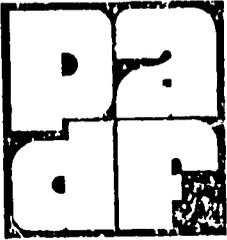


PD-ABC-078



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## Final Evaluation of the Belize Accelerated Cocoa Production Project

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## Table of Contents

	Page
I. Introduction and Historical Overview.....	1
II. Overall Goal Achievement.....	7
III. Project Success as seen by Participant Organizations...13	
A. Pan American Development Foundation (PADF).....	14
B. Farmers.....	15
C. Belize Ministry of Agriculture.....	16
D. Hershey Chocolate.....	17
E. United States Agency for International Development (USAID).....	18
F. Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA).....	19
G. Peace Corps Belize.....	20
H. Development Finance Corporation (DFC).....	21
IV. Lessons Learned.....	
A. Importance of Research Leading to Educational Material Development and Training as a Catalyst for Crop Development.....	24
B. Successful Community Development at Ringtail Village.....	28
C. Selection of Project Sites.....	31
D. Cooperation between Organizations.....	38
E. Other Areas Where Lessons Were Learned.....	41
V. The Role of the Continuous Evaluator.....	43
Diagram 1: Organizations Involved in Project.....	3
Chart 1: Cocoa Production Workshops Held.....	27
Appendix A: People Interviewed This Trip.	
Appendix B: Minister's Speech.	

## I. Introduction and Historical Overview

In the late summer and early fall of 1984 the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF), a private voluntary organization (PVO) with experience in development in Latin America, signed separate agreements with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Government of Belize to manage an experimental project to introduce commercial cocoa production to farmers of Belize. The project was called the Accelerated Cocoa Production Project. The production methods to be introduced in the project were primarily developed at a 1800 acre demonstration farm in Belize called the Hummingbird Hershey Farm Ltd., that is owned and operated by the Hershey Foods Corporation, with whom technical cooperation was also agreed. The signing of these agreements represented the cumulation of discussions started in 1981 by Glenn Trout, Hershey's Director of Agribusiness and Ed Marasciulo, Executive Vice President of PADF.

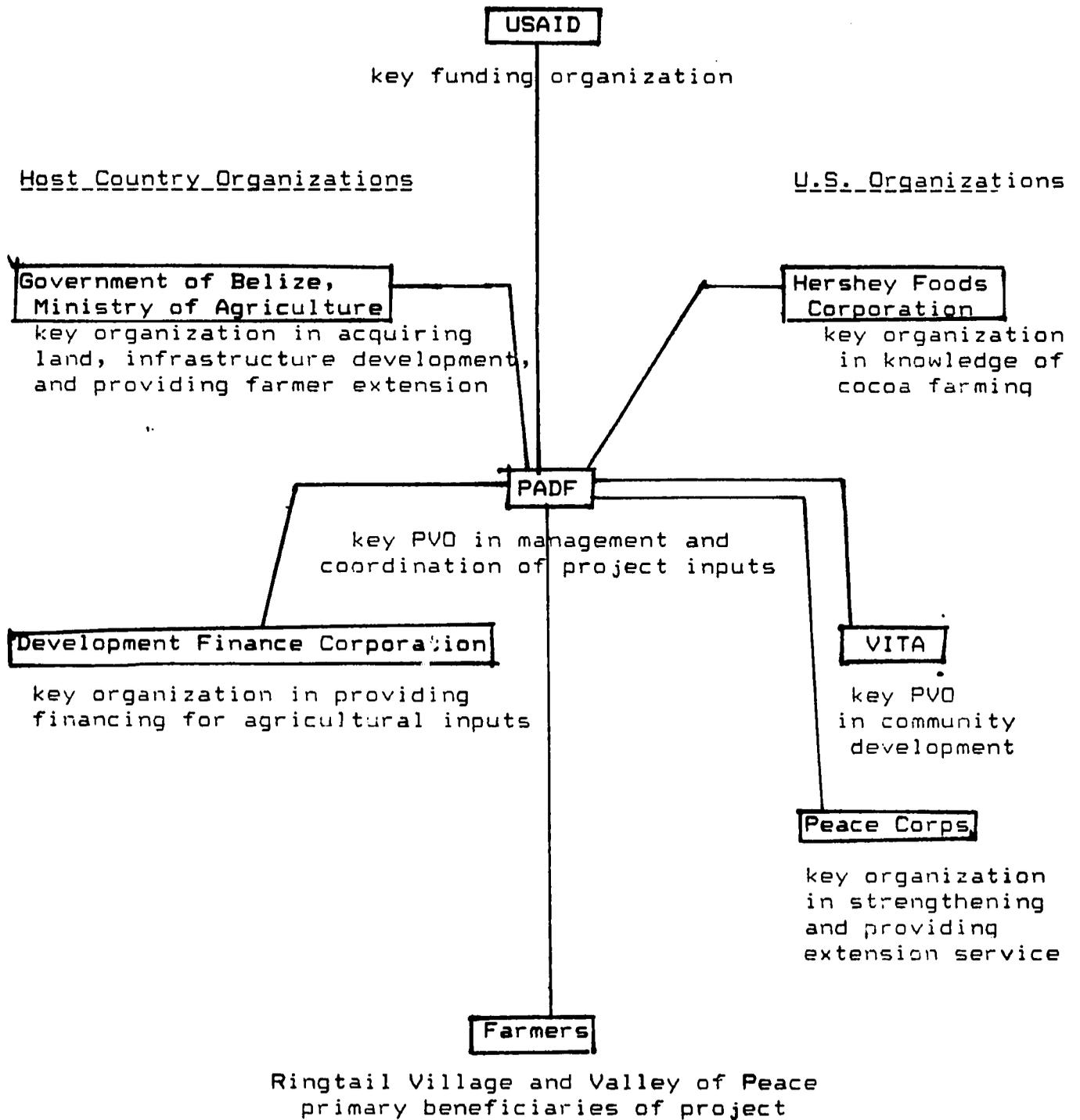
The experimental project called for the introduction of cocoa as a small farmer cash crop at two different sites. The first site consisted of 1000 acres of undeveloped jungle a few miles down the road from the Hummingbird Hershey farm. The site that became known as Ringtail Village, was settled by employees who worked and lived on the Hummingbird Hershey Farm.

Originally, each farmer was to receive 25 acres of land for development. Twenty five employees at the Hershey Hummingbird farm would be chosen by lottery to be part of the project. At the start of the project the land was owned by an expatriate businessman. It was the role of the Government of Belize to acquire the land and in turn sell it to the new settlers at attractive prices. In effect, Ringtail Village was a homestead project where the focus was to grow cocoa in order that farmers could obtain land and establish a home.

The second site was known as Valley of Peace. Valley of Peace is primarily a refugee settlement 15 miles northwest of Belmopan over small rural roads. Eighty-five percent of the population at Valley of Peace were refugees from El Salvador. The rest of the population was native Belizean. When the project started in the Valley of Peace, farmers were already settled in houses and farming 50 acre plots. Several development organizations, led by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, were already present at Valley of Peace. The focus of the project at Valley of Peace was to introduce cocoa as supplemental cash crop for farmers.

The project implementation plan included roles for eight groups or organizations (including the farmers as one group). These organizations are shown graphically in Diagram 1. PADF, graphically in the center of these groups, had the key role of

**Diagram 1  
Organizations Involved in Project**



coordinating and organizing the inputs of the other organizations in addition to providing technical expertise in agronomy. Chief responsibility for the coordination activities belonged to the PADF team leader in Belize, Mr. Jim Corvern.

Key partners in project implementation were the Government of Belize (GOB), Ministry of Agriculture and Hershey Foods Corporation. It was the main role of the GOB to acquire the land for the Ringtail Village site, to assist in infrastructure development at Ringtail Village, and to provide government extension officers to be trained in cocoa production technology and management. It was the role of Hershey Foods Corporation to provide access to knowledge of cocoa production and management that was being developed at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm and a market for all cocoa produced in Belize. In addition, both these partners provided a wide variety of other services throughout the life of the project as the needs arose.

The key funding organization was USAID, who provided a grant for approximately 39% of estimated total project costs. Original estimates of resource contributions to the project, both fiscal and labor, were as follows: USAID 39%, Government of Belize 20%, PADF/VITA 7%, Peace Corps 8%, Hershey Foods Corporation 3%, and the participant farmers 23%.

Other organizations in the project included Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA), a sub-grantee of PADF, Peace Corps,

and the Belizean Development Finance Corporation (DFC). It was the role of VITA to provide technical assistance in community development and institution building. This position was filled by Dr. Carolyn McCommon, who worked closely with the PADF team leader in Belize. It was the role of the Peace Corps to provide volunteers to assist in providing extension services to the farmers, to help with infrastructure development, and to help train government extension officers. Finally, it was the role of the Development Finance Corporation to provide to farmers at Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace loans for agricultural inputs. The farmers at Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace were intended to be the primary beneficiaries of the project.

Also, unique to this project was the addition of an outside consultant called a "continuous evaluator." His role was to assist the project in the following areas: coordination of project activities, identifying problems and blockages in project implementation, facilitating a problem-solving process, and assisting in identifying alternative plans or strategies for project implementation. This function was performed through consulting trips by Robert Gaarder, approximately every six months over the life of the project. Alternate visits (at end of 1st year, 2nd year, and 3rd year) coincided with a project retreat in which all organizations associated with the project met to discuss the current state of the project and determine project direction for the upcoming year.

What follows in this report is a general discussion of project achievements against the original project goals. This is followed by an assessment of the project from the perspective of each organization involved. The fourth section of the report discusses lessons learned, to provide insights that may be valuable in the adaptation and replication by similar projects. Finally, there is a discussion of the role played by the "continuous evaluator" to the project as seen by the project participants.

## II. OVERALL GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

The original project proposal called for development of two pilot sites where small farmers in Belize would apply the methods for growing cocoa originally developed at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm, modified by extension personnel associated with the project. As previously mentioned, these two sites are Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace. Specifically the original project paper stated that "At the end of the project the following are expected to be in place":

- 500 acres of cocoa planted.
- 50 small farmers fully trained in the improved technology production and process of cocoa.
- 6 GOB extension personnel trained in the techniques of transferring the new technology to additional farms in the country.
- 50 farm families fully developing the newly established cocoa farms, and located in new houses."1

The actual numbers achieved by the end of the project follow:

- 98 acres of cocoa planted (25 of which were destroyed by fire in May of 1987).
- 26 small farmers at Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace trained in cocoa management (12 of these 21 were at Valley of Peace, 10 of which discontinued growing cocoa after the May fires).
- 3 GOB extension agents trained.
- 5 GOB extension agents who have started training that will continue after the end of the project.
- 4 Farmers at Ringtail Village living in houses on their farms.
- 7 Farmers at Ringtail Village have started construction of their houses.  
Valley of Peace farmers already had housing at the start of the project.

At first glance one might conclude that the project was not very successful in achieving its goals. Yet almost without exception those people interviewed during the final evaluation felt the project was a success. USAID staff said that they consider this project "one of its success stories". In his opening remarks at the project's final retreat, the Minister of Agriculture for Belize stated that the end of the project signified "the culmination of a meaningful and successful joint venture" (Minister's complete speech in Appendix B). And, the Principal Agricultural Officer in charge of extension in Belize said that a direct result of this project is that the development of cooba has become the second most important priority in the country. Prior to this project it had no priority at all.

Why is it that, given the small numbers of beneficiaries and trained farmers the project is seen as being so successful? In order to fully understand the answer to this question, it is essential that we consider the expected outcomes of each of the original eight partners to the project separately. This is done at some length in the next section of this report. However, first some general observations about the achievement of the original goals are presented below.

## **Acreage Planted**

In retrospect, the goal of 500 acres of cocoa planted at Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace was far too ambitious. Cocoa is a very demanding crop in terms of labor required in the initial years, years during which there is virtually no income from the crop. All farmers involved in the project had to work other jobs to support their families while developing their cocoa farms. All farmers at the Ringtail Village site worked an eight hour day at the Hummingbird Hershey research farm. This left evenings and weekends for them to tend to their own cocoa farms. Similarly, all farmers at Valley of Peace had to work with other crops on their farms or as laborers on other farms before they could tend to the cocoa.

In addition to the heavy labor demands, there were problems with the suitability of the sites themselves. At the Ringtail Village, of the original 1000 acres preliminarily designated for use by the farmers, approximately 60% of the land proved unsuitable for cocoa production. There was only enough suitable land for 14 farmer plots (25 were originally called for). At Valley of Peace, there were many hindering factors that impeded cocoa production. So many in fact, that participants at the final project retreat concluded that Valley of Peace should not have been chosen as a site for this project. This is discussed at some length in section IV of this report "Lessons Learned".

It is therefore the opinion of the evaluator that 100 acres would have been a more realistic goal, not 500. If 100 acres were the original goal of this experimental project, 98% of the goal was accomplished. It is especially impressive to see 50 acres of cocoa thriving at the Ringtail Village site where three years ago there was nothing but dense jungle.

### **Farmers Trained**

The figure of 21 farmers trained is deceptive, because it only refers to the farmers trained at the Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace sites. In the past six months of the project, approximately 100 farmers from outside Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace were trained in a three series of workshops sponsored by the project. Farmers, extension officers, and representatives from non-government organizations have shown tremendous interest in these workshops. Attendance increased 100% from the first series of workshops to the third, rising from 50, to 71 in the second series, and finally to 96. Chart 1 on page 27 gives a detailed breakdown of farmers and extension officers trained in 1987.

The Principle Agriculture Officer (Extension) in the Ministry of Agriculture considers the project directly responsible for 400 hundred new acres of cocoa planted or rehabilitated in the Toledo District and 40 new acres in the Stann Creek District.

## **Extension Agents Trained**

Two problems occurred in relation to training extension agents. First, the Ministry of Agriculture was extremely "short handed" when it comes to extension officers. Second, for a long time there was a misunderstanding in the Ministry regarding expectations of the project for using extension officers. For a long time the Ministry thought the project would require six extension agents working full time with the project. This was viewed as impossible, as it would represent allocating more than 1/3 of the entire extension force to the project.

However, the Ministry believes that three extension officers are now adequately trained in cocoa production and management as a result of the workshops provided by the project and additional training received at the Hershey Hummingbird farm. In addition, the Ministry sent 5 newly hired extension officers to the final cocoa production and management training program conducted by the project at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm in October of 1987.

## **Housing**

The development of farmer housing in this project should be considered a success. At the Valley of Peace it was never within the scope of the project to develop housing, farmers already were housed, by the United Nations Refugee Program.

At Ringtail Village, it is possible that eleven of the 14 cocoa farmers there could be living in their own homes on their Ringtail farms by the end of the year. This surpasses everyones expectations. The Cooperative Housing Foundation deserves a lot of credit for this achievement. They continue to be active at Ringtail Village in assisting with housing being built and with home lending programs. In addition, a community center has been completed and a road has been constructed accessing all farms in the Ringtail Village.

### III. Project Success as seen by Participant Organizations

To better understand how each of the original eight organizations in the partnership viewed the success of the project, I asked key individuals in each organization three questions:

- What were the outcomes sought by your organization through this project?;
- In your eyes, what is the greatest achievement of the project?
- What was the greatest disappointment or problem in the project?

These questions were asked at the final project retreat and in individual interviews. The most frequently mentioned accomplishments were the following:

- Evidence of profitable small farmer development of a cocoa crop at Ringtail Village.
- The successful establishment of a new community, Ringtail Village.
- The development of quality cocoa farm management materials utilizing the knowledge gained from the project on growing cocoa. This includes a package for training extension officers.
- The development of a credit union that is utilized by farmers at Ringtail Village.

The most frequently mentioned disappointments were:

- o The lack of government involvement in the project especially in making government extension officers available for training.
- o The numerous problems encountered at Valley of Peace, culminating in very little cocoa development there.
- o The unsuitability of the majority of the land for agricultural usage at the Ringtail Village site.
- o The fact that farmers at both Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace still do not have clear titles to their land.

In the next section, "Lessons Learned", these key accomplishments and disappointments are analyzed in some detail. A summary of the perceptions of project accomplishments and disappointments by each participating organization is presented below.

### **Summary of Project Accomplishments and Disappointments by Organization**

#### **A.PADF, project manager and coordinator**

##### **Outcomes sought**

- o To develop a private sector/Private Voluntary Organization (PVO) model for appropriate and effective development of cocoa production by farmers of Belize.
- o To establish an interorganizational legacy (network) to continue development of cocoa in Belize.
- To improve the quality of life of project participants (farmers).

##### **Biggest Achievement**

- o The incorporation of new and existing organizations into the project when needs for these organizations were identified. Examples include the creation of the Belize Credit Union as a source of farmer loans and the Cooperative Housing Foundation to provide technical assistance in building houses.

**Other Achievements:**

- o Practical experience with a PVO/private sector model for development that could be applied to other projects in Belize or in other countries.

- o A village, Ringtail, was established within the tropical forest and it has the capability to continue to support cocoa production.

**Biggest Disappointment**

- o The unsatisfactory development of cocoa farming at Valley of Peace and all the problems associated with that site.

**Other Disappointments**

- o Project time constraints (3 years) restricted the quality and quantity of refining what we have learned from the experience of working with a long term crop like cocoa. Harvests from new planting will begin after the end of the project.

- o Unsatisfactory development of government linkages and support from other involved Belizean organizations.

- o The amount of unsuitable land at the Ringtail Village site that restricted project size and the fact that the farmers still do not have titles to their land.

**B. Farmers, project target group**

**Outcomes sought**

- o Two acres of cocoa planted per year, 10 acres total (5 yrs.)

- o Other crops planted for diversification, i.e. citrus

- o Establishment of a village (Ringtail)

**Biggest Achievement**

- o Ringtail Village. Approximately 33% of the goal for cocoa to be in the ground in five years is planted. (50 acres among 14 farmers dedicated to continuing cultivation).

- o Valley of Peace. Two farmers have five acres between them of planted cocoa and are dedicated to continue as cocoa farmers.

**Other Achievements**

- o At Ringtail Village. Nine acres of citrus established and seedlings to plant another 15 acres started. Other cash intercrops planted.

- o At Ringtail Village. The community center is completed. Three families are now living in their own homes, and construction for four additional homes has been started. A road for the village is in place.

- o At Ringtail Village. A credit union has been established and is functioning to provide farmers with an additional loan source.

### **Biggest Disappointment**

- o Valley of Peace. Uncontrolled fires in May of 1987 destroyed all but two cocoa farms in the project in the Valley of Peace. Farmers whose crops were destroyed by fire do not intend to plant more cocoa.

- o Ringtail Village. Uncontrolled fires that destroyed nine acres of cocoa in May. Unlike Valley of Peace, the fires have not discouraged Ringtail Village farmers to stop growing cocoa.

### **Other Disappointments**

- o Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace. Still no official land tenure.

- o Ringtail Village. Unsuitability of much of the land for growing cocoa.

- o Valley of Peace. Difficulty in obtaining loans early in the project.

- o Valley of Peace. Nutrient deficiencies in some of the soil.

- o Valley of Peace and Ringtail Village. The failure to meet predetermined project schedules for planting acres of cocoa due to the extraordinary amount of work required to grow the crop.

### **C. Belize Ministry of Agriculture, key partner land, infrastructure, and extension.**

#### **Outcomes Sought**

- o Introduction of cocoa as a new crop to increase agricultural diversification among small farmers.

- o Increased acreage of Cocoa in country.

- o Improved small farmer cocoa cultivation practices.

- o Establishment of National Cocoa Growers Association.

- o Trained extension officers in cocoa cultivation.

#### **Biggest Achievement**

- o This project has been a catalyst in getting other farmers in the country started in growing cocoa. The Ministry directly attributed this project in stimulating the planting of 400 new acres of cocoa in the Toledo District and 40 in two villages in the Stan Creek District.

#### **Other Achievements**

- o Three extension officers have trained in cocoa farming

- o Farmers with no previous experience in growing cocoa at Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace have successfully established cocoa acreage.

- o Toledo farmers who were growing cocoa now have greater yields due to improved cocoa management practices learned in this project.

- o Two cocoa associations have been established in Belize. The Toledo association has 98 members.

**Biggest Disappointment**

o Ringtail Village. A pre-project soil survey was not done and as a result much of the land is not suitable for planting cocoa.

**Other Disappointments**

o Valley of Peace. Low involvement of farmers.  
o Project tried to do too much and was too complex. It should have stayed focused on cocoa.

**D. Hershey Foods Corporation, key partner technology and research**

**Outcomes sought**

o Promote cocoa production in Central America and the Caribbean.  
o Reduce dependency on Hershey of employees at the Hummingbird Hershey research farm in Belize.  
o Establish a more permanent and experienced cocoa production work force close to the Hummingbird Hershey research farm that can be utilized by Hershey when needed.

**Biggest Achievement**

o The actual creation of a community, Ringtail Village, where 14 employees of Hummingbird Hershey's research farm will be living and managing their own cocoa farms.

**Other Achievements**

o The "seeds have been planted" for the expansion of cocoa production in Central America and the Caribbean, even though the actual benefit in terms of new cocoa produced will not be seen for another 5 to 20 years.

**Biggest Disappointment**

o Problems with land quality and titling at the Ringtail Village site. Some of the land acquired is poor and the farmers still do not have clear title to the land.

**Other Disappointments**

o Three years is an inadequate time for the project given a crop like cocoa which starts producing after three years. The project should have been at least five years in order to more fully learn about and document small farmer cocoa production and benefits in Belize.

o Lack of involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture, especially in the area of the training of extension agents. The government has not taken advantage of the opportunity to have their extension agents learn about cocoa production in Belize.

o Relationships between PADF, Hershey, and the Ministry of Agriculture got off to a poor beginning. A manager "type" should have been hired to initially get the project organized and started up.

**E. USAID, key funding agency**

**Outcomes Sought**

o To assist Belize to diversify in agriculture. To help Belize become less dependent on sugar as the primary source of foreign exchange earnings through the reintroduction of cocoa an indigenous crop to the area.

o Capitalize on the fact that Hershey provided a guaranteed market for cocoa produced in Belize, thus providing a cash crop for the small farmer.

o Develop a package of cocoa production reference materials that can be used by small farmers and extension agents in Belize.

o Develop a model of how USAID, private not for profit organizations (PADF & VITA), a host government and a U.S. corporation can cooperate to achieve development objectives.

**Biggest Achievement**

o Tangible evidence that cocoa crops can be grown profitably by the small farmer in Belize.

**Other Achievements**

o An extension package on cocoa production in Belize has been developed.

o Coordination among members of the project was good. Additional "players" such as the Cooperative Housing Foundation were brought in and utilized when needed.

o The project demonstrated how a new community, Ringtail Village, can be set up. With development of the credit union, all that should be in the scheme of a community is there.

o New developments, such as the IFAD and USAID Toledo Projects and World Bank financing of cocoa that will start in 1988, are a direct result of this project.

o The project received great exposure outside of the country. A lot of visitors came in from other countries in Central America and the Caribbean to see what the project was doing in cocoa production.

**Biggest Disappointment**

o The Ministry of Agriculture in Belize did not participate in the training of its extension agents as much as we would have liked.

**Other Disappointments**

o Valley of Peace was not very successful. As the Ministry of Agriculture had no jurisdiction there, it was hard to get a "handle on".

**F. VITA, partner in community development and institution building**

**Outcomes Sought**

- o To establish viable communities that will serve as a foundation for enhancing farmer development.
- o To support PADP in the collection of field data and information from the farmers that would support the development of the technical assistance package.
- o To support PADP in establishing linkages with other institutions involved in the project.

**Biggest Achievement**

- o The strong feeling of community that was achieved at Ringtail Village. The overall collaboration among all parties involved was a key factor in this achievement.

**Other Achievements**

- o Economic and social benefits accrued to both Hershey and the farmers at Ringtail Village.
- o Credit education given to the farmers.
- o The development of farm management materials.

**Biggest Disappointment**

- o The lack of progress in meeting project objectives at the Valley of Peace.

**Other Disappointments**

- o Lack of progress toward other objectives in the project such as getting land title for the farmers and training of extension agents.
- o Lack of progress of cocoa planted by farmers in the project due to the extensive amount of time required to successfully develop a cocoa farm. All farmers in the project either worked at Hershey or were growing other crops to support themselves at the same time they were establishing their cocoa farms.

**G. Peace Corps, partner in extension activities**

**Outcomes Sought**

- o Assisting in the increased generation of farmer income.
- o Assist in the training of Ministry of Agriculture extension agents through the transfer of technical knowledge on cocoa production.
- o Forge cultural ties between Belizeans and Americans.

**Biggest Achievement**

- o Technical manuals on cocoa production in Belize have been developed for use by extension agents and farmers. Workshops have been given using the manuals to train farmers and extension agents on cocoa production.

**Other Achievements**

- o Good field extension work was provided by the Volunteers.
- o Through the use of Peace Corps Small Project assistance grants, the road at Ringtail Village was completed.
- o The establishment of the credit union to assist in the development of Ringtail Village.

**Biggest Disappointment**

- o The lack of Belizean counterparts, MOA extension agents, for volunteers in the field to work with.

**Other Disappointments**

- o The project is ending too soon. It should be continued in order to fully understand the development of small farmer cocoa farms in Belize.
- o Lack of office space provided in the Ministry of Agriculture. This hindered the Volunteers getting to know extension agents and getting involved with them in the project.
- o Unrealistic expectations established in the beginning of the project for participants at Ringtail Village. Farmers worked at establishing cocoa farms in addition to their 40 hour a week job at Hershey. It was hard to achieve original project goals given the time they had.

**H. Development Finance Corporation (DFC), partner in providing credit for agricultural inputs.**

**Outcomes Sought**

- o At Ringtail Village, approve and implement 25 loans to establish 250 acres of cocoa. Distribute \$ 300,000 Belizean dollars. (approx \$ 100,000, distributed to date)
- o At Valley of Peace, approve at least 20 loans to establish 40 acres of cocoa.
- o Finalize all legal documents (mortgages) for loans granted to farmers.

**Biggest Achievement**

- o A model has been developed whereby with the proper coordination of other agencies involved, DFC can make loans to small farmers with less stringent collateral requirements.

**Other Achievements**

- o Due to project coordination with DFC, the loan delivery system has worked successfully.
- o There are no arrears on loans granted to farmers at Ringtail Village. A loan collection system through employee payroll deductions is in place at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm.

**Biggest Disappointment**

- o Farmers still do not have clear title to their land and therefore we still do not have real security for the loans.

#### Other Disappointments

o Fires at Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace created a need for more funding and the rescheduling of loans.

o The program for cocoa development at Valley of Peace was disorganized. Farmers at Valley of Peace had no previous exposure to cocoa. Project participants there kept shifting and acreage was uncertain, DFC sometimes had to reappraise a loan two or three times as project participants changed.

#### IV. Lessons Learned

To better understand why certain aspects of the project worked well while others did not, the achievements and disappointments discussed in the previous section of the report by participant organizations are grouped into five key areas, listed below with the specific accomplishments or disappointments. More in-depth discussion of these key areas follows.

##### Area groupings of accomplishments and disappointments

#### A. Important Role of Research Leading to Educational Material Development and Training as a Catalyst for Crop Development.

##### Accomplishments:

- Development of cocoa farm management materials.
- Preparation of a training manual in cocoa production for extension officers.
- The high interest generated for planting cocoa in the Toledo and Stann Creek Districts as a result of project training programs.
- The high visibility of the project in the entire Central American and Caribbean region leading to training of individuals outside of Belize.

## **B. Successful Community Development at Ringtail Village.**

### **Accomplishments:**

- Establishment of a road at Ringtail Village.
- Successful completion of a community center at Ringtail Village and development of farmer housing.
- Creation of a spirit of a collective accomplishment by farmers at Ringtail Village.
- Inclusion and/or creation of other organizations to meet emerging small farmer needs
- Establishment of a credit union to assist the farmers at Ringtail Village, with a credit education package.
- Involvement of the Cooperative Housing Foundation to stimulate housing development at Ringtail Village.

## **C. Selection of Project Sites. Disappointments:**

- The issue of unsuitable agricultural land at Ringtail Village.
- The problems with valley of Peace

## **D. Cooperation between Organizations. Disappointments:**

- A poor start in inter-organizational relationships, particularly between PADF, Hershey, and the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Unsatisfactory development government linkages and the resultant lack of involvement of government extension officers in the project.

- o Lack of clear title to farmers' lands.
- o Shortness (3 years) of the time frame for the project.
- o Initially unsatisfactory loan arrangements for Valley of Peace farmers.
- o Lack of project office space at the Ministry of Agriculture.

**E. Other areas where lessons were learned:**

- o Setting unrealistic expectations for farmer production at the beginning of the project.
- o Fire damage to crops in May of 1987.

**A. Importance of Research Leading to Educational Material Development and Training as a Catalyst for Crop Development**

One of the most important outcomes of the Accelerated Cocoa Production Project is a set of written materials that can be used to train and educate future farmers and extension agents on cocoa production. The project personnel did a good job of setting up data collection systems at Ringtail Village in order to learn more about growing cocoa as the project progressed. The results of this research are: a written extension manual, booklets for farmers, and an economic report that represents

state of the art information on how cocoa is produced in Belize and Central America. The materials represent the combined knowledge from the experience of cocoa growing at Ringtail Village and the Hummingbird Hershey Farm, based on what had been previously written on cocoa production. Peace Corps Volunteers played a vital role in the development of those materials.

The Ministry of Agriculture is extremely pleased to have these materials and plans to make them available to all their extension officers who work in areas where cocoa can be grown. The Principle Agriculture Officer (Extension) in the Ministry of Agriculture expressed his strong conviction that the legacy of the project is that it will be a "catalyst for future small farmer cocoa production in Belize." He believes that the project is already responsible for 400 acres of new and rehabilitated cocoa planted in the Toledo District and 40 acres of new cocoa planted in the Stann Creek District. This kind of excitement in the Ministry and in the Toledo and Stann Creek Districts about new cocoa development would not have been generated without the development of written materials on cocoa production, the training programs and field extension assistance that followed.

Interest in the cocoa production training programs conducted by project personnel in the last year of the project was very high. Attendance rose 100% from the first series of training programs to the third. Over 100 farmers, 20 representatives from

farmer organizations, and 8 extension officers received training in Belize. Chart 1 gives a complete overview of the cocoa production training programs conducted for Belizeans by the project through August, 1987. In addition, a nine day training program in cocoa production was conducted at Hummingbird Hershey Farm in October of 1987 for recently hired government extension officers. Ten people attended that program including personnel from the Toledo Cocoa Growers Association, CARE, DFC, and a new Peace Corps Volunteer who will work in cocoa extension in Belize. As each person trained shares his knowledge with others, one can begin to get an idea of the potential catalyst effect the Principle Agriculture Officer spoke of.

In addition to the training given to Belizean farmers and extension officers, information on cocoa production learned from this project was shared with interested parties in the entire Central American and Caribbean region. This was done primarily in two ways. First, numerous international visitors were received at the project site and attended courses at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm. Countries most active in sending representatives for training were Barbados, Grenada, St. Vincent, and Honduras. Second, the Project Director for PADF and the Farm Manager at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm (also a farmer in the project) played key roles in the first Inter-American Cocoa Forum, held in January of 1987 in San Jose, Costa Rica.

CHART 1: RESULTS OF BELIZE COCOA PRODUCTION WORKSHOPS

WORKSHOPS	ATTENDANCE					POST-WORKSHOP RESULTS
	Extension Officers	NGO Resps.	Total	Repeat from previous Workshops	Attended all 3	
<u>Cocoa Workshop I (March 1987)</u> 1. Site assessment 2. Nursery establishment						-Toledo- *Individual nurseries established for 40,000 plants. *TOGA supply store opened, stocked and selling inputs. *HHL conducted field training in rehabilitation.
Cayo District	4	9	13			-Stann Creek- *Group & individual nurseries established in 5 villages. *25,000 hybrid cocoa seeds purchased and planted. *Site assessments for new cocoa completed.
Toledo District	5	0	7			-Cayo- *22,000 hybrid cocoa seeds purchased and planted. *CIL (Cave's Branch) rehabilitated 110 acres old cocoa. *HHL donated cocoa seedlings to burned Ringtail farmers.
Stann Creek District	2	2	30			
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>50</b>			
<u>Cocoa Workshop II (June 1987)</u> 1. Nursery management 2. Fertilization/ shade management						-Toledo- *Toledo Cocoa Growers Association Membership up to 98. *Big Falls Coop includes cocoa in program with 45 acres. *Annatto & Legume shade/intercrops established. *Belize Chamber of Commerce starts annatto project in cocoa. *Large planting of 20 and 50 acres established.
Toledo District (June 1-2)	5	12	32	3(EOs)		-Stann Creek- *Participating villages apply for 1,050 acres for tree crops. *Land survey began by Lands Department. *Help for Progress funds cocoa project in San Roman. *Underbrushing & shade adjustment begun for 50 acres new cocoa. *Excellent nursery care continued following recommendation.
Stann Creek District (June 18-19)	2	2	39	17(44%)		
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>20</b>		
<u>Cocoa Workshop III (Aug. 1987)</u> 1. Field establishment 2. Pest & disease control 3. Intercrops						-Toledo- *TOGA begins information & extension assistance w/project booklets. *80 acres of new cocoa to be transplanted by November. *Participants development plans for 295 acres of cocoa.
Stann Creek District (Aug. 6-7)	4	5	40	24(60%)	14	-Stann Creek- *50 acres of new cocoa to be transplanted by November. *Help for Progress evaluating 2nd applic. for cocoa loan project. *Participants development plans for 160 acres of new cocoa. *Leucaena planted for leguminous shade.
Toledo Creek District (Aug. 13-14)	4	3	56	13(23%)	2(EOs)	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16</b>	

The forum was attended by 160 representative from all over the region exploring cocoa production and marketing.

Recommendations from this success for use in future projects can be drawn from the same three step process that took place in Belize. First, do\_research on ongoing cocoa farming activities (or whatever crop you are working with) within the project by collecting data as was done in the Belize project, from farmers as the project progresses. Second, publish\_written\_materials expanding and improving upon what has been already written (if anything has been written) about cocoa production (or whatever) in your area using the results of your research. This can be done, as in Belize at two levels, one level in the form of a training manual for extension officers and a second level consisting of fact sheets for the farmers. Using the materials developed, design training programs for farmers and extension officers. This process is directly responsible for the increased interest in cocoa production in Belize that the Principle Agricultural Officer (Extension) in Belize spoke of above.

#### **B. Successful Community Development at Ringtail Village**

An important success of this project was the development of a strong community at Ringtail Village, where members often worked together for the common good of all. The success of

community development efforts and the success of cocoa farming at Ringtail Village fed on each other. The stronger the community became, the more people were motivated to plant cocoa. The more the farmers planted cocoa, the more they established roots and became interested in the Ringtail community.

There were several ingredients that can be identified that contributed to successful community development at Ringtail Village. First, there was the dedication, commitment and competence of the VIJA community development specialist assigned to the project. A second factor in the success at Ringtail was that all active family members were involved in various aspects of building the community, men women, and children. One could feel the enthusiasm and sense of community spirit in participants at Ringtail Village. When the road and the community center were being built, everyone in the village turned out to to help complete these projects. Peace Corps Volunteers also played an important role in organizing this work. It was common for farmers at Ringtail to help each other on their farms when it was needed. The wives of the farmers sponsored a yearly children's Christmas party and started fund raising activities to raise additional money for the community center. The project has discussed with the Belizean Enterprise for Sustained Technology (BEST) and Belize Institute of Management further assistance and training on income generating activities to the women of Ringtail Village.

There was a sense of pride in being a "Ringtailer". Instilling that sense of pride in the people started with the selection of the name Ringtail. The term was previously used on the Hummingbird Hershey Farm to identify the best workers.

A third factor contributing to the success of Ringtail was the inclusion or creation of new organizations to assist with specifically identified needs. For example, early in the project the Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) was contacted in Belize City to get involved with the Village. It was largely through the impetus provided by the CHF advisor that the first houses at Ringtail Village for farmers and their families were built. He identified usable local materials (some donated by Hummingbird Hershey Farm), found low-cost construction methods, designed appropriate structures in collaboration with pilot Ringtail home builders, and dedicated personal time to work with construction efforts.

Another example was the development of a credit union at the Hummingbird Hershey Farm to provide credit to farmers for housing and agricultural materials not related to cocoa production. The credit union to which Hershey lent early support, has been highly successful. There are presently 64 members in the union representing over half the employees at Hummingbird Hershey Farm. Today the credit union is managing a \$52,000 home financing program established with technical and

financial assistance from the Cooperative Housing Foundation.

The credit union and the Village Association are managed by members of the Ringtail community. This on the job leadership training contributes to the fourth factor in successful community development at Ringtail, the development\_of\_local\_leadership\_abilities. Initially Pat Scott, a farmer at Ringtail Village but also a senior officer at the Hummingbird Farm was the first leader to emerge. His example was invaluable in getting other farmers started in cocoa farming and believing in themselves. Later additional leaders emerged and stepped forward to manage the credit union and the Village Association. It is through these efforts of human development that the farmers and their families now express confidence in their ability to be self reliant and sustain the momentum started by the project for the development of Ringtail Village. In an effort to continue to support this momentum, the project has discussed with BEST continuing the process of leadership development by providing more training to Ringtail farmers in the area of farm management and small business development. Training in the areas of management and the use of computers to officers of the credit union has been provided through a 10 week course at the Belmopan Comprehensive School.

### **C. Selection of Project Sites**

Both choices for demonstration sites, Ringtail Village and Valley of Peace, were chosen quickly and not well thought out.

The Ringtail Village site was a problem because most of the land turned out to be unsuitable for cocoa growing. At Valley of Peace the problems were not as simple. They stemmed chiefly from the fact that Valley of Peace was a designated refugee area. Problems encountered at Valley of Peace included; lack of cohesion among Spanish speaking and native Belizean members of the community, lack of government support, a lack of a feeling of stability or settledness among the farmers, a lack of support from Hummingbird Hershey Farm, the presence of other aid agencies with their own development priorities, a site that at times was inaccessible, low level of education, lack of financing initially for agricultural inputs, and a lack of consistent leadership within the community.

The purpose in selecting a second experimental project site (Valley of Peace) was to determine if growing cocoa would "catch on" with farmers not working with Hershey and not focused specifically on cocoa farming. Those present at the final project retreat concluded that Valley of Peace should not have become the second site and that because of its refugee status, Valley of Peace could not and should not be considered as a "typical" Belizean small farmer community and therefore it is not a fair barometer for gauging if cocoa farming would "catch on" with Belizean small farmers.

Because of the importance of what was learned here in terms of selecting a refugee area as part of a agricultural development project, a more in-depth analysis of nine problems encountered at Valley of Peace are discussed in more detail below with a comparison to the situation at the Ringtail Village site.

### 1. Community\_Cohesion

At Ringtail Village the project started with a more homogeneous participant population. All the Ringtail Village participants are native Belizeans and speak English. They all knew each other fairly well from working together at Hershey. In contrast, at Valley of Peace, the community is split between Belizean nationals and Salvadorean refugees. They don't speak the same language and are very suspicious of each other. As a result, you do not find the Belizean and Salvadorean farmers working cooperatively together, and the village council has always suffered from sharp divisions along these two national lines.

### 2. Government\_Support

In January of 1987, Belizean police in the Orange Walk District rounded up and expelled 117 illegal aliens. The Prime Minister was quoted as saying "Similiar exercises will be carried

out from time to time" (The Reporter, Feb. 1, 1987). Government support is more forthcoming for the Ringtail Village site which is totally Belizean than it is for the Valley of Peace site where most of the population are recognized refugees. Even though the refugees at Valley of Peace are legal, the refugee situation in Belize is so politically sensitive that government support at Valley of Peace, is "ill defined".

### 3. Stability or Settledness

Growing cocoa requires a long term investment in time and money. It requires stable, settled and committed farmers. At Ringtail, the farmers already have a job with Hershey. This is important for two reasons. First, they are familiar with cocoa production and understand the marketing process and long term economics implications of the crop. Secondly, since they already have a job, they can afford to grow a crop like cocoa that will not yield income for three or four years.

On the other hand, at Valley of Peace they have no fixed wages. Refugees by definition are uprooted, and find it difficult to feel settled or stable in new, unfamiliar, and often hostile surroundings. They are concerned chiefly with survival and therefore focus on crops that will produce returns in 2,3, or 4 months. They are also largely unfamiliar with cocoa as a crop.

#### 4. Hummingbird Hershey Support

The Hummingbird Hershey Farm is a couple of miles from Ringtail Village. Hershey has a vested interest in the farmers at Ringtail for a number of reasons, chiefly that they are their employees. Hershey is in constant communication with the farmers at Ringtail, they learn about their technical assistance needs immediately, and provide substantial Hershey support for the farmers in a wide variety of ways. In contrast Hummingbird Hershey is a long way from Valley of Peace. Its technicians and administrative support staff do not know these people and in most cases do not even speak the same language. Understandably, support from Hershey at Valley of Peace is practically nonexistent.

#### 5. Presence of Other Aid Agencies at Valley of Peace

Where as Ringtail Village basically received complementary and coordinated aid from the cocoa project and the Hummingbird Hershey Farm, Valley of Peace on the other hand has been "overrun" with relief agencies offering all kinds of assistance. A few of the organizations which have been active at Valley of Peace include the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Enfants Refugie's du Monde, Christian Workers Relief Committee, and the Mennonite Central Committee. Most of the aid organizations at Valley of Peace were present there and

active when the cocoa project arrived. Some interviewed felt the refugees viewed the cocoa project as "just another assistance scheme" and were distrustful since aid programs in the past had raised hopes but contributed little to their plight. They simply could not find much enthusiasm for "another development project", especially one that required a lot of hard work planting and maintaining cocoa trees. Most had the attitude "why bother?"

#### 6. Accessibility\_of\_Site

As alluded to previously, Ringtail Village is a much more desirable location, at least in terms of access to technicians and extension personnel. Ringtail Village is on the main highway to southern Belize. Valley of Peace is a considerable distance from a main highway. Until recently (with the completion of a new road) Valley of Peace was not accessible at all during the rainy season and only with some difficulty during the dry season.

#### 7. Education\_and\_Communication

At Ringtail Village all the farmers speak English and are literate. The main language at Valley of Peace is Spanish and only 30 to 40% of the farmers are literate, making all kinds of assistance more difficult from agricultural extension to credit.

## 8. Financing

Loans are more accessible to Belizeans than they are to the Salvadoran refugees. It was approximately a year after the Development Finance Corporation (DFC) made loans available to farmers at Ringtail Village that loans were finally made available to farmers at Valley of Peace through a PADF grant. In addition, the total amount of loan money available to farmers at Ringtail Village was approximately five times that that was made available to farmers at Valley of Peace although the amount per acre and terms were very similiar.

## 9. Leadership

The comparison would not be complete without talking about leadership. It would not be possible to move forward in establishing cocoa farms or do community development work in any substantial way without the support of the leadership of the community. At Ringtail the project was very fortunate to have natural leadership in the form of Pat Scott, Farm Manager at Hummingbird Hershey Farm and a participant at Ringtail Village. Pat was a model for other farmers at Ringtail and an invaluable source of information to them on cocoa production. In contrast leadership at Valley of Peace was very fragmented. The politics of the site make it very difficult for a leader to sustain influence in the community. Leaders came and went and none were experienced in growing cocoa.

In summary, site selection of new cocoa communities like Ringtail Village should be based on completion of proper land survey, including soil tests before settling on a site. As it was in this project, if the objective of selecting a second site is to see if cocoa would "catch on" with typical Belizean farmers who do not benefit from the ties and support of the Hummingbird Hershey Farm Valley of Peace should not have been chosen as the second sight given the problem of working with a settling refugee population as enumerated above.

#### **D. Cooperation among Organizations**

Many of the problems encountered, especially the involvement (or lack of involvement) of the Government of Belize, and the feeling by some that the Hummingbird Hershey Farm and staff were not utilized to the extent they could have been (especially in the beginning of the project) stem from initial inability of PADF project personnel to forge a strong coalition to implement the project. Problems with getting land tenure for the farmers and the participation of the Ministry of Agriculture extension officers remained with the project until its end.

In addition, many participating organizations believe given the nature of the cocoa crop (3 years before you can start

harvesting) a three year project was too short. Five years would have been more appropriate, allowing time to take the farmers through a complete cycle from planting to marketing. Yet, in spite of this wide spread belief that the project should have been longer, there was no coordinated effort among organizations to seek more project funding from USAID. One member of participating organization put it this way, "The project was separate from its member organizations", and criticized the approach as too much "let me ask for your ideas and I will prepare a package, instead of "let us prepare this together".

Initial government support for the project was focused entirely in the office of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Natural Resources (since changed to the Ministry of Agriculture). Support within the Ministry became nonexistent when the Permanent Secretary was replaced with a new political officer shortly after the start of the project. According to the Ministry of Agriculture personnel, The Cocoa Advisory Board was formed in an effort to address this problem six months into the life of the project. Its primary purpose was to oversee the Accelerated Cocoa Production Project and create a liaison between the Ministry and PADF. The Ministry of Agriculture Officer assigned to the project, Mr. Joe Smith, Principle Agriculture Officer (Research), said that he had "no other

relationship with PADF other than through the Cocoa Advisory Board". It was through the Board that requests were made to the Minister of Agriculture to assist the project with the land tenure issue, building of the road at Ringtail Village, and releasing extension officers for training. The role of the Cocoa Advisory Board and the need to establish better relations with the Ministry of Agriculture were pointed out as areas that needed close attention in the first visit by the continuous evaluator in March of 1985, when the project was six months old.

To summarize what was learned, in future and similar projects, top priority should be placed on forming a solid partnership among all key organizations involved in the project at the very beginning. Once commitment to the project from all parties is established, structure would be set in place to allow for collective decisions to be made. In the Belize Accelerated Cocoa Production project, more broad based support for the project should have been solicited among Ministry of Agriculture Personnel. Meetings should have been set up by the project Director to personally contact District Agricultural Officers and Extension Officers in the field in the districts where cocoa could be grown (Toledo, Stann Creek, and Cayo) to apprise them of the project and opportunities for extension training. Such "grass roots" organizational support within the

Belizean government could have been very important in influencing the Ministry to be more supportive of extension officer training. Above all, the message should have been put out to the Ministry of Agriculture that "this is your project" (meaning Belize's) and that without a close working relationship between PADF and the Ministry, an opportunity may be lost."

To build this kind of a team approach in a development project is not an easy task. It requires exceptional interpersonal skills and experience in bringing people together for a common cause. It is recommended that if long term project personnel do not have these skills they should be accompanied by personnel who do at the beginning of the project to help establish a team approach.

#### **E. Other Areas where Lessons Were Learned Briefly Noted**

Given the amount of work required to grow cocoa and the limited resources available to the small farmer, the original expectation of having ten acres of cocoa planted per farmer in three years was unrealistic. As mentioned previously all farmers in the project had other jobs and/or farming activities that raised income to support their families, because cocoa trees can not be harvested until three years after they are

planted. Under these conditions, the maximum one should expect from the farmers in the project is two acres of cocoa planted per year. It is recommended that more careful analysis of resources, time and money, that farmers can contribute to such a project be made to make project projections more realistic. The project documented and published labor and capital requirements for small farmers growing cocoa.

The project also learned a lesson the hard way regarding fires. In Belize the slash and burn method of farming is widely used. There is no way to predict when fires will get out of control. This year, after an especially long dry season, 25 acres of cocoa were burned. Farmers need to be advised about potential fire problems from the time they first start planting cocoa. In this project farmers were encouraged to plant cocoa as far away as possible from the milpa lands where fires are traditionally started. However, they should also be advised to build firebreaks. And finally, and perhaps most important farmers need to receive training on how to be more vigilant during the dry season when milpa fires are prevalent. It is recommended that future new cocoa planting projects be designed with fire protective needs in mind.

## V. The Role of the Continuous Evaluator

At the start of a new development project, an experienced veteran of development work was asked what could be expected from the project. His reply was "I know that I don't know what will happen". Because of the evolving nature of development work it is important that projects have enough flexibility to change directions and take advantage of situations that are encountered in the project that never could have been predicted. Given the experimental nature of this project, and complex interrelationships among the public sector, a U.S. corporation and its Belizean experimental farm, and private voluntary organizations working to introduce a new agricultural technology it was especially important that implementation of the project design be flexible.

To assist the project team periodically assessing the state of the project and help facilitate thinking on new directions as the project unfolded, this project created a unique position that was called the "continuous evaluator". The continuous evaluator was an organizational development consultant who visited Belize every six months for approximately two weeks, a total of six trips to Belize were made over three years, the 1st trip being when the project was six months old. On the 2nd, 4th, and 6th visits, the evaluator took part in organizing an annual project

retreat for all participant organizations involved. Broadly the objectives of the retreats were to take a look at "where the project was" and reassess "where it was going".

More specifically the role of the continuous evaluator was described to perform the following functions:

1. To periodically measure the progress of the project against its defined goals;
2. To assist project personnel in the identification of problems that block goal achievement;
3. To facilitate problem solving with project staff and the development of strategy to overcome problems that block goal achievement;
4. To facilitate the coordination of activities between the various organizations in the project;
5. To assist project personnel in the revision of project implementation plans with input from the evaluator based on his cumulative findings;
6. To identify the lessons learned from the project that can be carried forward and applied to future projects; and
7. To assist in the development of models that can be used for the design of similar development projects in the future.

Was the use of a consultant to the project in this manner worth the time and monetary investment? According to the comments

from individuals associated with the project, it was. However, I would recommend that the consultation process start at the very beginning of the project, not six months after it has started. The consultant could have played a crucial role in helping to organize the various organizations involved with the project and getting a clearer definition of the role each participant/organization in the project would play (see Section IV "Cooperation between Organizations"). In other words start the project with a retreat with the above objective in mind. It should be noted that this was the original plan, but with all the activities involved in project start up it never got off the ground.

#### Participant feedback on the role of the continuous evaluator

Based on feedback from individuals associated with the project the continuous evaluator assisted the project in the areas outlined below. The areas are listed to roughly correspond with the intended role of the continuous evaluator as described on the previous page.

1. The continuous evaluator brought additional expertise to the project. Using a continuous evaluator was like having an additional professional on the project team. A professional whose expertise was in areas of management and organization. Given the

variety of professional backgrounds (agronomy, anthropology, etc.) of key individuals involved in the implementation of the project and the complexity of the project, it proved very useful to have someone who could provide assistance in project management and organization. One project participant put it this way "It should be in all projects, we easily could have gone on (our own) narrow tracks, this (continuous evaluation process) gave us a broader perspective."

2. The continuous evaluation helped open communication between parties associated with the project. Many project participants commented that the structures laid out by the continuous evaluator (i.e. semiannual visits and annual retreats) were excellent in stimulating communication between the various parties involved with the project. Some felt this to be the most valuable contribution of the continuous evaluator. Quotes from project participants: "Good to have an impartial person to listen to our problems"; "It (continuous evaluation process) gives everyone a chance to voice their opinions"; "People say things to the continuous evaluator they don't say to us (full time project personnel in Belize), they are more verbal. As a result it helped to open communication channels and facilitate movement."

3. The continuous evaluator contributed to problem solving and refocusing the direction of the project. At the heart of what was initially intended as the contribution of the continuous evaluator was the skill to "facilitate problem solving with project staff" and develop strategies to overcome the problems or blockages to achieving project goals. One of the key senior individuals associated with the project felt that "If parties acted on recommendations (from the continuous evaluation process) and new directions were established, it was a worthwhile investment." Many participants associated with the project recognized this contribution made by the continuous evaluator. Some quotes from project participants: "The evaluation helped to identify problems and as problems became identified, actions were taken to modify the implementation of the project"; "Retreats helped us to focus on key needs and problems of the project"; "It (continuous evaluation process) stirred up thinking, questioning, and discussion of the project. Even up to the last minute changes are being made as a result of the continuous evaluators visit."

4. The continuous evaluator enhanced cooperation between organizations associated with the project. "It (continuous evaluation process) contributed to facilitating communication between organizations and improving relations between organizations." The above quote from one of the participants

typifies what many people saw as a link between opening channels of communication and improving relationships between organizations associated with the project. Through the annual retreat process, the roles of each participating organization were further defined and clarified. This process greatly assisted the coordination of activities between organizations.

5. The continuous evaluator contributed to the professional growth and development of individuals associated with the project. Through the problem solving and planning processes introduced by the continuous evaluator, project personnel developed their own skills to do the same. This contributed to better project management overall. To quote one participant, "This was a unique kind of project and it (continuous evaluation process) contributed to the growth and learning of project participants."

6. The continuous evaluator contributed to "revitalizing support and commitment to the project". One of the unanticipated consequences of the continuous evaluator role was a sort of motivational factor. Several participants felt that the retreats revitalized the "support and commitment to the project" of all participants, including the farmers. When one farmer was asked about the role of the continuous evaluator he replied, "You got to have a continuous evaluator, when the guys (at Ringtail Village) knew another retreat or evaluation was coming they sped up and tried to get more accomplished."

APPENDIX A: PEOPLE INTERVIEWED THIS TRIP

1. B.K. Matlick, Director of Agribusiness, Hershey Foods Corporation
2. Dean Lindo, Minister of Agriculture, Government of Belize
3. Jim Corven, PADF Project Team Leader
4. Carolyn McCommon, Community Development Advisor, VITA
5. Richard Burn, General Manager, Hummingbird Hershey Farm
6. Neb Braschich, Representative, USAID Belize
7. Steve Szadek, Agriculture Development Officer, USAID Belize
8. Efrin Aldana, Principle Ag. Officer (Extension), Ministry of Agriculture Belize
9. Joe Smith, Principle Ag. Officer (Research), Ministry of Agriculture Belize and Chairman of the Cocoa Advisory Board
10. Norberto Ambros, Project Officer, PADF
11. Alvaro Bautista, Development Finance Corporation
12. Mark Kather, Peace Corps Volunteer at Valley of Peace
13. Jim Raisner, Peace Corps Volunteer at Ringtail Village
14. Jan Leydet, Peace Corps Volunteer
15. Lou Miller, Deputy Director of Peace Corps Belize
16. Pat Scott, Farmer at Ringtail Village
17. Rojo Manzanero, Farmer at Ringtail Village
18. Antonio Castro, Farmer at Valley of Peace
19. Jamie Tun, Farmer at Valley of Peace
20. Luciano Tun, Farmer at Valley of Peace

APPENDIX B

ADDRESS OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE OF BELIZE

FINAL PROJECT RETREAT AND WORKSHOP

OF THE ACCELERATED COCOA PROJECT

20th August, 1987 at Caye Chapel

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As Minister of Agriculture, it is indeed an honour and pleasure for me to be here today to address you at this final project retreat and workshop of the Accelerated Cocoa Development Project of Belize.

As you are aware, cocoa has been identified as an ideal diversification crop in Belize. Because of its potential, the GOB, USAID and PADF undertook and are now proudly celebrating the culmination of a meaningful and successful joint venture.

Over the past three years, this project has assisted in making cocoa a crop of major importance to the economy of Belize. Technical support and the guaranteed market offered by Hummingbird Hershey has been surely invaluable. To them I offer our thanks. Production statistics indicate steady growth in cocoa production.

In 1985, 371,915 lbs. of wet beans were produced.

In 1986, production increased to 469,357 lbs.

For 1987 the projected production of wet beans is 671,000 lbs. (225,000 lbs. dry beans).

Additionally, I wish to observe that while bearing acreage is approximately 390 acres, acreage planted exceeds 1,700 acres.

Please take note that the Government's policy as enunciated in FAP aims at increasing acreage and number of farmers growing cacao through the provision of land titles to bona fide farmers, continuing to

50

encourage provision of credit through DFC and other lending institutions, and provision of technical assistance for identifying areas suitable for cocoa.

This Ministry has, within its capabilities, been supportive of this project. However, the personal energies and dedication of Mr. Jim Corven has played a major part in determining the success of this project. The staff of my Ministry has without reservations commented on the outstanding job performed by him and his staff over the past years. I personally extend sincere thanks to him and his staff for a job well done.

These combined efforts have seen the establishments and development of the Ringtail Village and the participation of some 14 farmers in cacao production and the production of cocoa in the Valley of Peace.

Application of the project's technical package outside of the original sites was extended to the Stann Creek and Toledo Districts. Results on the application of the package developed was excellent.

We naturally view its development with interest and high expectations when its potential as foreign exchange earner is so promising.

Recently PADF and the Ministry of Agriculture have released a comprehensive extension manual- "The Cocoa Guidebook" and a farmer's booklet "Growing Cocoa in Belize." With these documents and the level of training that both the extension agents in the Ministry and the Private Voluntary Organizations have received, I feel confident that the promotion and expansion of the cocoa industry will continue. This in itself points to the success of the project.

It is, therefore, with a sense of achievement that we meet here today. Ladies and gentlemen, I am now very pleased to declare this workshop open and to which you fruitful discussions.

Thank you.