bilateral USAID missions have expressed support for the regional collaborative approach of ESARRN which would be difficult to accomplish on a bilateral basis. ESARRN's role, as the primary training and networking mechanism in support of root crops development, continues to promote root crops as important food crops in national agricultural research programs.

In terms of project activities, there have been some changes in levels of activity from the original proposal, however, this was expected from a regional project that must respond to initiatives from national programs. ESARRN's bilingual staff have been able to work effectively in all ESARRN member countries. ESARRN member countries currently consist of Rwanda, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania, Sudan, Kenya, Zambia, Mozambique, Burundi, Ethiopia, and Madagascar. Membership is open to other interested countries in the region.

The coordinator's office is located in Lilongwe, Malawi and IITA headquarters in Ibadan, Nigeria, provides administrative and technical backstopping for the project.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION - The project evaluation plan called for a mid-term evaluation to assess the progress of the Project in achieving project objectives. The evaluation team was asked to assess project implementation to date with a view to enhancing performance and potential impact. In particular, USAID is concerned with the low level of funds drawdown and if project objectives are being adequately addressed. The evaluation report presents findings, conclusions and recommendations which will assist USAID, IDRC, IITA and the Steering Committee to make decisions about the future of the project. The evaluation took place between November 27 and December 21, 1988. The evaluation team consisted of representatives from USAID, IDRC, IITA, and an independent consultant who served as the teams technical leader. The Statement of Work (SOW) for the evaluation is attached as an annex. The team visited national programs in four countries (Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, and Kenya). Field visits to on-station and on-farm research trials were made in each country visited. Project files in REDSO/ESA and ESARRN coordinator's office were reviewed. The team held interviews with IITA headquarter staff, leaders of national root crop programs, host government representatives, and USAID mission personnel in countries visited. A meeting was also held with the Steering Committee concerning project implementation issues and the evaluation recommendations. Financial records and reports in the coordinator's office and REDSO/ESA were also reviewed.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS - The interim evaluation of the IITA ESARRN project concluded that, notwithstanding the slow start-up, the grant was being well implemented and that significant progress was being made with training, genetic material distribution, and strengthening of national programs. Major Findings and Conclusions are as follows:

1. There is inadequate baseline data on root crops to make a quantitative assessment of project accomplishments.
2. Although the project started more slowly than anticipated, the desired outputs of this first project can still be achieved by PACD.
3. The periodic joint review by donors has helped clarify responsibilities and improved coordination.
4. The collaborative networking approach was found to be cost effective and implementation problems encountered in one country did not adversely affect overall operation of the network relative to project activities in other countries.
5. REDSO/ESA is the appropriate AID office for project management and technical supervision. Management by a bilateral mission would be disjointed and difficult because of the large number of countries involved. AID/W is too distant to respond to project needs in a timely manner.
6. The professional staff of ESARRN needs to be expanded to cope with demand for services from national programs.
7. The final evaluation of research is farmer adoption. At present, technology transfer and extension services need to be strengthened as linkages between research/extension/farmers are generally weak.
8. Inadequate funding for the expansion and improvement of root crop research programs at the national level is a major constraint to achieving ESARRN's objectives of (1) technical training in root crops research; (2) networking; and, (3) establishing sustainable national root crops research programs.
9. Available improved genetic material is not being adequately tested and distributed in all member countries.

Lessons Learned

Although the project is not completed and we anticipate the need for a follow-on grant to achieve all long-term objectives, some important design and implementation lessons can be drawn from the evaluation findings.

Project Design Implications

1. It is imperative that adequate, reliable baseline data be collected prior to embarking on a major research effort. The absence of this data inhibits meaningful evaluation efforts and impairs the ability of donors, host countries and IARCs to make informed judgements during project implementation.
2. Regional networks which can cut across nationalistic and linguistic barriers are an effective means to foster collaboration and cooperation among national programs. Network support of African scientists through workshops, publications, travel, mid-career and in-service training to maintain performance, competence and morale through regional programs is both operationally efficient and cost effective.

Broad Action Implications

A regional approach to support research efforts can only be effective if there is commitment at the NARs level to fully participate in the network. Furthermore, national governments must demonstrate their commitment by allocating sufficient resources to develop and maintain of national research programs. Any follow-on project activity will require careful analysis of the government capability and interest in sustaining network supported activities following project completion.

ATTACHMENTS

K. Attachments (List attachments submitted with this Evaluation Summary; always attach copy of full evaluation report, even if one was submitted earlier; attach studies, surveys, etc., from "on-going" evaluation, if relevant to the evaluation report.)

ESARRN Interim Evaluation Report

COMMENTS

L. Comments By Mission, AID/W Office and Borrower/Grantee On Full Report

REDSO/ESA finds the evaluation addressed the issues as presented in the SOW and is complete. AID agrees with the full set of recommendations and actions indicated, except in the case of a no additional cost PACD extension. We are uncertain at this time if an additional person can be added to the ESARRN staff and still have a sufficient budget residuals for an extension past the present PACD.

REDSO is concerned about NARs funding mechanisms, donor sources, and additional local resource allocations required during the remaining JOP, issues which must be treated by all parties as high priority.

The evaluation team is to be congratulated and the grantee commended for a successful initiation of this regional project.

IITA Remarks:

Robert McColaugh/J. P. Ekebil/IITA, Ibadan Telex dated March 21, 1989

Quote IITA fully agrees with all the recommendations except that we feel that the resources available are inadequate to carry out a baseline survey for root crops in the region. Preliminary analysis shows that the resources available are inadequate to employ a second scientist at no additional cost PACD extension. IITA is grateful to USAID and IDRC for financing the regional root crops network.

Please accept this telex as a signature for block G. End Quote.