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**AN ASSESSMENT OF  
THE IMPACT OF CLASP TRAINING AMONG SELECTED  
GROUPS OF CLASP TRAINEES IN GUATEMALA**

**AND**

**A REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF  
IN-COUNTRY FOLLOW-ON EFFORTS IN GUATEMALA**

**VOLUME II**

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# CHAPTER ONE

## The History of CAPS in Guatemala

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### *History of CAPS In*

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#### **THE GUATEMALA EVALUATION: A POINT OF TRANSITION**

The Mission began its implementation of CAPS-Guatemala in FY 1985; for three consecutive years, from FY 1987 to FY 1989, nearly a thousand Trainees were sent per year. CAPS retained high levels of new starts through FY 1990. At present, however, the Program has completed its U.S. training phase. PAZAC, the in-country office of the CAPS program, closed at the end of FY 1990, and only a few long-term academic Trainees have yet to return. One major CAPS activity still continues within Guatemala, the Follow-on training program carried out by the Experiment in International Living (EIL). This program, described in some detail in Chapter Two, will be completed in mid-1992<sup>1</sup>.

However, the second phase of the CLASP program (CLASP II) is already underway. In Guatemala, this project, the Guatemala Peace Scholarship Program, sent its first short-term groups to the U.S. in June, 1991<sup>2</sup>. This moment of transition is therefore a timely one to document the work accomplished under CAPS-Guatemala in order to highlight the successes and difficulties that arose in the implementation of this largest of CLASP country programs.

Beyond Guatemala, the conclusion of the regional Central America Peace Scholarship reflects a major point of transition in CLASP. CLASP II is a new multi-country project which draws on the experience of the first six years of implementation of CLASP I throughout the region and extends the training initiative until at least 1998. As CLASP I winds down at different times in different countries, it is appropriate to

examine the particular achievements and difficulties associated with each country's program in order to accumulate the varied experiences. These will serve as guides and benchmarks as CLASP II becomes fully operational. This evaluation represents one such effort.

Another factor added to the desirability of evaluating CAPS-Guatemala, and the allied CASP program, at the present moment. This is the growing interest in Follow-on, in the various options that are being adopted by different Missions to support CLASP Trainees upon their return home. As was shown in Chapter Two, the Guatemala Mission has been known for some time as an innovator in Follow-on. Given the centrality of the Follow-on debate in recent years, an examination of the present state of Follow-on in Guatemala was deemed a priority.

Finally, the transition between CLASP I and CLASP II has been accompanied by a broadening of the evaluation model. In CLASP I, evaluations focused on both organizational issues and on the process of training. Attention was paid to the fulfillment of general CLASP criteria—the percentage of particular categories of Trainees composing the Trainee cohorts or the degree to which certain program elements were offered to all Peace Scholars. There was also a concern for measuring the degree of satisfaction that Trainees expressed with respect to participation in the program. These processual issues provided important information about the functioning of the program, to be sure, and in the earlier period of implementation it was of considerable interest for all concerned to have this data at hand.

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Earlier evaluations did not ignore such issues as the application of training by returned Trainees to their work place. Such questions were always included in interviews with returned Peace Scholars in the country report evaluations. It is through such interests that it was reported in 1988 that a high percentage of Guatemalan returnees stated that their training was generally either "useful" or "very useful" for their present job<sup>3</sup>, and that those trained in small business were most likely to agree that CLASP training had a positive impact on their income (while it was noted that the rating for that particular indicator was relatively low) (Aguirre International 1988:3/25-3/27).

As the program matured, and as more Trainees returned home and re-entered the work force, program implementors concluded that more and richer information was needed to assess the effects of CLASP training. As one evaluator put it, the present evaluation model did not give a "sense of the broader impact of the program nor of the interaction of the training with the local context" (Chesterfield et al. 1989:3)<sup>4</sup>. AID/Washington, therefore, adopted more flexible evaluation models which would supplement the quantitative, questionnaire-based data collection that had been the hallmark of the first years of the program<sup>5</sup>. In late 1990, a new evaluation contract was awarded to Aguirre International which called for synthesizing the approaches to data management and process evaluation which it had developed previously with a new emphasis on qualitative evaluation methods and a greater concern for determining the consequences and ramifications of training.

### **THE GUATEMALAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND THE CAPS PROGRAM**

When the Central American Peace Scholarship Program began in Guatemala in 1985, it faced a series of challenges peculiar to the history and the current constitution of Guatemalan society. In this section four important factors in Guatemalan society are sketched which formed a backdrop that

CAPS planners had to take into account in applying the program to Guatemala. These are:

- the structure of the distribution of wealth in the country;
- the nature of the large rural population and its relative access to resources;
- the ethnic complexity of the social order; and, finally,
- the reality of conflict and guerrilla war in major portions of the country.

While other significant elements of the Guatemalan context could also be noted—such as changes in international economic relations, with direct impacts on the rural poor—these four are important contexts as the CAPS program was tailored to Guatemala.

### **The Structure of Wealth**

Certain incongruities arise around the issue of the relative degree of development of Guatemala. When one examines the global figures normally cited to describe countries' development (such as gross domestic product or per capita income), one sees that Guatemala is not among the poorest countries in the hemisphere. Indeed, in World Bank terms, Guatemala is ranked as a "lower middle-income" nation, with a per capita income calculated for 1988 at \$900 (World Bank 1990: 178). Guatemala did experience a period of rapid growth, especially in the 1970s, due partly to favorable commodities prices, but also as a result of internal investment in manufacturing and participation in the Central American Common Market (Eglin 1983:121-22).

Yet this relatively elevated status in the Third World pecking order does not begin to reflect the nature of the distribution of wealth; a major proportion of the population is still largely rural and poor. The World Bank estimates that 45 percent of adults in Guatemala are illiterate; and 33 percent of the population is classified as living in urban areas. The Bank figures also indicate that

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the bottom fifth of the Guatemalan population receives less than 6 percent of household income, while the top 10 percent receives over 40 percent (World Bank 1990: 178, 236, 238).

While the economic expansion in the 1960s and the 1970s was occurring, the economy grew at an annual rate double that of the population as a whole. Yet the distribution of wealth was such that little of that new wealth reached the poorest strata of the society, with the result that USAID economists determined that the situation of the rural *campesinos* had actually deteriorated in absolute terms during these decades despite the high rate of growth elsewhere in the economy (Painter 1989:13). The situation for the rural poor has only been exacerbated in the 1980s, when economic growth reversed itself, inflation grew worse, and even the agro-industrial sector, which rural people counted upon for seasonal income as migrant laborers, contracted severely (Painter 1989: 20-21). As the CAPS program designed its training program in 1985, this reality of poverty and the unequal distribution of wealth was clearly a constraining factor.

### **The Plight of the Rural Poor**

While the manufacturing sector provides a major percentage of the gross domestic product, agriculture still employs the most people, most of whom work as small-scale farmers on their own plot of land or as landless day laborers<sup>6</sup>. Yet the high percentage of population in agriculture reflects the remnants of a colonial economy which depended, and still depends, on the export of agricultural crops, not positive opportunities in the sector for the majority. Land, like wealth in general, is unevenly distributed in Guatemala. A decade ago (and little has changed since that time), 90 percent of the farm units (which were 7 hectares or smaller) had only 16 percent of the farmland. At the opposite end of the spectrum, only 3 percent of the farming units claimed 65 percent of the farmland, and these most frequently had

the best soils. The technology employed on the small farms is traditional and antiquated, with little capital investment (Eglin 1983:100, 106-07). The CAPS scholarship, with its focus on disadvantaged population, was also designed to deal with the situation and problems of this rural population.

### **The Ethnic Diversity of Guatemala**

The poverty that discussions of landholdings and the distribution of wealth reveal is only one aspect of the complex social circumstances of Guatemala. Guatemala is also a country of divergent ethnic identities, in which a major proportion of the rural peasant population, especially in the western highlands, speaks Mayan languages and considers itself to be ethnically distinct from the more urbanized, Spanish-speaking population of the east and of the towns and cities. With millions of Guatemalans speaking Quiché, Cakchiquel, Kekchi, or Mam; with between 18 and 28 different linguistic groupings in all; and with estimates that probably about half of Guatemala's 8,000,000 people are Indian or indigenous (Kluck 1983:52-53), the CAPS program was conscious by design, from the beginning, to reach this part of the population, a segment which had largely been ignored in the past in international training programs—to say nothing of the overall discrimination to which this group is subject in terms of access to such governmental or private sector services as health care, education, or agricultural credit.

### **Civil Strife and War**

Added to the stark inequalities that characterize the ethnic and socioeconomic conditions has been, throughout the decade of the 1980s and up to the present, the reality of terrorism and war. Guerrilla movements have been active in rural Guatemala for several decades, from at least the time of the overthrow of the Arbenz government in 1954. The level of activity of rural guerrilla groups grew considerably in the late 1970s, however, and reached such a high level in the early years of the 1980's that the state

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itself was seriously challenged. In response, the Guatemalan army adopted a harsh counter-insurgency campaign. This escalation led to such levels of violence that many thousands lost their lives (Krueger and Enge 1985; Krueger 1989). The brunt of the battle took place in rural areas; one result was the uprooting of several hundred indigenous villages in many areas of the highlands and their resettlement in army-run centers in which, for some time, all men were required to participate in civil defense units, and egress was strictly controlled with a pass system (Krueger 1989). The 1986 accession to power by an elected civilian government, and its replacement early this year by an opposition slate also elected by popular suffrage, is a break with several decades of military rule. This move towards a more democratic public order has created the hope for some resolution to the grave problems facing the country. It has also served as another component in the planning for the CAPS program, to be augmented in the CLASP II project. The goals of both CAPS and GPS support the creation and strengthening of civil institutions at the grass roots level, which are designed to bolster progress on that front.

### **THE CAPS PROGRAM AND ITS APPLICATION IN GUATEMALA**

Program planners in Guatemala, as was true throughout the region, were charged with several specific goals in implementing the CAPS program. They were to institute training around general development goals relevant to the country; but they were also commissioned with designing a training program that introduced several significant innovations into the way USAID carried out training.

CLASP I thus established the following principles for programming:

- the scholarship program would be extended to segments of the population which had not previously been beneficiaries of such training initiatives, such that

recruitment of participants would focus on economically and socially disadvantaged segments of the population as priority groups;

- it would program undergraduate, and not primarily graduate, academic training;
- Follow-on activities would be incorporated as an integral part of training; and
- CLASP I would be aimed at four target groups: the economically and socially disadvantaged (who would be at least 70 percent of the total); women (at least 40 percent of the total); rural and urban youth; and actual and potential leaders.

CLASP I, and its regional project CAPS, also incorporated a political dimension into development training, since the program specified the importance of ensuring that Trainees have the opportunity to come to understand important values and practices in U.S. society. Four programmatic elements relating to democratic initiatives were developed in CLASP I.

- CLASP candidates should be chosen from leadership groups that are of local concern, as opposed to general development goals.
- CLASP Trainees should have the chance to come to know American institutions and persons, to "Experience America."
- CLASP Peace Scholars should be able to share their own culture and values with U.S. citizens.
- Training of CLASP Peace Scholars should be applicable at home and lead to the strengthening of ties of friendship between themselves and Americans.

The evolution of the CAPS project in Guatemala has been well described in an earlier evaluation (Aguirre International 1988:1/5-1/21). However, it is evident that

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CAPS-Guatemala evolved over the years in a dialogue between AID/Guatemala and Washington. CAPS was intended to reach leadership groups that reflected local concerns, not necessarily macroeconomic priorities. In Guatemala, the response to CLASP I guidance was shaped by the recognition of the poverty and ethnic complexity of the targeted disadvantaged population as well as their residence in often remote rural areas. As already mentioned, special importance was placed in the then upcoming transition to a civilian government, in early 1986, after decades of military rule. Two particular program goals were thus highlighted from the beginning: the importance of training related to democratic institutions; and the whole set of issues surrounding the recruitment and training of Peace Scholars of indigenous extraction (USAID/Guatemala 1985).

### **The Implementation of CAPS-Guatemala**

Training Office personnel took the initiative in Guatemala to move quickly in implementing CAPS. Soon after the overall CLASP project was approved in Washington, AID/Guatemala developed a mid-year Country Training Plan and, thanks to a rapid allocation of funds, succeeded in having Trainees recruited and on their way by May. Originally estimating that they would send ten short-term groups and a handful of long-term Trainees, by the end of FY 1985 they had lined up some 26 short-term groups for travel to the U.S. and had selected the cadre of 25 long-term academic Trainees that constituted the entire group of long-term Trainees sent through FY 1987 (USAID/Guatemala 1985).

Many of the overall patterns which characterized CAPS-Guatemala throughout the life of the project were set in the first months of its implementation. In short-term technical training, the Mission opted for groups of 20 to 40, to be taught exclusively in Spanish. There was a strong focus on the recruitment

of women, indigenous Trainees, and other disadvantaged candidates.

During this first period of activity in FY 1985, the management of the program was done within the Mission, with technical offices invested with suggesting training programs and the Training Office acting as would a contractor on the administrative side (USAID/Guatemala 1985: 31-38). While in late 1985 the CTP still spoke of locating an in-country contractor to carry out the work of recruitment, selection, and predeparture orientation, this was modified by FY 1986 with the founding of PAZAC. In August 1986, the Mission signed a limited-scope grant agreement with the Secretaría General de Planificación (SEGEPLAN) of the Guatemalan government which established the in-country support office which took the name Paz en América Central, or PAZAC, Peace in Central America (Aguirre International 1988: 4/1-2). The Training Officer within the Mission, a Foreign Service National, was named project manager, and she worked closely with—indeed, as a part-time supervisor within—the PAZAC office. PAZAC was organized along project functional lines; it essentially acted as any other in-country office in terms of recruitment, selection, program design, and orientation. On the U.S. side, USAID/Guatemala largely relied on the OIT placement contractor, PIET (Partners in International Education and Training), to oversee Trainee placement.

### ***The Trainee Population***

During the first years, a conscious decision was made to emphasize the indigenous population of the western and central highlands (such as from the departments of Sololá, San Marcos, and Quetzaltenango); for the first three years of the program (FY 1985 through FY 1987), almost half the Trainees were classified as indigenous, largely Mayan speakers from highland rural communities<sup>7</sup>. As the years passed, other regions were emphasized for the recruitment of candidates for training, so that by the fourth year there were a greater number of

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Trainees from the north, and by the fifth, from coastal areas and the eastern parts of the country. In FY 1990, the last year short-term Trainees were sent under CAPS, 97 percent came from the five eastern departments of Suchitepéquez, Jalapa, El Progreso, Santa Rosa, and Sacatepéquez<sup>9</sup>.

### *Training Themes*

It was recognized early on by Mission personnel that there were at least two limiting factors on the degree to which advanced technical training was feasible for short-term training: first, CAPS had a major component which surpassed direct development goals; or, put another way, the program was both "political" and oriented to development. In simplest terms, this was translated into an emphasis on including Experience America as a set of activities designed to be incorporated into all training. But this implied that no one should lose sight of the fact that important goals remained those of creating links with the U.S. and, more diffusely, creating positive attitudes with respect to the U.S. In the second place, the target populations—especially disadvantaged groups from rural areas—constrained the dimensions of technical training. Combined with the five-week training period (which served to use resources so that a maximal number of Trainees could be selected), the goals of technical training were necessarily kept modest. As a USAID/Guatemala document stated in 1987, "because of the low educational base, the technical training in CAPS Phase I is primarily based on improving organizational, management and leadership skills rather than on developing specific technical skills . . ." (USAID/Guatemala 1987:2).

The fields of study chosen for the short-term technical training drew on guidance from the Planning Council of Guatemala, consonant with AID objectives in the country. The topics selected were

- small enterprise;

- bilingual education;
- monolingual (i.e., Spanish-only) education;
- non-formal education and the training of trainers;
- community development;
- agriculture (such as apple harvesting or melon production);
- non-traditional exports;
- cooperative management;
- non-profit organizations; and
- community health (including both volunteer health promoters in communities as well as Ministry of Health workers).

While other groups were occasionally sent for short-term training, these topics provided the structure for the great bulk of training carried out. By FY 1990, only four topics were covered: health promoters, health trainers, small enterprise, and community development.

Through time, changes were made in the nature of the short-term experience: for example, short-term Trainees were nearly always provided a week in Washington during the first few years of the program; towards the end, the week was eliminated. Homestays were deemed impractical for large groups of Trainees, and these were reduced (Aguirre International 1988:3/20). Predeparture orientation, based on the assessments of evaluations, was expanded. While these changes doubtless affected the experience of the Trainees in a variety of ways, it is difficult at this point to be able to specify, year by year, how these changes were reflected in the responses the evaluators received to their questions of Trainees, especially in the more open-ended formats adopted for group discussion.

The long-term training component of CAPS began in 1985 with a program offering some twenty-five candidates academic training in a variety of fields. Most of these Trainees were placed in Master's degree programs in agricultural economics, international management, public health, and other related fields. Others were able to follow two-year training

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programs in public health, and two were sent to finish a Bachelor's degree in a U.S. institution. No other long-term Trainees were chosen in FY 1986 or FY 1987<sup>o</sup>. In 1988, the long-term program was again taken up, with the following components:

- A one-year Junior Year Abroad (JYA) program in coordination with several Guatemalan universities, which has sent some 300 young Guatemalans to a variety of U.S. institutions for a year of undergraduate education;
- A two-year program in conjunction with the Universidad del Valle of Guatemala City, in which students fifty students have gone to complete a Bachelor's degree in a U.S. institution; and

- A nine-month program of long-term technical training which has sent about 300 Trainees to study in three fields: public health; accounting, computers, and finance; and hotel management and tourism.

Finally, Follow-on efforts have evolved and been expanded through the CAPS years, as was documented in Chapter Two.

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## ENDNOTES

1. This project received extended attention in this report in Chapter Two.
2. The evaluation team was charged with an examination of CAPS. As the GPS Program is newly underway, it did not enter into our review.
3. Without specifying the actual percentage, the report shows an overall mean of 4.22 on a 5-point scale.
4. The evaluation from which this reference is drawn relied on a case study approach which focused on a limited number of individual Trainees. While a valuable demonstration of the usefulness of a more qualitative approach to evaluation, it was critiqued, in turn, because some reviewers felt it was difficult to determine the generality of the opinions quoted in the text. The present evaluation is designed to overcome that uncertainty by combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches; see Chapter Three.
5. A watershed in this process was a conference held in May, 1989 on the new CLASP project and approaches to evaluation which would focus on impact.
6. Indeed, these two options are not mutually exclusive. It is not uncommon for smallhold farmers also to work as local day laborers, as seasonal migrants to the coast, and in other productive activities such as artisan production. The evaluators talked to some CAPS returnees who also served as volunteer health promoters in their communities as well.
7. The figures are the following, taken from the FY 1988 Country Training Plan (USAID/Guatemala 1987:187):

<u>FY</u>	Total	Ladino		Indigenous	
	<u>N</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
1985	312	194	62.2	118	37.8
1986	796	334	42.0	462	58.0
1987	319	208	65.2	111	34.7
8. That was 396 of the 408 Trainees. The other 12 came from el Petén, the sparsely populated region in the north, bordering Belize.
9. Twelve of these Trainees actually went in FY 1986, although they were chosen in FY 1985.

# CHAPTER TWO

## The CAPS Trainee

### Population

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**CHAPTER TWO:**

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**The CAPS Trainee**

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**Population**

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**THE CAPS TRAINEE POPULATION**

The goal of the present discussion is to briefly characterize the overall CLASP Trainee population in Guatemala, drawing on information gathered by USAID/Guatemala and by the CASP/CASS program staff. The CLASP population is separated into three major groupings, according to the kind of program in which they participated: Short-term Technical Trainees, Long-term Trainees, and Trainees who participated in the CASP program.

**CAPS TRAINEES: AN OVERVIEW**

The number of CLASP Trainees is greater than in any other country; 4,558 in the CAPS program through FY 1990 and 186 in the CASP program (of whom about 132 had returned to Guatemala by the time the evaluation was carried out). CLASP Trainees are characterized by heterogeneity in almost every dimension: they are almost 50 percent women, which signifies that the scholarships have been extended to that half of the population which has normally found it very difficult to undertake either vocational or advanced academic training, especially outside Guatemala (see Table 2.1).

Year	Total	Women	Percent
FY 85	326	132	40
FY 86	809	187	23
FY 87	1,037	589	57
FY 88	932	504	54
FY 89	1,048	531	51
FY 90	406	231	57
TOTAL	4,558	2,174	48

The Trainees are geographically dispersed, coming from every one of Guatemala's 22 departments, from small, isolated mountain villages and equally isolated settlements in the tropics to the metropolis which is Guatemala City. Trainees are also drawn from a wide scope of income classes (though very clearly clustered at the low end of the income scale). They encompass an extensive range of fields, experiences, and economic and social backgrounds.

CLASP Trainees represent as well the full range of ethnic diversity of the country: indigenous Guatemalans are especially well represented in the CAPS Trainee population. A significant proportion of the short-term technical Trainees are native speakers of Mayan languages; hundreds retain traditional affiliations in villages in the central and western highlands.

Of Mission-sponsored Trainees, some 3,900 were short-termers, about 86 percent of the CAPS I population sent by the Mission. CIS figures indicate a total of 658 long-term Trainees in the Mission-sponsored CAPS program, or 14 percent of the total Mission program. The Mission's figures on long-term Trainees are higher than those maintained in the CIS biodata files, at least as reported in a recent summary sheet on the program and include CASP and other categories.

The CAPS population evidenced some interesting characteristics. The biodata files indicate that 90 percent were classified as coming from rural areas, 95 percent are economically disadvantaged, and 95 percent were classified as leaders. Overall, 36 percent of the Trainee population had six

years or less of schooling, and 50 percent less than ten years. The discussion now turns to the subgroups within this broader population. Given the great emphasis on short-term technical training in CAPS, let us examine this group first.

### SHORT-TERM TECHNICAL TRAINEES

Given the significance of short-term training for CAPS-Guatemala, the mobilization of short-term Trainees was a major undertaking for the five years of the Program. From the very first moment, the Mission was successful in organizing groups for the training experience: from May 1985 until the end of the fiscal year, a period of about four months, some 312 short-term Trainees were sent to the U.S. The rhythm of the selection process remained high: by FY 1987, over a thousand short-term Trainees were sent. The numbers declined somewhat after that, although these reductions in short-term training were then compensated for in the long-term category.

The numbers in Table 2.2 represent the greatest movement to the United States of Trainees for short-term training in the entire CLASP program. The second largest program in CAPS, Costa Rica, sent only a little more than a third as many short-term Trainees as did Guatemala in the same period. The planning and logistical work

FY 85	312
FY 86	797
FY 87	1,037
FY 88	663
FY 89	685
FY 90	406
TOTAL	3,900

involved in recruiting and preparing such a large number of Trainees was monumental, especially if one considers the difficulties in communications and infrastructure that characterize rural Guatemala. Yet all reports, both from personnel within the

Mission as well as from discussions with hundreds of Trainees, suggest that for the most part this process worked well, with very few cases reported (including occasional unpredictable illnesses) of problems with Trainees who returned early, or who failed to return with their groups, or who had other significant problems which diminished their ability to receive training or which interfered with the training of others.

CAPS short-term Trainees, overall, average a little over 28 years of age; 39.8 percent of short-term Trainees (1,391 of 3,496 cases recorded) were over thirty. By a slight majority, the typical short-term Trainee is married; but this varies significantly by sex, where we see that 68.2 percent of men are married, whereas only 31.8 percent of the women Trainees are (see Table 2.3).

	Women	%	Men	%
Married	683	36.3	1,382	68.2
Single	1,196	63.7	643	31.8

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 3,391

Consistent with CLASP's special focus on reaching both women and the economically disadvantaged, the Mission established the means to incorporate the rural poor into the short-term program. The biodata files indicate that in this the Mission was quite successful in reaching its goals. The population of short-term technical Trainees is one which was clearly drawn from the lower socioeconomic levels of Guatemalan society (see Table 2.4).

	Female	%	Male	%
Yes	1,832	97.5	1,941	95.9
No	45	2.5	82	4.1

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 3,900

Biographical information indicates that, in terms of income, CAPS short-term Trainees

are poor. Eighty-one percent claimed to have a household income of less than \$250 a month, and almost 40 percent of less than \$100 a month. Notable in these figures is that a significantly greater percentage of men than women report they earn less than \$1,000 a year (46 percent of men as opposed to only 34 percent of women). While reported household income figures should be considered with some reserve, given the general incentive to report low figures, this figure is consistent with other data reported by the Trainees (see Table 2.5).

Annual Income Level	Female	Male	Total
Under \$1,000	33.7	45.6	39.4
\$1,000-1,999	28.1	22.3	25.3
\$2,000-2,999	17.0	15.4	16.2
\$3,000-3,999	9.1	7.1	8.1
\$4,000-4,999	4.9	4.3	4.6
\$5,000-5,999	2.8	2.2	2.5
Over \$6,000	4.4	3.1	3.8

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 3,908

The levels of educational achievement of CAPS short-term Trainees also suggest a disadvantaged population. More than half of the male population (53.1 percent) either has no formal education or only primary schooling. Women fare somewhat better, with only 44.6 percent having primary schooling or less. Only a little more than 14 percent of both men and women finished high school, although a significant proportion, 32.3 percent overall, have had technical training (see Table 2.6).

Educational Level	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
None	213	11.3	467	23.0	680	17.4
Primary	626	33.3	611	30.1	1,237	31.7
High sch.	266	14.1	290	14.3	556	14.2
Technical	691	36.8	573	28.3	1,264	32.3
Higher ed.	16	.9	30	1.4	46	1.2
Other	68	3.6	54	2.7	122	3.1
Total	1,880	48.1	2,028	51.9	3,908	100.0

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 3,908

The educational levels that Trainees ascribe to their parents are also quite low. As Table 2.7 indicates, 85 percent of short-term Trainees claimed that their fathers had six or fewer years of education, and 88 percent assigned the same educational level to their mothers. Only 8.4 percent of the fathers and less than 6 percent of the mothers had been able to attend school beyond the eighth grade. In addition, some 55 percent came from families in which they had four or more siblings. And fully 64 percent of the CAPS short-term population live in households in which at least five, and up to fifteen, people rely on the family income.

Educational Level	Father's		
	Female	Male	Total
None	26.8	40.4	33.2
1st to 3rd	29.8	28.1	29.0
4th to 6th	31.6	24.5	28.3
7th and 8th	1.3	0.8	1.0
More than 8th	10.5	6.1	8.4

  

Educational Level	Mother's		
	Female	Male	Total
None	33.6	51.1	41.8
1st to 3rd	30.0	22.9	26.7
4th to 6th	28.2	20.9	24.8
7th and 8th	1.2	0.8	0.9
More than 8th	7.1	4.5	5.8

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 2,867

Women were also well represented throughout the life of the short-term program, but especially in the final years. USAID/Guatemala sent over 1,881 women to the United States for short-term training from 1985 through 1990, as Table 2.5 shows. In terms of both percentages and total numbers, Guatemala CAPS surpassed all the other CAPS programs in the recruitment of women (see Table 2.8).

Table 2.8 Women in Short-term Training

<u>Year</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Percent</u>
FY 85	128	41.0
FY 86	186	23.3
FY 87	589	56.7
FY 88	380	57.1
FY 89	367	53.0
FY 90	231	56.9
TOTAL	1,881	48.1

Program planners consciously drew on different populations as CAPS progressed, leading to a geographic progression from west to east. That is, during the first several years the Mission focused for recruitment, in addition to the metropolitan area of the capital, on the western altiplano: Sololá, Quiché, San Marcos, Quetzaltenango, and other highland departments. As the program advanced, recruitment was quite consciously moved towards the east, the south coast, and the north coast.

The western highlands are the core of the Maya-speaking indigenous population, while the eastern sections of the country are populated by a more *mestizo* or, to use the Guatemalan term, *ladino* population. Indeed, in the final year of implementing CAPS I, the last group of 406 short-termers all came from six less well-represented departments: Suchitepequez, Jalapa, El Progreso, Santa Rosa, Sacatepequez, and the Petén. Incidentally, the year focused on only four training topics, and all 18 groups were rotated among health trainers, health promoters, community development, and small business.

As Appendix A shows, over 30 percent of the short-term Trainees came from Regions VI and VII, which contain the highland departments of Quetzaltenango, Sololá, el Quiché, San Marcos, Huehuetenango, and Totonicapán. Another fifth of the short-term Trainees came from the three highland departments around the capital city. On the other hand, the rest of the country has also been well represented, as program planners placed emphasis on the south coast and the eastern departments.

This emphasis on drawing on the indigenous population led the Guatemala Mission to keep track of a category of "ethnically disadvantaged," a characteristic of Trainees not required by CLASP guidelines but which is nevertheless a meaningful label in a country such as Guatemala where ethnicity is an important element in the definition of social groupings. The evaluators understand "ethnically disadvantaged" in this case to be equivalent, for the most part, to "indigenous," which the Mission has defined as "an individual who speaks a native language, wears Mayan dress and/or identifies himself/herself as a member of a Mayan ethnic group" (USAID/Guatemala 1989:6). The social realities of Guatemala are such that the indigenous are objects of discrimination and prejudice; indigenous identity is clearly a disadvantaged status (see Table 2.9).

Table 2.9 Are Trainees Ethnically Disadvantaged?

	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	474	25.2	953	47.0	1,427	36.5
No	1,407	74.8	1,075	53.0	2,482	63.5
Source: CIS Biographical Database					N = 3,909	

Rural residence is another indicator of disadvantaged status in Guatemala as in other Latin American countries. In the case of CAPS short-term Trainees, fully 93.5 percent were classified as residing in rural areas, with essentially no variation by sex (see Table 2.10).

	<u>Women</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	1,760	93.6	1,896	93.5
No	121	6.4	132	6.5

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 3,909

Finally, CAPS Trainees were selected to be leaders in their communities or in their places of work. Although the criteria for the assignment may have varied through the years, the program has identified some 97 percent of its short-term technical Trainees as leaders.

### CAPS LONG-TERM TRAINEES

The long-term training provided to Guatemalan Peace Scholars by CAPS-Guatemala has been varied, ranging from a small contingent early in the program sent for advanced degrees, to the present and ongoing Junior Year Abroad effort. The Mission also sponsored a long-term technical training component which has supported several hundred Trainees. The discussion here, treats all long-term Trainees as a single population. Across this grouping, long-term training, whether technical or academic, implies a greater overall educational preparation, and in Guatemala (as in other countries) educational achievement is an indicator for many other social characteristics and conditions. A separation of technical and academic subpopulations in this case would also be misleading. Several hundred Trainees who participated in the Junior Year Abroad option, while involved in what most would classify as an academic program, are nevertheless placed in the technical training category in the biographical database, presumably because they are not working towards a degree in their year in the United States.

The long-term population remained small for the first few years of the program, as the implementing office concentrated on the recruitment and training of the large number of short-term Trainees. Ninety-six percent of

the long-term Trainees were sent in the fiscal years of 1988 and 1989 (see Table 2.11).

FY 85	14
FY 86	12
FY 87	0
FY 88	269
FY 89	363
FY 90	0
TOTAL	658

The average age of the CAPS long-term Trainee is, not unexpectedly, substantially lower than the short-term Trainees, at a little over age twenty-two. About 14 percent were under twenty, and only slightly more than 6 percent were over thirty. In contrast with the short-term Trainees, most are single, as seen in Table 2.12.

	<u>Women</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>%</u>
Married	8	2.7	26	7.3
Single	285	97.3	330	92.7

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 649

The percentage of long-term Trainees who were classified as economically disadvantaged, while still well above the CLASP target of 70 percent, was nevertheless somewhat lower than for the large short-term population. In the case of the long-term Trainees, the percentage of men who are characterized as disadvantaged was less than that of the women. Seventy five percent of the long-term Trainee population was categorized as economically disadvantaged (see Table 2.13).

	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	233	79.5	255	71.6
No	60	20.5	101	28.4

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 649

The same information on income levels and educational achievement that was presented for CAPS short-term Trainees is also available for the long-term program participants. Table 2.14 classifies the percentages of Trainees by their income levels. Here we see that the average income distribution is somewhat greater than for the short-term

Income Level	Female	Male	Total
Under \$1,000	7.7	8.1	7.9
\$1,000-1,999	25.4	22.7	24.0
\$2,000-2,999	26.5	26.9	26.7
\$3,000-3,999	15.3	15.2	15.3
\$4,000-4,999	9.8	11.9	10.9
\$5,000-5,999	6.6	6.3	6.4
Over \$6,000	8.7	9.0	8.8

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 622

Trainees. Only 31 percent put their monthly income at less than \$250 (with short-term Trainees, the figure was 81 percent), and over a quarter (26.1 percent) place their income at \$4,000 per year or greater, as compared with only 11 percent of the short-term Trainees.

Table 2.15 reviews the reported educational levels of long-term Trainees at the time of their application for the scholarship. The contrast with short-term Trainees here is very clear; while in Table 2.6 we saw that 53 percent of male short-term Trainees had either no formal schooling or had only attended primary school, the educational levels of the long-term Trainees are much

Educational Level	Female		Male		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Primary	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.2
High sch.	28	9.6	112	31.5	140	21.6
Technical	219	74.7	225	63.2	444	68.4
Higher ed.	6	2.0	18	5.1	24	3.7
Other	40	13.6	0	0.0	40	6.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>45.1</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>54.9</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 649

higher. Only one Trainee overall places primary school as his highest level of training. Thirty-two percent of men (but less than 10 percent of women) have high school diplomas as their highest educational level; 68.4 percent of men and 74.7 percent of women have received post-secondary technical training. However, it is unclear with the information at hand where the Junior Year Abroad Trainees have been placed; presumably, since they have at least two years of university experience but have not yet earned the *licenciatura*, they are classed with those who have received technical training.

The same higher levels of educational achievement are evident when Trainees report the training received by their parents. Table 2.16 shows that the parents of long-term Trainees had been able to progress considerably further, on average, than the parents of the short-term Trainees. For example, a full 47.1 percent of the fathers of women Trainees, and 40.1 percent of the fathers of men Trainees, had nine years or more of formal education. For short-term Trainees, this figure was only 8.4 percent overall. Since most students in Guatemala

Father's			
Educational Level	Female	Male	Total
None	10.2	10.2	10.2
1st to 3rd	13.1	16.8	15.1
4th to 6th	27.0	30.1	28.7
7th and 8th	2.6	2.8	2.7
9th to 11th	14.6	12.7	13.6
More than 11th	32.5	27.4	29.7

  

Mother's			
Educational Level	Female	Male	Total
None	10.0	13.5	11.9
1st to 3rd	14.3	21.8	18.3
4th to 6th	35.4	28.2	31.5
7th and 8th	2.9	1.5	2.1
9th to 11th	13.2	10.7	11.9
More than 11th	24.3	24.2	24.3

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 606

finish the *bachiller* in eleven years, almost 30 percent of the fathers of both sexes had post-secondary education. On the lower end of the educational scale, long-term Trainees reported that only a quarter of their fathers had three years or less of schooling, while 62 percent of short-term Trainees made the same statement.

The participation of women in the program is similar to the numbers seen in the short-term program. In the two principal years of FY 1988 and FY 1989, when the bulk of long-term Trainees were sent, women formed more than 46 percent both years. Of the 649 long-term Trainees on record, 293 (or 45.1 percent) were women.

Table 2.17 shows that less than 10 percent of the female, and less than 15 percent of the male long-term Trainees were categorized by the Mission as "ethnically disadvantaged." Overall, only 12 percent of long-term Trainees were placed in this category, as compared with 36.5 percent of short-term Trainees.

	Women	%	Men	%
Yes	206	70.3	228	64.0
No	87	29.7	128	36.0
Source: CIS Biographical Database				N = 649

A comparison of rural residence of long-term Trainees with those of the short-term Trainees shows a significant contrast: 93.5 percent of short-termers lived in rural areas, whereas, for long-termers, the figure was 67 percent.

A high percentage of long-term Trainees were also identified as leaders by the Mission; of the 649 long-term Trainees on record, 534 (or 82.3 percent overall) were categorized as leaders. The percentage of men and women who were so classified were similar: 80 percent of the women and 84.3 percent of the men were characterized as leaders.

## CASP TRAINEES

The CASP-Georgetown earmark, which functioned throughout Central America (and which has, under CASS, expanded to the Caribbean) has sent a considerably smaller number of people to the United States for training. As is discussed in Chapter Four, the CASP/CASS program has adopted the specific strategy of providing long-term technical training in a limited number of vocational fields. (While the CIS biographical database indicates that there have been twenty-five short-term CASP Trainees from Guatemala, 17 of these were in the first two years of the program, and there have been only two short-term Trainees since FY 1987; Recruitment has thus drawn on a somewhat different population than that of the CAPS program. For example, the CASP group is the youngest of the three subpopulations, averaging about 21.6 years (and if the twenty-five short-term Trainees are excluded, the average age drops to a little over twenty years of age). Of 145 Trainees for whom there are records, only six are over age 30; none of these were long-term Trainees. This is consistent with CASP/CASS efforts to recruit young people with no (or only the first semesters of) university training. CASP Trainees are also characterized as being unmarried; none are recorded as having spouses (see Table 2.18).

	CASP	CASS
FY 1985	15	
FY 1986	41	
FY 1987	28	
FY 1988	48	
FY 1989	54	58
FY 1990	0	95
TOTAL	186	153

  

	Women	%	Men	%
Married	0	0.0	0	0.0
Single	74	100.0	98	100.0
Source: CIS Biographical Database				

CASP/CASS records assert that all of their Trainees are economically disadvantaged. In outlining the present recruitment practices, the country coordinator described to the evaluators a process by which a determination is made of economically disadvantaged status, including measures of income in relation to household size and whether certain material goods are in the possession of the candidate. The evaluators are unable, with the information at hand, to compare the CAPS long-term population (with whom the Mission felt that 75.2 percent should be classified as economically disadvantaged).

Information is also available on the reported household income and on educational levels achieved by CASP Trainees and their parents. The following tables show that 83.7 percent of the population reports a household income of less than \$250 per month, a proportion slightly higher than the CAPS short-term population and a global picture of income which would be much lower than for the CAPS long-term group. In terms of income distribution, men and women appear to be fairly evenly matched (see Table 2.19).

Income Level	Female	%	Male	%	Total (%)
Under \$1,000	20	26.7	29	26.9	26.8
\$1,000-1,999	26	34.7	29	26.9	30.1
\$2,000-2,999	20	26.7	29	26.9	26.8
\$3,000-3,999	5	6.7	11	10.2	8.7
\$4,000-4,999	1	1.3	6	5.6	3.8
\$5,000-5,999	0	0.0	2	1.9	1.1
Over \$6,000	3	4.0	2	1.9	2.7

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 186

The same is true for educational levels. CASP Trainees have fairly high educational levels, required for them to undertake college-level work in the United States. Over sixty percent have at least the equivalent of a high school diploma; about a fifth more have some additional technical training, and an almost equal amount also

are listed in the "other" category, in this case presumably referring to at least some initial course work at the university or getting a normal school certificate (see Table 2.20).

Educational Level	Female	%	Male	%	Total	%
None	0	0.0	2	1.9	2	1.1
Primary	0	0.0	1	0.9	1	0.5
High sch.	44	60.3	66	60.6	110	60.4
Technical	14	19.2	23	21.1	37	20.3
Other	15	20.5	13	11.9	28	15.4
No info.	0	0.0	4	3.7	4	2.2
TOTAL	73	40.1	109	59.9	182	100.0

Source: CIS Biographical Database N = 182

The educational levels reported for their parents indicate that many CASP Trainees are indeed advancing considerably further than their parents. While all of the parents received at least some formal education, the majority of parents of both male and female Trainees have only a primary school education. About a fifth of the fathers of both men and women, and around 18 percent of the mothers, had completed more than 11 years, and had therefore some advanced technical or university training (see Table 2.21).

Women were well represented throughout the life of the program, reaching over 50 percent in two years (see Table 2.22). On the other hand, the CASP program has a relatively low percentage of Trainees who are classified as "ethnically disadvantaged." Whether a CLASP implementing office decides to use "ethnic disadvantage" as a consideration in recruitment is left up to the country office itself; it is not a requirement of CLASP program-wide. In the CASP-Guatemala case, it either has not been used as a significant point for selection or it has not been systematically recorded. Only 7.9 percent of women and 16.4 percent of men (for an overall average of 12.9 percent) has been classified by the CASP office as ethnically disadvantaged.

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**Table 2.21 Parents' Educational Levels: CASP Trainees (Percentages)**

**Father's**

<u>Educational Level</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
None	0.0	0.0	0.0
1st to 3rd	22.6	16.4	19.4
4th to 6th	45.2	37.3	41.1
7th and 8th	3.2	6.0	4.7
9th to 11th	9.7	19.4	14.7
More than 12	19.3	20.9	20.2

**Mother's**

<u>Educational Level</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>
None	0.0	0.0	0.0
1st to 3rd	37.1	30.6	33.6
4th to 6th	35.5	30.6	32.8
7th and 8th	4.8	11.1	8.2
9th to 11th	1.6	12.5	7.5
More than 12	20.9	15.3	17.9

Source: CIS Biographical Database      N = 134

By a small majority, however, CASP Trainees are residents of rural areas: 55.3 percent of the women and 51.8 percent of the men are from rural areas. As for leadership status, 100 percent of the Trainees were identified by the CASP office in Guatemala as being leaders.

**Table 2.22 Women Trainees in CASP**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Percent</u>
FY 85	3	20
FY 86	21	51
FY 87	14	50
FY 88	12	25
FY 89	26	48
TOTAL	76	41

Source: CIS Database      N = 134

**CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS**

This review of the composition of CLASP population in Guatemala reveals a number of particular characteristics of the Trainee population. In the first place, it is evident that the short-term CAPS population is very poor and, by any measure, truly disadvantaged. This group of 4,000 Guatemalans has,

for the most part, been one whose parents received little more than a primary school education; and, for the men, 40 percent say their fathers had no formal education at all, while well over half of the men say the same thing about their mothers. Income levels are low, in which over 70 percent of both sexes say they earn less than \$2,000 per year. In terms of their own educational achievements, the population seems to divide into two groups: over half overall have less than a primary school education, and about a third have some technical training after high school. The group is overwhelmingly disadvantaged economically; nearly 97 percent are so classified. According to Mission figures, almost half of the male Trainees, and over a third overall, are also from an ethnically disadvantaged group.

The CAPS long-term Trainee population and the CASP Trainees show some interesting contrasts. Both are younger, on average, than the short-term Trainees. They are also much less likely to have spouses: nearly 70 percent of the male short-term Trainees were married, while only 7 percent of the CAPS male long-term population and none of the CASP Trainees were married. Income levels are still low for the CAPS long-term population and for the CASP Trainees, but there is less clustering at the very bottom of the income scale, and there are more representatives of groups who earn more. The long-term Trainees, as would be expected of a group which has generally carried out college-level training in the U.S., has higher levels of educational achievement. Nearly everyone has at least a high school diploma, and the great majority both of CAPS long-term Trainees and of the CASP group have training beyond high school. It is apparent as well that the latter two groups are considerably less diverse ethnically than the short-term population, with only 12 percent of the two long-term groups being categorized as "ethnically disadvantaged."

These contrasts point to the diversity within the CLASP population, which is still nevertheless a segment of the Guatemalan

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populace which has had few opportunities of the kind provided by CLASP training. Both USAID/Guatemala and the CASP office have recruited a distinctive and varied population from throughout Guatemala which by all appearances should go on to have a significant impact on the country in the future. After discussing the methods used in the evaluation and documenting the way the research was carried out in the next chapter, we turn to the Trainees' assessment of their training and to their involvement in Follow-on.

# CHAPTER THREE

## The CLASP

### Scholarship Experience

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## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### ***The CLASP***

### ***Scholarship Experience***

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#### **THE CLASP SCHOLARSHIP EXPERIENCE**

For many Trainees in the CAPS and CASP programs, the opportunity to study in the United States, to meet U.S. citizens, and to visit different areas of the country, constitutes one of the major events in their lives. Trainees generally articulate very explicitly the significance (for some, the life-changing nature) of the experience.

Yet while the great majority feel that CLASP Training has been an important individual milestone in their lives, it is a rare Trainee who does not have well formed views on the value and relative success of the training. Most Trainees are able to assess with considerable acuity the various aspects of the program, and were eager to communicate those opinions. When they found aspects of the program that worked well, or were carried out with either efficiency or human sensitivity, they were eager to report that. But the Trainees were also prepared to criticize certain aspects of the program and to offer suggestions for improvement. Trainees also recognized that they spoke from their perspective as Trainees, limiting their comprehension of policies or decisions programmers were required to make.

This section provides Trainee reports on the CLASP scholarship experience, from recruitment to return. It draws on data obtained from the focus groups, and reports the views of Trainees in their own words. Focus groups are not chosen by random sample and their results are not generalizable through statistical techniques (see Volume I, Chapter Three). Nevertheless, the range of views expressed here represent the views of more than a hundred CAPS Trainees. The

chapter is organized by program components and Trainee category, since the experiences of Trainees who participate in the different programs vary considerably.

#### **CAPS SHORT-TERM TRAINEES**

Short-term Trainees were the category of CAPS Scholars with whom the evaluators spent the most time. Trainees were asked to comment on selection, orientation, training, and Experience America. These issues have been dealt with in previous evaluations (Aguirre International 1987, 1988). Here, however, it is possible to capture in some instances a greater length of time since training and a broader population of Trainees. The emphasis is also on the retrospective voice of the Trainees, now that CAPS I has ended. The starting point was: How do Trainees view the training experience now, with at least one year having passed between their U.S. training and the present moment (and in some cases four or five years)? Trainees were asked to describe and comment upon this process as they saw it now.

#### **The Recruitment Process**

The mobilization of short-term Trainees was a major undertaking for the five years of the Program. Administrators within CAPS-Guatemala reported that the CAPS program drew on a network of institutions through which they mobilized the short-term technical Trainees. The primary agent in this effort was PAZAC, the implementing agency. PAZAC, however, relied upon a range of public and private sector institutions to inform their employees or clients about the program, to recruit potential candidates,

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and even to nominate candidates for particular training programs.

PAZAC and its in-country institutional collaborators were remarkably efficient in the task of recruiting short-term Trainees. It succeeded in locating and incorporating into the program 3,900 persons, men and women from isolated rural areas; speakers of native languages; peasant farmers who had, in some way, demonstrated a commitment to volunteer in a health campaign or in some other socially motivated activity. Even persons within the Mission holding a less than enthusiastic view of CAPS Training spoke with awe about the way these groups—especially from highland communities which were of difficult access—were recruited, screened, selected, provided orientation, and sent to the United States.

A previous evaluation described the process of institutional linkages that PAZAC developed with supporting organizations as “fruitful” (Aguirre International 1988: 4/5-4/16). The choice of intermediary institutions reflected the priority training areas as well as the real institutional possibilities of Guatemala: the Ministries of Education and Health were a major source of CAPS Trainees in those two fields, for instance, and such government-supported institutions as INTECAP (the Instituto Nacional de Tecnología y Capacitación), INACOOOP (the Instituto Nacional de Cooperativas), and DIGESA (the state agricultural extension office) each were called upon to suggest candidates for short-term courses in the training of trainers or cooperative management, respectively.

Likewise, a range of institutions provided nominees for the small business focus (called PYME, or Pequeña y Mediana Empresa). Here, vocational education institutions were called upon (i.e., Instituto Feminino Técnico, which provides training for women in a variety of small businesses in “traditionally” female fields) or other institutions which work with disadvantaged populations (i.e., the Fundación de la Mujer, which provides

small credit to woman-owned businesses). Very rarely—although there were some exceptions—did these Trainees find their way into the program as a result of their own initiative<sup>1</sup>.

### **Selection Issues: Fairness**

Short-term Trainees were asked if they felt that the process of selection in which they had participated was fair, efficiently carried out, and relatively free of extraneous influences. The goal was to obtain Trainees’ views as to whether they believed there was implicit political influence or attempts by those overseeing the recruitment to direct the fellowships to individuals—friends or followers—who may have been inappropriate. Since PAZAC necessarily had to delegate at least the initial mobilization and selection to other institutions, did these latter entities fulfill the charge they received well, in the eyes of the Trainees themselves?

Most Trainees agreed that the great bulk of Trainees deserved to go, or at least would have been good candidates in the process of in-country selection. As a teacher participating in an EIL seminar put it,

“In some measure, we wouldn’t be able to tell you what percentage, some people may have gone due to *compadrazgo* (friendship or ritual kinship) or *cuello* (influence). But to a very great degree we were chosen honestly, due to our abilities.”

Most short-term Trainees said that they had learned of the program through their superiors at work, or, in the case of rural residents who participated in public health or community development programs, through a Ministry health worker or through a local schoolteacher. When one teacher announced that she had been chosen through “friendship,” her description of her recruitment suggested that a high official, whom she considered a friend, nominated her. She did not suggest any way in which

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she failed to meet the criteria that were set for the group in which she took part.

### ***Trainees Recall the Selection Process***

The process was straightforward in terms of its strict application of selection criteria:

- A young trainer of trainers who works in a cooperative recounted that he was chosen when the other person nominated by his institution was beyond the maximum age permissible.
- The recruitment of a group of teachers from private schools was typical of the selection process for state employees. All those in the focus group had been selected through the institution in which they were working; invitations and application forms had arrived from Guatemala City announcing the program, and most of the Trainees in the group said that they were nominated by their school principals. Certain normative standards were announced: they should be active in teaching and in school activities, they must have been teaching more than five years, and they should be under 35 years old. All those present said they fulfilled those criteria, and those who did not were excluded.
- A Trainee who has a small business was more typical of the recruitment of the CAPS population. She recounted that she was recruited through INTECAP, the national training institute, where she had been taking a course. A trainer there was told to recruit eight from her region, and she was nominated. She was told to bring her business license; she sold bread to pay for the trip to Guatemala City, took a short exam there, and was selected. She had eight days between the trainer's announcement and the day she left.
- A case of a non-teacher—a community telephone operator, specifically—who went in a teacher training group was mentioned in one group as an example of inefficient

selection. It was felt that her occupation should have excluded her from the specific training. Another member of the group demurred, suggesting that even though this person did not work in the classroom, she most likely used her training in working with adult groups in her town.

- Another Trainee said that in her group "only two fellowships were wasted," and she based this assessment on the fact that these two persons had not participated actively in any alumni or Follow-on activities since returning.

Concerns about the selection process being unfairly distorted were apparently often not far below the surface, even by those doing the recruiting. A volunteer health promoter reported that when she was invited by a local Ministry of Health worker to go to the department capital to fill out the forms, the Ministry health worker told her and her group not to publicize what scholarship they were applying for, for fear that local politicians might attempt to divert the program from people being chosen by merit in order to try to give it to people who were politically connected. (That this would not have been acceptable to AID did not enter into this health technician's equation.)

One group of teachers agreed that even in the few cases where influence may have entered in the selection process, Trainees in their programs were clearly economically disadvantaged. One pointed out that even teachers who work two jobs, in both private and public schools, are not paid well. Trainees were also leaders; very few did not exhibit leadership abilities.

### ***Trainee Critiques of the Selection Process***

Critiques were made of the selection process, however. The following are typical commentaries by the Trainees:

- Trainees felt that *cuello* was sometimes involved in the selection of a small

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percentage of Trainees, such as a mayor's wife or a manager's *compadre*. But one Trainee stated that this was definitely not due to anything that PAZAC or AID had done. Rather, this was due to the fact that AID had to rely on local institutions to nominate people; the distortions came from the people who were charged with nominating candidates.

- When a candidate was unable to go, sometimes a family member was sent instead. This led, in the minds of some Trainees, to candidates who were not as well prepared or not as committed.
- The selection process was usually "vertical," in which the recruitment and selection were made by supervisors with little input by the potential Trainees themselves.
- Training of Trainers Trainees could cite cases of individual Trainees who had been selected as a result of *cuello*, that is, through influence and friendship. But they felt that such cases resulted as much from time pressure to select Trainees as from a distortion of the process; Ministry recruiters turned to friends because they often had so little time to prepare the lists of names.
- Some potential Trainees were said to be unable to go because they could not pay the minimal required expenses, such as the costs associated with documents such as the medical exam or passports. Trainees from FY 1990 estimated that they spent between Q.200 and Q.400 (between US\$50.00 and \$100.00) in these expenses; women were charged Q.90 for the medical examination that year.
- Some *ladino* Trainees complained that they were part of groups with indigenous participants who, according to the *ladinos*, did not have a sufficient command of Spanish. The *ladinos'* discomfort with the experience of sharing their training with indigenous Trainees was, if anything, a

great strength of the program, and reflects a conscious policy of CAPS-Guatemala<sup>2</sup>.

- A woman who was in a small business group noted that the Trainees were heterogeneous in their educational levels, and this created problems. She also described how it broadened the group's understanding of fellow Guatemalans, however.
- In several focus groups, Trainees mentioned fellow Peace Scholars who were not serious about their training. A Trainee who studied cooperatives said that while many in his group had the appropriate background, he noted that there were also secretaries with no post-secondary training, who stated that they were going "on vacation." A small business woman said that some of the Trainees were not actually in business, and another PYME mentioned two persons who treated the training as a sight-seeing trip, with no desire to improve themselves.
- As described previously, Trainees objected to what some of them saw as the rigid application of program criteria, feeling that many Trainees who were disqualified for pregnancy, age, health reasons, and "by the Embassy" were good leaders and should have been able to go.

### Other Selection Issues

Other observers of the selection process who have worked closely with Trainees have noted that concerns relating to past selection processes seem to be more pronounced in some subject fields than others. For example, these commentators involved in Follow-on find that the Training of Trainers group was appropriate. They have questioned the degree to which some Trainees in the health field may have been community leaders, believing that in this case the recruitment by outside Ministry people may have led to the situation in which those

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selected were personally known by the outside official due to past participation in a public health campaign, though their other leadership activities may have been limited.

Within the PYME subsegment of Trainees there appears it is perceived that a high percentage of women operate beauty shops. This may be somewhat exaggerated<sup>3</sup>; but, to the degree that this is true, it reflects the fact that the goal of recruiting women candidates, met and surpassed by Guatemala CAPS, required that the program draw on institutions which would provide them access to women in the various fields of study, as was mentioned previously. One of these, the Instituto Técnico Femenino of Guatemala City, provides training in operating beauty shops and pastry shops, and this educational establishment sent about six faculty members and over forty of its graduates.

### **The Issue of Indigenous Representation**

As mentioned above, some Trainees claim that their fellow Peace Scholars of indigenous background were often not able to take advantage of the training due to language difficulties or educational levels. The issue of ethnic identity was one with which many Trainees were uncomfortable with respect to their own ethnic identification; many also expressed confusion or ambivalence about how indigenous people who are not fluent in Spanish should have been incorporated into the CLASP program.

In every case, Trainees acknowledged that indigenous Guatemalans were a majority of the population (in some cases, Trainees thought that up to 80 percent of Guatemalans were indigenous, although most observers reckon the figure at about half the population). While poverty and limited educational opportunities are not limited to the indigenous population, it is nevertheless true that most rural indigenous speakers of Mayan languages are poor, and many have little more than a few years of schooling. Indigenous Trainees themselves expressed no

great problem with the way in which U.S. trainers designed programs for them. In several focus groups with a high percentage of indigenous Trainees, the training was well regarded.

The problems arose rather with Trainees who had achieved higher levels of education. Various Trainees mentioned that the difficulties with language faced by indigenous members of their training groups slowed group progress. Several groups recommended the adoption of educational levels for Trainee selection that would be out of reach for most indigenous Guatemalans. When reminded of the high percentage of indigenous population, or of illiteracy, in the country, most recognized that this would create a quandary, and no Trainee ever categorically argued that the training should not be extended to all. Different solutions were proposed by Trainees to overcome the educational backgrounds of indigenous candidates, such as special courses for the non-literate, or restricting the courses to the indigenous. Others would insist, however, on maintaining a literacy requirement throughout, regardless of its impact on indigenous recruitment.

In some groups, the contact between more urbanized and "hispanicized" Guatemalans and indigenous people from rural areas was clearly beneficial to changing attitudes. When the high levels of illiteracy in Guatemala and the intent of the program to include the disadvantaged was noted, a 1985 PYME Trainee said that, with the exception of three people employed in administrative positions, all the rest in her training group owned very small businesses and exhibited low levels of education. She spoke approvingly of the way the U.S. Trainers, through case analysis, were able to tailor the training to these Trainees, and noted that these small businessmen generally had considerable practical knowledge if not formal education. The trainers also worked in terms of the cases of the Trainees themselves, many of whom had businesses which were not going well. She cited a concrete case where the

trainers helped a woman with a workshop in Antigua dramatically redesign her business.

### Were Trainees Leaders?

When Trainees were asked to characterize whether or not they considered themselves "leaders," most said that they were. They recognized that they were called upon to lead meetings, to teach others, to take initiatives. Trainees in different groups were always willing to suggest that some of their fellow Trainees in the U.S. did not demonstrate leadership abilities. This issue, again, strikes the evaluators as similar to the questions of influence. That is, Trainees recognize the existence of a "real" which conflicts somewhat with the "ideal" criteria set up by the program. But they also affirm that the cases which did not meet the criteria were always limited. In the area of selecting people whom others identify (or who identify themselves) as leaders, the program was successful.

### Predeparture Orientation

The majority of Trainees described the orientation as useful and adequate. Trainee responses show that the experience had clearly evolved over the course of the years. The earliest Trainees often spoke of a session lasting only a few hours. Later Trainees recall a full day or more of orientation. A frequent comment from Trainees was that the orientation was adequate in terms of the mechanics of travel, but often less specific on the content of the course. One Training of Trainers Trainee said that he only received an indication of course content after arriving in the U.S., when he was given a schedule for the first week of training.

Predeparture orientations are also often the object of very specific kinds of complaints. For example, two teachers going to Michigan say that they were not given adequate information about clothing; another said their final destination was changed in the Miami airport. Most said that they had

insufficient preparation in English, which was true; no attempt has been made to provide CAPS short-term Trainees with more than basic survival English.

Table 3.1 Did Trainees Receive Pre-departure Orientation?

	<u>Male</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	150	76.5	200	72.4	350	74.3
No	46	23.4	76	27.5	122	25.7

Source: CIS Exit Database

One the other hand, many Trainees appreciated the orientations. A small business Trainee who only had a day's warning reported that she did receive a short orientation course in Guatemala City before leaving. Several said they were primarily concerned that someone be there to meet them in the U.S., and they were open to learning whatever they were taught. Several Trainees in different groups mentioned that they were well oriented after their arrival in Washington.

Overall, however, the results from the focus groups suggested some ambivalence about the degree to which the predeparture

Table 3.2 Did Trainees Feel Prepared for Their U.S. Training?

	<u>Male</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>
Unprepared	12	6.0	22	7.9	34	7.1
Somewhat prep.	50	25.0	72	25.8	122	25.5
Prepared	83	41.5	121	43.4	204	42.6
Very prepared	55	27.5	62	22.2	117	24.4

Source: CIS Exit Database

orientation prepared the Trainees for their U.S. experience, similar to the responses offered by the relatively small sample of CAPS short-term Trainees who form part of the exit database maintained by the evaluation contractor. In that case, most Trainees reported feeling well prepared in beginning their training program in the U.S., but a smaller proportion (about 32% overall) reported it felt "somewhat prepared" or

even "unprepared." More extensive orientations, at least with greater focus on the content of the training program, would have been beneficial.

### The U.S. Training Experience

CAPS Trainees from Guatemala in the aggregate were exposed to a wide range of training experiences in the United States across a breadth of fields in a variety of training institutions over a period of five years. CAPS Trainees studied in twenty-five U.S. states; short-term Trainees took courses in at least a dozen fields.

	No.	%
Agriculture and Environmental Issues	123	3.2
Community Development	495	12.7
Cooperatives	334	8.6
Health Professionals	110	2.8
Primary Health Care and Nutrition	912	23.4
Microenterprise Development	914	23.4
Non-traditional Exports	110	2.8
Non-profit Organizations	76	1.9
Rural Education	335	8.6
Training of Trainers	475	12.2
Other	16	.4
TOTAL	3,900	100.0

Source: CIS Biographical Database

With this much variety, many and varied appreciations of the training experience are reported. Overall, short-term Trainees are satisfied with their U.S. training. They find it relevant to their work (its relevance and applicability is reported in Chapter One in the discussion of the impact of CAPS training in the work place); they generally report that they learned a great deal and that it has been an important experience. They also reported enjoying the training experience.

### Trainee Assessments of Their Programs

Within the context of positive views about training, a range of opinion noted. Most of

these dealt with such issues as whether the training reached the Trainees' objectives or was well designed for their needs.

### Positive Views

On one end of this range of views are those who felt the training was directly useful and of great assistance in their work. For example, a Trainee who studied public health described the main objective of her training as that of being trained in order to return and serve the community. She felt that this objective had been reached; her training motivated her to be able to help her community.

In a Training of Trainers group, the Trainees had been members of training groups in a variety of areas: cooperatives, health, education, training of trainers, and agriculture. When asked to finish the sentence "My training was . . .," such answers as "very good," "satisfactory," "excellent," and "both practical and theoretical" were mentioned. Trainees gave an average grade between 75 and 80 to the training they received.

A group of PYME Trainees who were in the United States between 1985 and 1987 rated their training programs between 95 and 100, with the exception of one grade of 75. Other small business people cited specific examples of the relevance of the training (discussed in Chapter One, Volume I). They all agreed that they had substantially reached their training goals. Trainees who had gone to the U.S. to study leadership and community development and who were attending an EIL training seminar were likewise very positive about the courses they received. They also rated their training between 90 and 100. A group of agricultural extension agents, attending an EIL natural resources seminar, rated their U.S. training an average of 89 out of 100.

### Negative Views

On the opposite end of the spectrum were those Trainees who criticized the training for

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its lack of direct relevance. A group of school teachers was perhaps most critical of the training courses. Several reported that while they were impressed with the educational materials, they felt that the trainers were not informed about their educational background or about educational curriculum in Guatemala and generally assumed that education was "backwards" when, in fact, their training compared with that of U.S. teachers. They were taught concepts and techniques in the U.S. with which they were already quite familiar. Several reported that they expected more from their training, and at least two mentioned that they felt they had given more in the training than they had received. The theme that training was not directed to their level of experience or education was repeated by several Trainees in the Training of Trainers group.

### *Neutral Views*

Finally, many Trainees fell into a middle ground in which they indicate that the training itself was of less importance than the total experience. Trainees spoke of returning full of self-confidence and in good spirits, with the idea that they could achieve their own goals. One teacher said that, although she felt the practical training goals were not achieved, she learned to esteem Guatemala more while in the U.S. and to believe that it is possible to move her country forward in development. Others also stated they felt that broader goals than the technical training had been fulfilled through their scholarship.

### **Training Styles: Getting Out of the Classroom**

The U.S. institutions and contractors providing the training for these groups apparently worked to ensure that Trainees had a range of experiences outside the classroom. For example, one Trainee described visits his group made to a dairy farm, to see a drip irrigation system, and to a winery. Several of the teachers stated they had the chance to observe—one to teach—in a U.S. school. Training of Trainers Trainees thought that

the training sessions in the U.S. were well balanced between classroom and site visits and other practical applications of classroom training.

In a PYME group, several Trainees recounted that their training included tours and visits to factories; one expressed disappointment that there was only one such visit after they had been promised more, and this to "see the machines, not the people." Another Trainee pointed out that this first Trainee was in one of the very first training groups in 1985, and that by the time she had gone in late 1986 things may have functioned better. Several Trainees reported they were broken up into smaller groups by type of business, and the training was tailored to their particular needs.

The same small group training was adopted for most other fields as well, teachers, trainers, and community development Trainees. For the teachers, such training topics as mathematics pedagogy and classroom discipline were mentioned as being most useful. One Trainee stated that her training focused directly on leadership issues, and noted that the techniques and concepts were immediately employed within the group, altering the authoritarian style of some of the group members.

### **Length of Training**

The one comment consistently heard from short-term technical Trainees, most of whom were in four- and five-week training programs, was that the period of training was too short. This view was widely shared, even among those who profess high levels of satisfaction with the training; indeed, this is one point on which nearly all Trainees reached agreement. Trainees in all fields would have preferred a longer course. A female Trainee pointed out that the five-week schedule meant that, in reality, only about three weeks were actually available for the training, since a week was set aside for sightseeing, and time was lost at the beginning of the stay in administrative arrangements and settling in.

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As one Trainee put it, five weeks is enough to *pasear*, to tour, but not long enough to accomplish as much as he would have liked. Training of Trainers Trainees pointed out that in three to five weeks it was not possible to specialize in a field; rather, the period served more as an incentive, a stimulus to future work. Two mentioned that they gave more in their training sessions than they learned; and that they would only want to repeat the experience if it were longer and if it were clear that they were being chosen to share their own knowledge and experience, and not just as students. One extension agent referred to time as "the enemy" of the training, in the sense that he felt that everything was always rushed to accomplish as much as possible in the short period available.

The shortness of training has long been a point of debate in the Guatemala CAPS program. Program administrators argue that in spite of the views that Trainees express on this, many Trainees—especially the most disadvantaged—would not have been able to leave their homes and jobs for longer than the period of time allotted. Programmers also point to the fact that many Trainees, during their training experience, were very homesick, and were extremely anxious to return home as soon as they could. It is not possible to weigh these opposing points of view now; but the Trainees' insistence on the importance of a longer training period suggests that greater flexibility in scheduling the design of programs is a desirable goal for the future.

### **Experience America: Short-term Trainees**

The thousands of CAPS short-term Trainees had a multiplicity of experiences within the U.S. and an array of contacts with Americans. Most Trainees recognized the importance of the Experience America component of their training. In fact, some of the more skeptical Trainees saw the Experience America component as the real motive for the entire program; as one Trainee rather

bluntly put it, "they wanted us to fall in love with the U.S." Other Trainees also expressed the feeling that they felt that the primary purpose of their trip, even more important than the technical training, was for them to get to know the United States, the people there, so that they would bring back a pleasant image of North Americans. Another phrased the objective of the scholarship more philosophically, to see that all people are basically similar.

Certain conditions were nearly uniform for Trainees in terms of their United States experience. For example, all short-term training was conducted in Spanish, and the fact that they could not communicate in English was a limitation that the majority of Trainees found distressing. Trainees recognized that the program was not designed to train them in English and accepted the constraint as inevitable. Also, as has been seen, Trainees were in the U.S. for a limited time.

### ***The Homestay for Short-term Trainees***

A factor which varied among Trainee groups, however, and which strongly shaped the quality of Trainees' experience in the United States, was the contacts they had with U.S. citizens, especially whether or not they were able to participate in a homestay or an equivalent experience. In the evaluators' view, the homestay was one key element in the degree to which Trainees felt they had the chance to have some "real" experience of the United States.

Trainees in many groups pointed out that they had been trained by other Latin Americans, and, while they appreciated the opportunity to meet Spanish speakers from other countries, they wondered whether they had any "real" understanding of U.S. people as a result. This sense of distance was strengthened if the living arrangements precluded family contacts. For example, a group of Training of Trainers Trainees spent their time in a hotel in Miami, and did not get to know any families. One said that his only "at home" experience came when a

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trainer invited him to his house, an unplanned event. A Trainee in another group who also spent his time in a hotel in Miami felt that the hotel environment effectively prevented any real contact with Americans and the United States.

Those who participated in homestays with U.S. families were more positive. One teacher reported that she had firmly opposed the home visit because she disliked the idea of not being able to communicate well. After being obliged to go, she found it a very broadening and pleasing experience. Another Trainee recounted her surprise when she saw her American host eat a tidbit of food left over on the plate of a fellow Trainee; she saw this as evidence that this family felt no feelings of discrimination against the Trainees. She added that it would be marvelous if all North Americans were like the family she got to know.

The programmed Experience America activities of sightseeing and excursions were recalled with pleasure. Several Trainees recounted their visits to Washington; perhaps most memorable in this instance was the emotion which an indigenous Trainee displayed as he spoke of his visit to see the U.S. Senate in session. Others said they appreciated the chance to visit historical sites around the U.S., and several Trainees told of visits to Native American communities in which they were well received. Trainees also mentioned visits to Epcot Center and Disney World. Yet, as one Trainee pointed out, it is not feasible to expect the Trainees to understand American culture through a one-week trip.

One aspect of Experience America that evoked considerable discussion among Trainees was that of trying to understand U.S. public behavior. The courtesy and friendliness of U.S. citizens was mentioned by many Trainees. For example, one PYME Peace Scholar described how she and a group of fellow Trainees were set the task by their trainers of moving about Washington, and they found Americans willing to help

them. Many other Trainees had contrary stories, of rudeness suffered, of the expression of racism or discrimination, and of U.S. citizens' unwillingness to try to communicate with those who do not speak English. The weight of opinion here, however, was clearly towards a favorable view of U.S. citizens and institutions, even if the depth of understanding remained somewhat superficial.

### **The Short-term View of Training: Planning for the Future**

A role-playing exercise which most short-term groups carried out asked them to constitute themselves as a committee which would design a new training program. The idea behind this task was to lead Trainees beyond a simple recounting of problems that they may have encountered to consider positively, based on their own experience, what points would be worth preserving and expanding in the future. Trainees generally took this assignment seriously and made a series of considered suggestions as to how they would structure the training program. This section summarizes some of those recommendations.

A Training of Trainers Trainee group argued that training areas should continue to focus on development priorities, although a separate training focus should include indigenous language and culture. A mixed group of Trainees argued for training in the fields of literacy, business administration, health, small enterprises, and community development. The training emphases, they felt, should be set by the Guatemalan government or at least reflect the government's priorities. A PYME group came to the (not surprising) conclusion that small business should continue to be a principal focus of training.

A group of teachers argued that training should be for three months in order to provide enough time to combine both theoretical and practical concerns. Other groups suggested variations on somewhat

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longer training periods. One group gained a certain consensus around the more novel idea that training should be held in Guatemala at a less intensive level for perhaps a year or two, permitting people to continue to work. The Trainees could be taken to the United States for a few weeks for the Experience America component.

### *Who Should Be Selected?*

As for who should be chosen as Trainees, the Trainees in different groups devoted considerable time to sketching the characteristics of those who would be future Trainees. One group argued that they should be leaders, identified with and representing the community. Age should not be a criterion of selection. Trainees should be field or community people, not office workers. Their merit should lie in results, in their concrete works. New Trainees should be accredited by community committees or authorities.

One group suggested that Trainees should not be over 40 years of age and should have at least three years of primary school. A preference should be shown for bilinguals (i.e., those who speak a native language and Spanish). The moderator asked if high levels of illiteracy would not exclude many people, and the discussants agreed that practical knowledge, intelligence, and social activities, not merely education, should be the most important selection criteria.

Groups naturally preferred to imagine the Trainees as continuing to be like themselves. Educators felt, for example, that the Trainees selected should continue to be teachers. One teacher would have excluded Trainees from the private sector, since he felt that they only thought in terms of their own advancement and not in their role in the community. Small business people, on the other hand, felt that Trainees should be fellow PYME, although one group felt that the Trainees should be beginners in business, not those with the most experience, and that

those with struggling businesses already in operation made good candidates.

Trainees universally agreed that economic need should continue to serve as a criterion; those who can afford to go on their own should not be sent. What defined economic need varied, for example. In the case of a PYME group, it was decided that a Trainee's income should not exceed an upper limit of Q.3,000 per month in a family of five persons, though obviously those who earn less would be better. (It is interesting to note that this is approximately double the figure used for "economically disadvantaged" by the CAPS program.) Teachers felt groups should continue to include both men and women, focus on the training of leaders, and give preference to teacher training and pedagogical techniques. Those with little formal training should be included in the program, since many who are capable do not have the opportunity to demonstrate this. Teachers without formal training could be mixed with normal school graduates if their level permits. To avoid *cuello*, an investigation should be done on each candidate to see what they do in the community.

Some Trainees worried about the role of the Trainees once back in-country. One group felt that Trainees should be asked to sign an agreement whereby they commit themselves to pass on what they have learned. The commitment would have to be at an individual level, and not through the Ministry of Education, since there are constant changes of personnel and leadership in the latter. Others felt that returned Trainees should always participate in the orientation of new candidates before their travel to the U.S. Finally, many Trainees, from many short-term groups, argued that their new program should have the same kind of reinforcement seminars provided for returned Trainees as was currently being offered them by CAPS.

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### **Short-term Training Experience: Summing Up**

Overall, CAPS short-term Trainees were delighted with the opportunity they had to go to the U.S. as a CLASP Peace Scholar. Many spoke with conviction about the importance of the experience with respect to their work or their community activities. But perhaps even more common was the statement that the experience changed their understanding of the United States and of the world, on the one hand, and of themselves and their own potential, on the other.

In the context of a critical appraisal of the experience, Trainees could often point to specific problems they saw with the CAPS scholarship: the brevity of the training, the occasional failure to take into account the background of the Trainees in the design of courses, and the inability of trainers or institutions to adequately understand or deal with the heterogeneity of the Trainee population. Trainees sometimes had bad experiences in the United States, and this colored their view of the country and its people. But for most Trainees, the CAPS scholarship was a high point in their lives. In terms of the good will and positive attitudes it seems to have created, it is a success.

### **CAPS LONG-TERM TRAINEES**

The long-term training component of CAPS began in 1985 with a program offering some twenty-five candidates academic training in a variety of fields. Most of these Trainees were placed in Master's degree programs in agricultural economics, international management, public health, and other related fields. Others were able to follow two-year training programs in public health, and two were sent to finish a Bachelor's degree in a U.S. institution. No other long-term Trainees were chosen in FY 1986 or FY 1987. In 1988, the long-term program was again taken up, with the following components:

program in coordination with several

Guatemalan universities, which has sent some 300 young Guatemalans to a variety of U.S. institutions for a year of undergraduate education;

the Universidad del Valle of Guatemala City, in which students fifty students have gone to complete a Bachelor's degree in a U.S. institution; and

technical training which has sent about 300 Trainees to study in three fields: public health; accounting, computers, and finance; and hotel management and tourism.

In discussions with CAPS long-term Trainees, the JYA program was of special interest. It includes a significant proportion of the total long-term population and has been the object of considerable commentary by a variety of CAPS observers. The JYA program was also administered by two different contractors, PIET and META. Two focus groups were held with JYA Trainees; the distinguishing criterion for the composition of the groups was the U.S. contractor.

### **Recruitment and Selection**

Recruitment for the JYA program contrasted significantly with that of short-term Trainees which called upon governmental and private institutions to identify and mobilize candidates. In the case of JYA, applicants took the initiative to apply for the scholarship. Notification took place via notices in the universities and articles and announcements in Guatemalan newspapers. The Trainees interviewed in the focus groups had learned of the program through both methods.

PAZAC created an advisory panel to review JYA applications. Selection criteria were not reviewed with Mission personnel, but Trainees could not be over twenty-five years old. Economically, the population which was

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less disadvantaged than the short-term Trainees. This is consistent with the fact that these Trainees were already well advanced in university careers; most of them were from the capital city, and they studied in such fields as architecture, systems engineering, psychology, communications, agronomy, and civil engineering.

### **JYA Commitment**

A comment made about the JYA Trainees by some observers is that they are not as serious or as committed to working to improve social conditions as most short-term Trainees. Some are perceived sometimes as going to the United States to "play around." When JYA students from one group were asked if this were the case, they denied it. One pointed out that they had to work very intensively on English, and they could not have the luxury to play around. One said that in his group only one person took the minimum number of courses required; the rest took on greater loads. Trainees from the second focus group also felt that the selection process was good at choosing people who were committed to getting as much as possible out of the experience. One Trainee mentioned that of his group, only one person failed to take advantage of the training opportunities. He estimated that eight percent or less of the Trainees were inappropriate.

### **Predeparture Orientation**

Many Trainees heard no news on the scholarship for months, and then were notified to attend a general meeting. Those selected were told to be ready to leave in fairly short order. One of the JYA focus groups maintained that they had several days of predeparture orientation in Guatemala before leaving for the U.S. Even so, they rated their sense of preparedness, on a scale of 10, an average of 5. The main problem cited was the lack of specific information about what they would be encountering. For example, one Trainee said she only knew the names of the school and the program, but

nothing about the content. Another only knew the name of the family with whom she would stay.

A major element in their sense of unpreparedness was that only a few had studied English, and the language barrier concerned them. Nevertheless, they all received good instructions on travel and support upon arriving.

### **The U.S. Training Experience**

The reception given these Trainees by their host institutions is dependent on the school's willingness to plan and organize the initial days' activities after the Trainees' arrival. Some were well received and supported in the initial weeks, while other universities left them to their own devices. This early reception was often apparently very formative in the overall views that Trainees developed about their U.S. experience.

### ***The Emphasis on English***

From the first day to the last the JYA Trainees studied English. The overall goal was to help them advance to a level of English fluency by the end of the fall semester so that they could take normal university classes in the spring. Some of those who began their training in the summer progressed rapidly and early in the fall semester were able to sit in on regular classes. Most did in the spring semester. One META Trainee said she was taking five university courses during the last three months of her stay. Many students felt that the fluency developed in English was one of their principal accomplishments in the program.

### **Reflections on the Training**

Most of the META JYA students engaged in liberal studies, hoping to take courses which would advance their university careers. The degree to which they were able to do this depended on the course offerings at the institutions. Students agreed that they opted

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for one of two strategies: either taking general education courses which they knew they could not get in Guatemala, or striving to stick with courses directly related to their majors at home.

The Trainees in the second focus group were less tolerant of what they saw as limited options in the training programs. Several contended that they were inadequately informed of course content. One felt that the courses offered in his institution contained nothing that he could not get in Guatemala; another said that the course work, due to the low level of technological development in Guatemala, would not be applicable to his situation. One Trainee who was particularly critical of the training received, later revealed that he had been tracked into the JYA program after having been nominated for a degree scholarship at a large state university. When asked to rank their U.S. academic training between 0 and 100, the group average was only 64, with a range between 50 and 75.

The basis for this disappointment is caused by the fact that the training they were promised was not realized, or that the training they received was not applicable. In the former case, students mentioned courses that were not offered when they thought they should be. In the second, Trainees referred in some cases to advanced technology which is unavailable in Guatemala (for example, a chemical engineering student who could not use the techniques he learned); or to techniques which are not appropriate to Guatemala (an agronomy student mentioned swine production methods which would not work there, or were less efficient than approaches already in use).

The root cause of this discontent on the part of some Trainees may lie even deeper than that, however. In the first place, students were dismayed by the normal patterns of U.S. academic life. That is, U.S. university students are given wide liberty in designing their academic life, in carrying out their work, even in deciding whether they will

choose to attend class or not. Those that found this freedom to be disconcerting felt that they should have received better supervision, that "the academic advisor should be keeping track of what we do." Another Trainee commented that the Guatemalan student is closely supervised and spends much more time in class than U.S. students; this person said it took her some time to realize that she was expected to take the initiative.

In addition, conflicting ideas arose as to the purpose of the program. Many Trainees felt their goal was to take advantage of the experience to advance their academic careers. Trainees reported, however, that program designers tended to characterize the year at a U.S. university as primarily a cultural experience. As one Trainee put it, "We went to study; but they said we were going to have an experience in another country. From the point of view of an interesting international experience, it was great. But in terms of technical training, it was lacking." This conflict in perceptions suggests that some of the unfavorable views expressed about the experience by a segment of Trainees related in reality to opposing definitions of the goals of the program.

Finally, a complaint that many Trainees of both groups voiced was the fact that the college credits they earned while in the U.S. were not accepted by Guatemalan institutions. Many of the Trainees interviewed seemed to feel that they had been promised that the credits would indeed be transferred, but only one, a Trainee at Rafael Landívar University, was able to receive college credit for her work.

### **Experience America**

The Experience America for the JYA Trainees, as for other long-term Peace Scholars, relates much more to the day-to-day routine they established in their educational institution than the more structured events scheduled for the short-term Trainees. Again, an important

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component of Experience America for JYA students, according to the Trainees themselves, was the opportunity to get to know U.S. families.

While most META JYA students lived in dormitories, they stayed with U.S. families at Christmas; each one was also "assigned" to a family to maintain relations. Most of the students of both JYA focus groups spoke of very warm ties with the U.S. families with whom they entered into relationship, and they generally professed to having positive feelings towards North Americans. One described North Americans as "uncomplicated" and informal; another as friendly and good. A third said that these contacts dramatically changed the view of North Americans that she had obtained from television.

Several students also had negative experiences. One young woman spoke of her shock and discomfort when her female dorm roommate returned with her boyfriend, both drunk, early one morning to the room she shared with the Trainee, when the latter was preparing for an exam. She left when the boyfriend stayed, and had to change her room. Similar experiences were recounted. Yet most felt that these were isolated cases.

Another characteristic that surprised the students was the lack of knowledge that North Americans exhibited about Guatemala. One reported that people asked her if they were "backwards" or if people lived in trees. Another student defended North Americans, arguing that the fault lay with the educational system which did not teach people where things are.

Perhaps the most profound aspect of Experience America came with daily life as a university student, and the realization that they could do whatever they desired: get up early or late; go to class or not; take part in sports or not. This "freedom to be able to choose," as one student put it, was a great contrast with their situation in Guatemala, where most still live with their parents and in

a broader network of kin ties and obligations. To take up again a theme in the previous discussion of the academic experience, those Trainees that decided to learn to live with the less structured life of the U.S. university spoke in very positive terms about the growth they saw in themselves and the independence which they enjoyed. Those who were unable or unwilling to adapt themselves to the more flexible U.S. university system were less enthusiastic about the experience and tended to focus on what they saw as shortcomings in the academic training *per se*.

## **THE CASP PROGRAM**

### **Recruitment, Selection, and Orientation**

CASP/CASS students shared with the JYA CAPS Trainees many common experiences. As was seen in the discussion on the CLASP population (see Chapter Three, Volume II) CASP and CAPS long-term Trainees share many characteristics. Most are young, and like the JYA group, have aspirations for more extended training beyond high school.

The country office of CASP/CASS established a selection procedure which attempts to ensure that only persons with a high likelihood of initial eligibility are invited to apply for the scholarships. In the past year, a further innovation in recruitment and selection has the office calling on employers to assist in the process of identifying candidates. CASS/CASP country officials offer a number of reasons for these refinements in their selection process. CASP scholarships have tended to be granted more in the highlands. In interests of representativeness and fairness, CASP wants to direct a greater proportion of the fellowships to the areas of the country which have not received as many fellowships, in the south coast and in the north.

Added to this desire to include other areas is the fact that the CASP/CASS program would like to see Trainees return to their areas of origin. Certain fields offered are not

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appropriate to entire areas of the country. Trainees versed in industrial maintenance would not be able to find employment in Totonicapán or Huehuetenango, and this most likely would force the Trainee to migrate to the cities.

In the past, CASP scholarships were advertised through the public media, newspapers and the radio. This resulted in thousands of applications, creating wide expectations which could not be met. The new method is to limit the dissemination of scholarship information to match needs of areas of the country with the programs that CASP/CASS have to offer. In the south coast, for example, a zone of agro-industry such as large sugar refineries, CASS/CASP is emphasizing four of the eight fields it offers because they are most appropriate to employment there. In the north of the country, an area with a considerable tourist potential, the program in hotel and restaurant administration is advertised.

### *The Selection Procedure*

The program now screens potential applicants with a pre-application to ensure that they meet the minimum qualifications that they are single, under the maximum age, and have completed high school. Those who are eligible complete the longer application form, which attempts to get at issues of leadership, family relations, and economic status.

The program attempts to get at least ten applicants for each scholarship slot. Selection committees are composed of three persons and draw many of their members from businesses which will employ Trainees in the future, such as human resource managers of the sugar refineries. They review the applications in each field in order to narrow the initial pool to five for each scholarship. Former Trainees, Georgetown University graduates, and community members are also invited to take part in the selection. Then, all the candidates are interviewed in their regions. The best two

candidates' applications for each scholarship are sent to Washington for the final selection.

The members of the two focus groups consisting of CASP participants discussed their training experience. All had been back at least six months, which meant they were recruited in or before 1988, before the new "Everybody Works" program was established. One Trainee had learned of the program from multiple sources; another Trainee learned of the agriculture program in Iowa through a visit by CASP program sponsors. Trainees studying at technical institutes learned through teachers or advisors. One Trainee had already known about the program for several years because other students from her institution had been sent. Other students said that they took the initiative to find out about the program and to apply.

### *Predeparture Orientation*

In terms of predeparture orientation, most felt that the general information about the United States was useful. Several in both groups commented that they were given very little information about the specifics of the course work. Others also felt that they had little time from the moment that they were selected until their departure date (though many spoke of a month or more). One Trainee reported that he was distressed to learn on his arrival in the United States that his program was only for eleven months rather than twenty-one.

### *U.S. Training*

The CASP/CASS program offers training in a delimited and particular range of fields, and offers an A.A. or A.S. degree as well as technical certification in one of the seven areas of study. These fields have evolved over the years and are currently hotel and restaurant administration; industrial food technology; computer sciences; electronics and computer repair; clothing marketing;

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small business management; and quality control.

Like the JYA students, the CASP Trainees had no, or little, previous training in English. They began their English from the first day, and most spent at least the first full year working on language as well as on the courses for their program. Members of both focus groups commented on the trials of learning the language, of their difficulties at the beginning of the process.

The Trainees attended a wide range of institutions. Several mentioned that they felt that the institutions were not prepared to receive them; one said that his group was the first of a new program, and their original arrival date was postponed to accommodate the college's inability to be ready. All of one group of CASP returnees characterized the training as at a lower academic level than they expected, between "medium" and "low."

More debate occurred around the issue of the applicability of the training, and disagreements here were clearly related to the Trainees' field of study. Particularly unhappy were two agricultural technology students in the first group, who felt that the training they received was inappropriate to Guatemala and did not prepare them for work at home. They both rated the applicability quite low, in comparison to the other Trainees who were willing to assign a much higher score<sup>5</sup>. A Trainee who thought she was going to study "high fashion design" was surprised to see that the training was aimed at a much more basic level. One who thought he was going to study computer repair found that the training was not what he expected. On the other hand, he agreed that he had used what he learned there a great deal in his present work.

Like the first group, the second CASS/CASP group expressed mixed opinions about the training. Several characterized their training as "excellent." Others mentioned some of the same criticisms as the first, relating to

differences in their training expectations and what they were actually taught, as well as its applicability at home. Most of this group agreed to the idea that the training had "some" application; several said "a great deal," and a few said "none." One Trainee mentioned that his group was initially unhappy about the program content. When they went to the trainers, they found that these were open to their suggestions for modifications, and the Trainees were able to convince the school to reorient the training in the direction they wanted.

An experience specific to CASP/CASS is the mixing of various nationalities in the training groups. A topic that came up, then, with these Trainees that was not heard with the CAPS long-term academic students was the issue of competition with Trainees from neighboring countries, and characterizations—usually unflattering—of Costa Ricans or Hondurans. On the other hand, the chance to meet other Central Americans was clearly seen by many Trainees as a real advantage of the program.

Trainees were positive and complimentary about their relationships with the Georgetown staff. They all reported that they received regular visits from them, and they found them responsive to their needs.

As was the case with the CAPS JYA, perhaps the most unexpected benefit from the training was the mastery of English. Several reported that they were now teaching English or used it in their work. While the assessment of the specific training programs varied, almost all were happy with the command of English they gained as CASP Trainees.

### **Experience America**

Most Trainees were almost universally happy with the chance to live and study in the United States, even if some had reservations about the particular training received. Many of the most important reactions to the scholarship related to the opportunity to

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meet Americans, attend U.S. schools, and to get to know the United States.

Many of the themes expressed by JYA students were also heard from CASP Trainees: the initial disorientation upon their arrival in the country; the broadening of horizons as they learned to become more independent and self-sufficient; their frustration with North Americans' lack of knowledge about Central America; and their general sense that North Americans are open, friendly, and hard-working, but also sometimes cold and distant.

As with the JYA students, those who either lived an American family or had a homestay generally spoke with warmth about that experience. For most, it was the main way that they had come to know North Americans on a personal level. Some found living with an American family difficult, and Trainees reported a certain moving about between families and apartments. However, many revealed, in general discussions about the United States, that their understanding of North Americans was closely linked to the homestay experience.

Trainees also pointed to negative experiences. One Trainee reported that he and some fellow CASP scholars were placed under pressure to leave the apartment they were in by the owner, and he felt that comments made by this landlord made it clear that their treatment was the result of discrimination. What surprised him was that the owner was an immigrant. A second also mentioned housing discrimination, but in this case it was "of Latins by Latins." Others mentioned what they thought were negative reactions to them on the bus, but added that their fellow commuters, after a time, warmed to them. Several students who lived in dormitories reported they were shocked by the sexual behavior of North American students. Another CASP Trainee mentioned that several North Americans he had met were unhappy to hear he had a government scholarship, paid for by the taxpayer. Perhaps the most disturbing negative

experience reported was that of a CASP Trainee who visited a southern city with several African students and were singled out for special surveillance by the police.

In spite of these negative occurrences, the CASP students rated the experience of life in the United States more highly than their training. Students referred to it as "a marvelous experience," as "a great opportunity that will never be repeated," as "the best years in all my life as a student." When asked to rate the Experience America portion of their scholarship, they assigned between 90 and 100 on a 100-point scale.

Many Trainees, like the CAPS JYA Trainees cited previously, phrased the import of the scholarship in terms of the impact that it had on their own personal development. Trainees spoke of having greater confidence in themselves, in overcoming fear and in coming to know themselves independently of their role in their natal family.

In his training group of about fifteen Guatemalans, reported one Trainee, three have since returned to the States, apparently all by perfectly legitimate means. One has won another scholarship; a second married a young man with whom she became involved while studying; and a third was invited by the family with whom he had lived to return to finish a degree, relying on their financial support. Others mentioned fellow Trainees (not necessarily from Guatemala) who have returned to the U.S.

### **Return and Reincorporation**

The issue of return and reincorporation for CASP students may be greater than for CAPS students. For CAPS short-term trainees, most left jobs or occupations which they took up again on their return five weeks later. For the CAPS JYA students, most of them returned to the university, and reincorporation, while having important psychological and social dimensions, nevertheless was not directly related to gaining their livelihood.

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CASP Trainees, on the other hand, are normally expected to enter the work force upon their return. As the CASP/CASS office has recognized, however, many have not been able to return directly to a job in their field. Of the limited number of Trainees interviewed in focus groups, many had spent some period of time unemployed on their return. A number did, indeed, return to the university for further study, most living at home. Others drew upon their English skills to find a job teaching English. Today, about half of those who participated in the focus groups are at present working in their field of study. Several others continued teaching English.

Trainees mentioned other aspects of the "reentry" process that were problematical for them. Fellow students were now well ahead of the returned Trainees in their formal studies. A female Trainee pointed out that many of her friends were married. She went on to express concern that the fact that female CASP Trainees are out of the country for a critical period in their early twenties (when apparently most Guatemalans marry) may make their eventual marriage much less likely. Other Trainees pointed to benefits, such as the fact that the U.S. experience gave them a certain prestige in their community.

The one point that the Trainees all mentioned as being detrimental to their situation was that they were unable to transfer the college credits gained in the United States to a Guatemalan institution. For those who wish to continue in the university, this has been particularly frustrating. The CASP/CASS office is reported to be close to an agreement with Guatemalan institutions so that they will accept credits earned by CASS/CASP Trainees. If this is achieved, one of the most unfavorable aspects of the program will no longer be an issue.

## Concluding Considerations

In terms of the successes of the different training programs, all have been able to reach their target populations successfully and to carry out the mandate that programmers have given them. The contrasts among these different programs with respect to the populations they serve and the variety of goals within each suggests that a mix of approaches like the one adopted in CLASP in Guatemala serves AID well.

A suitable solution to a short training period in the U.S. for short-term Trainees can come through providing innovative Follow-on training after their return. Trainees participating in the Follow-on training agree that the overall experience (from their selection to their attendance at reinforcement seminars) has been made much richer, and the question of the inapplicability of training recedes. Indeed, the EIL Follow-on program has, for those who participate, become a kind of second core to the fellowship which continues to provide them with great incentives to continue learning and to apply what they learned.

Short-term training has been perhaps the most controversial component of the CLASP program, in terms of the brevity of the experience and the concern that little may be learned in the limited time available. Trainees agree with the critique of the length of the program, but they also view the experience as a landmark in their lives in terms of broadening their perceptions of the U.S. and the world. A significant proportion also feel that what they did learn in the five-week period has been directly helpful to them in their work or in their community activities.

In sum, the strength of the short-term training as it was designed in CAPS-Guatemala was that it reached a very large number of people and provided them with a

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profound experience, both in training and in cultural awareness, in the U.S. Most short-term Trainees would not have been viable candidates for CLASP long-term training (let alone other U.S. scholarship programs)—their educational levels are too low, they are too poor and often too old, and they could not have left their homes and families any longer than they already have. After their five weeks in the U.S., they have returned to Guatemala with a positive (if perhaps not very analytical) understanding of the United States, and they are willing to join in activities relating to USAID in the future.

The CASP program, with its emphasis on job training and practical skills, also seems to engender a commitment to participate in the country's development. The small size of the CASP contingent means that the group can

continue to maintain limited contact with each other, and most have decided to continue their formal education. The problems discussed by the Trainees relate most often to their sense that the training in the U.S. was not well attuned to what they need now. The issue of tailoring the programs to the different countries' needs was addressed in an evaluation of CASP in the past, and the program has responded by redesigning several, and replacing several other, fields of study. This kind of modification and refinement of training programs will have to be a continuing aspect of the CASS program in the future, as program planners continue the dialogue between themselves, USAID offices, Trainees, and employers and development specialists in the various countries where the program is active.

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## ENDNOTES

1. One such exception is a Trainee from 1989, a schoolteacher who told us that he thought that PAZAC was yet another funding source for small community development projects when he first visited the office, and he had carried there a series of project proposals in the hope of securing financing. He admitted to considerable surprise when he learned, on being recalled to the PAZAC office some time later, that his overtures had resulted in a scholarship for travel to the U.S., and not a project grant. This Trainee is today very involved in a range of Follow-on activities.
2. A decision was made early on to try to ensure, through an oral exam, that indigenous Trainees spoke Spanish well enough to benefit from the training.
3. EIL has found that about 15 percent of the PYME Trainees are beauty shop operators; see Chapter Five.
4. Twelve of these Trainees actually went in FY 1986, although they were chosen in FY 1985.
5. The two agricultural technology students averaged 35 out of 100 when they rated applicability; the rest of the group averaged 90 on the same issue.

**A P P E N D I X    A**

**Distribution of  
CLASP Trainees**

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**APPENDIX A:**

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***Distribution of***

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***CLASP Trainees***

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	<u>Total</u> <u>CAPS</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Returned*</u> <u>S-T</u>		<u>Returned*</u> <u>L-T</u>		<u>CASP</u>	<u>Percent</u>
			<u>CAPS</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>CAPS</u>	<u>Percent</u>		
REGION I	1159	25.4	769	19.7	362	59.8	77	58.3
Guatemala	834	18.3	487	12.5	323	53.4	68	51.5
Sacatepequez	171	3.8	143	3.7	25	4.1	3	2.3
Chimaltenango	154	3.4	139	3.6	14	2.3	6	4.5
REGION II	289	6.3	256	6.6	24	4.0	10	7.6
Alta Verapaz	184	4.0	156	4.0	19	3.1	5	3.8
Baja Verapaz	105	2.3	100	2.6	5	0.8	5	3.8
REGION III	765	16.6	683	17.5	66	10.9	11	8.3
El Progreso	128	2.8	120	3.1	8	1.3	0	0.0
Zacapa	255	5.5	246	6.3	8	1.3	0	0.0
Chiquimula	235	5.1	172	4.4	48	7.9	8	6.1
Izabal	147	3.2	145	3.7	2	0.3	3	2.3
REGION IV	395	8.6	374	9.6	19	3.1	5	3.8
Jalapa	107	2.3	102	2.6	4	0.7	2	1.5
Jutiapa	148	3.2	135	3.5	12	2.0	1	0.8
Santa Rosa	140	3.0	137	3.5	3	0.5	2	1.5
REGION V	526	11.4	490	12.6	35	5.8	1	0.8
Escuintla	178	3.9	161	4.1	16	2.6	0	0.0
Suchitepequez	160	3.5	154	3.9	9	1.5	1	0.8
Retalhuleu	188	4.1	175	4.5	10	1.7	0	0.0
REGION VI	803	17.4	720	18.5	71	11.7	21	15.9
Huehuetenango	153	3.3	136	3.5	16	2.6	2	1.5
Totonicapán	146	3.2	144	3.7	2	0.3	2	1.5
San Marcos	260	5.6	251	6.4	9	1.5	2	1.5
Quetzaltenango	244	5.3	189	4.8	44	7.3	15	11.4
REGION VII	589	10.9	477	12.2	10	1.7	7	5.3
Sololá	385	8.4	374	9.6	9	1.5	5	3.8
Quiché	105	2.5	103	2.6	1	0.2	2	1.5
REGION VIII	133	2.9	117	3.0	18	3.0	0	0.0
El Petén	133	2.9	117	3.0	18	3.0	0	0.0
UNIDENTIFIED	0	0.0	14	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	4,558	100.0	3,900	100.0	605	100.0	132	100.0

\* These were the counts of returned Trainees at the time of the evaluation.

**A P P E N D I X    B**

**Topline Reports of  
Focus Groups**

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**APPENDIX B:**  
**Topline Reports**  
**of Focus Groups**

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**FOCUS GROUP #1:**

***Non-EIL Trainees (Male/Female, Short-Term/Long-Term). 6/15/91, 9:30 a.m., held at Rafael Landívar University.***

**Group Characteristics**

Six CAPS returned Trainees participated in this group, five women and one man. Their ages fluctuated between 23 and 32 years. All but one lived in Guatemala City. One was married, the rest were single. Their declared annual, combined household income varied from Q.4,000.00 to Q.30,000.00 (approximately \$824.00 and \$6,185.00 respectively). Of the women, two had B.S. degrees in Chemistry, two were college students in Guatemala and one was a supervisor. The man was an agricultural engineer, a former graduate of the University of California at Davis. His three-year old son was with him throughout the session.

While under the CAPS scholarship, the two chemists, the students, and the engineer were long-term, academic Trainees with 2.5 to 4 years of U.S. student residency. The supervisor was a five-week, short-term Trainee. All five long-term Trainees felt competent in English. No one had previously participated in a focus group.

**Group Dynamics**

All participants contributed to the discussion in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere, and were attentive to all and every group task. This group was asked to: a) fill out and comment on the evaluation's survey questionnaire, and b) participate in the discussion of the subject matter of the evaluation (which included an analysis of the issues included in the focus

group moderator's guide), and suggest additional relevant themes for inclusion in the instrument. In essence, the group's main purposes were to help, as respondents, in the pilot testing of the survey and focus group instruments.

**Results of the Session**

At the beginning of the session, participants were asked to fill out the self-administered evaluation survey questionnaire, and then, to go over the instrument once again assessing the relevance of the questions, and evaluating the flow and sequencing of the items. They were also asked to write any pertinent notes at the margins for further reference. The completion of the questionnaire was an individual exercise, but the discussion after completion was a group activity. The objective of this format was to gain from the views and opinions of all, and to assess the degree of consensus on suggested questionnaire improvements.

After the review of the instrument, participants stated that it was "adequate." In their view, it contained relevant questions which had not been asked previously in similar CAPS evaluation questionnaires. Nevertheless, participants made some suggestions for the improvement of the instrument's flow, and rearranged, in a group exercise, some of the items in it. After discussion, all of the Trainee suggested modifications. Where consensus was reached, the changes were adopted in a new, modified version of the survey questionnaire. A few other changes, however, were considered but not adopted.

During the discussion, the ethnic, self-designation item in the questionnaire, item 6,

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drew considerable attention among participants, however, no firm guidance was provided to the evaluators except that "indigena" and "natural" were terms used interchangeably when referring to Guatemala's indigenous population. To probe the issue further, the moderator asked participants to ethnically identify themselves. The responses obtained rendered national identity but not ethnicity; that is, most stated they were "guatemalteco(a)." One identified herself as "ladina guatemalteca." Ethnicity, therefore, appeared to be a delicate, thorny matter.

From this point on in the session, participants alternated their interventions between offering specific suggestions for questionnaire improvement, and discussing, in detail, their own scholarship experience.

The series of questions dealing with post-training employment was deemed very important by some participants. After the discussion of the items in this section, a related comment was that they perceived the need for a job development entity helping Trainees to find appropriate jobs. An additional comment in this area of concern was that, in general, returned Trainees face difficulties in the job market, because of the incompatibility of U.S. credentials with Guatemala's licensing regulations. According to them, sometimes their ability to speak English is seen by potential employers as a bigger asset than their degree. One said, "The problem in Guatemala is that they don't give credit to a U.S. B.A./B.S. degree. (The U.S. degree) is not as important as saying I am an engineer licensed in Guatemala." "Where I am working right now, I make less (money) than an engineer licensed in Guatemala," said one of the B.S. graduate participants. In this same line of thought, the need to design and implement an employment readiness workshop was suggested.

In discussing the scholarship's impact on a Trainee's life, participants stated that "going to the United States was marvelous," not

only for the academic experience, as the long-term Trainees expressed, but because the U.S. experience had provided them with a new outlook on society. Because of the scholarship, "you see things differently, you think differently" said one of the women, as the rest of the group echoed this feeling. The scholarship was associated with maturity in some and, for the Trainee who spent four years in the university, it was a challenge to share a room with a girl not as friendly as she would like her to be, and to "fight for an open bathroom in the school's dormitories." The general feeling was that the scholarship experience has opened new avenues for personal development based, mainly, on a newly acquired attitude of self-sufficiency.

As a result of the review of the moderator's guide by participants, some language changes were also adopted to reflect some of the local, regional terminology. Participants thought that the themes included in this guide were also relevant and interesting. They also commended the opportunity to voice their opinion on important issues pertaining to their training.

Their final comments were on Follow-on. The group thought that this should be an AID-initiated activity.

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## **FOCUS GROUP #2:**

***EIL/Non-EIL Trainees (Male/Female, Short-Term/Long-Term). 6/15/91, 11:40 a.m., held at Rafael Landívar University.***

### **Group Characteristics**

Nine returned Trainees participated in this group, five women and four men. Their ages were 22 to 51 years. Five were single and four married. Their reported annual combined income ranged from Q.1,00.00 to Q.30,000.00 (approximately \$206.00 to \$6,185.00). Whereas a self-employed person showed the lowest reported combined annual income, the highest income was reported by an administrator working in the private sector. Excepting one, who was the sole member of his family unit, all of the others lived in households of three to 12 members.

A variety of public and private sector occupations were represented in the group including teaching, accounting, government employment, private administration, technical management, and the health careers. One was a self-employed small scale clothing manufacturer.

All but two were short-term returned Trainees, some with five-week training duration, others with a two-month stay in the U.S. Two were long-term scholars, both with a one-year academic scholarship. Two ASOPAZAC Departmental Board of Directors officials were in the group. Four of the nine stated that they had previously participated in a focus group. Some in the group were chosen for the scholarship early in the program, in 1985. Others were more recent scholarship recipients, sent to the U.S. as recently as 1989.

### **Group Dynamics**

Departing from the usual focus group strategy, during this session the moderator and observer interacted with the participants.

After a brief description of the nature of the CAPS evaluation being conducted, and participant introductions, the moderator explained that the main objective of the session was to pilot test the evaluation's survey questionnaire (face-to-face interview version.)

### **The Pilot Testing of the CAPS Evaluation Survey Instrument**

Participants were asked to read very carefully all of the items in the questionnaire, and to try to identify items that, in their opinion, needed revision and/or change for whatever reason. In trying to systematize their input, they were asked to follow a review format consisting of questionnaire completion and examination of every item on an individual basis, and a group discussion focused on the concerns that each participant had about any questionnaire items. To facilitate their work, they were asked to use the margins of the questionnaire to annotate their concerns and/or suggested changes.

After participants completed the questionnaire, their first general reaction was that it was good, well structured, and it included questions that were relevant to their scholarship experience in the U.S., and to what they are currently doing in Guatemala. However, one participant was uncomfortable with some of the items because, according to him, there were four items that were not clear. As he pointed them out, the rest of the group agreed with him. As these items were discussed, the moderator encouraged participants to make any suggestions for the overall improvement of the instrument.

After a general discussion of the instrument, some specific suggestions were heard: "Allow a space to enter the Trainees' telephone number." "Add 'Semi-Urbana' to the 'rural' and 'urbana' options." On the urban/rural issue, the *zona marginal* concept was assessed for inclusion but, after deliberations, it was suggested that it did not fit the concept category since *marginal* was a

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qualifier that could be applied to urban as well as rural zones.

Another issue that drew considerable attention was household size, i.e., questions 7 and 8 of the instrument. Participants suggested that a difference had to be established between those in the household who were dependents and those who lived under the same roof but supported themselves, "cohabitants." Participants felt that, unless the distinction between these two categories was made, the information obtained in this particular area would not be usable. (This observation was considered by the evaluation team but, in the end, modifying the household size questions was deemed not necessary. It is important to state, however, that dependency vis-a-vis cohabitation, as prevalent practices in some familial arrangements, would affect the consideration of household income. When and if a future evaluation would focus on the economic situation of Trainees, for example, these two concepts would deserve a closer examination.)

Participants reviewed the whole instrument, item by item, and offered other important suggestions for its improvement. For example, "Use *inscrito* instead of *matriculado*" to better capture the Trainees current school attendance, because *matriculado* "is a formal term, more of the judicial system domain." Whenever a suggestion was brought up, it was discussed. If consensus was reached, it was recorded.

The issue of employment touched on the fact that a given person being interviewed may be both a self-employed person and salaried worker, in a public and private establishment, at the same time. Partially because of this observation, the instrument's employment inquiry section was subjected to a careful revision and reformulation.

### **Familiarity With the Scholarship-Granting Organization: CAPS OR PAZAC?**

As these returned Trainees were more familiar with the PAZAC organization, they suggested to substitute CAPS for PAZAC wherever it occurred in the questionnaire. Also, they proposed to substitute *campo* with *area*, a term used more frequently to denote *field* of study. Other minor editorial changes were made as a result of this pilot test, and, although some observations did not prompt any modifications to the instrument, they helped in the formulation of strategy to address some evaluation themes. For example, one of these observations was "The questions on women caught my attention. I am not a woman, but my wife could definitely attend the training. Nevertheless, [I know that] there are some husbands who represent a problem [for women to attend training]; children are a problem too." After everyone had the opportunity to discuss the issue, they agreed that long distances to training the places, getting the husband's permission to attend, and lack of child care were some of the impediments that some women would face in order to attend training.

A woman participant, married and with children, stated that married women have the desire to attend training, and they "struggle" in order to do so. A man stated that sometimes women cannot attend training because of "medical conditions" during pregnancies, for example, when physicians recommend rest.

Finally, the group commented on Follow-on. For them, the frequency of Follow-on activities, and the duration of Follow-on training were important topics to address in the questionnaire.

As a final activity, participants were asked to rank the usefulness of the instrument on a 0 to 10 scale. Unanimously, they said "nine."

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### **FOCUS GROUP #3:**

***EIL Teacher Group. 6/16/91, 8:15 p.m.,  
held at La Posada, Cobán***

#### **Group Characteristics**

This group, of whom all are teachers in private schools in Guatemala, was attending its fourth module of EIL Follow-on training in Cobán in the category of "monolingual education." Nine women took part, eight of whom had studied teacher training in the U.S., and one health promoter.

#### **Group Dynamics**

Interaction was open and unrestricted, and the women were apparently comfortable with the circumstances and the discussion. The forthrightness with which several expressed their views suggests long years in the classroom and the leadership qualities for which they were chosen.

#### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator described the nature of the evaluation and Aguirre International's independent role, and promised them confidentiality in terms of identifying the source of statements.

#### **Selection and Predeparture**

All present had been selected through the private institution in which they were working; invitations and application forms had come from the capital announcing the program, and most of these said they were nominated by their school principals. Certain criteria were announced: they should be active in teaching and in school activities; they must have been teaching more than five years, and they should be under 35 years old. In their program, they said, there were no teachers from public schools. One said that she was selected in a different way; she had just left a private institution, but she was selected "through friendship," and not

because she filled any particular prerequisites. A colleague with whom she had worked "was very friendly with AID," and he gave her the application. Another stressed that it was her work in the community and not in the school (where she was in conflict with the director), that supported her nomination and selection. A third mentioned a case where a stand-in was selected by the director when the first candidate could not go, "so the scholarship would not be lost." One group member said that in her group "only two fellowships were wasted," and she decided this based on the fact that these two persons had not participated actively in any alumni or Follow-on activities since returning.

One teacher said that surely some were chosen who were not appropriate; but that in large measure "we were honestly selected for our abilities." A case of a non-teacher—a community telephone operator, specifically—who went in a teacher training group was mentioned; but another member of the group suggested that even though this person did not work in the classroom, she most likely used her training with adult groups in her town. A third told how she and her colleagues in rural health were advised to maintain silence on the scholarships as they were being processed, for fear that local politicians in her Altiplano area would attempt to take the scholarships and give them out to their cronies.

The teachers agreed that, even in the few cases where friendship may have entered in the selection process, Trainees in their programs were clearly economically disadvantaged. One pointed out that even teachers who work two jobs, in both private and public schools, are not paid well. The Trainees were also leaders; very few did not exhibit leadership abilities.

These Trainees said their predeparture orientation was limited, some said to several hours, others to a single day. They were only given "general suggestions" about their training program, and two who were in

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Michigan mentioned that they were not given adequate information about clothing; another said that their final destination was changed after they had already arrived in the Miami airport. The group as a whole reported that they did not feel prepared for their training experience.

### **U.S. Training Experience**

**Length of training:** All agreed that five weeks was enough only to motivate people, to give the general idea of how to work in a different mode.

**Training content and methods:** Most of the Trainees stated they had been located on the campuses of U.S. educational institutions, but they had not, in their brief stay, entered into the normal course work of university students. Some noted that most of their classes were held in hotels, and their university exposure was limited.

Several of the teachers reported that, while they were impressed with the educational materials which they were shown while in their courses, they also felt that the trainers were not informed about their educational background or about educational curriculum in Guatemala and generally assumed that education was more "backwards" than it is. They were taught concepts and techniques in the U.S. with which they were already quite familiar. Several reported that they expected more from their training, and at least two mentioned that they felt they had given more in the training than they had received. Only the person who had studied health promotion sharply disagreed with this assessment; for her, the training was very useful and quite applicable to her present volunteer work.

Several of the teachers stated that they had the chance to observe—one to teach—in a U.S. school. Others felt that they could have benefitted from more extra-classroom training. Most stated that the training method was to divide their training group into smaller groupings according to their own

background. Such training topics as mathematics, pedagogy and classroom discipline were mentioned as being most useful. One Trainee stated that her training focused directly on leadership issues, and noted that the techniques and concepts were immediately employed within the group, altering the authoritarian style of some of the group members.

**Assessment of training:** The person who studied health described the main objective of her training as that of being trained in order to return and serve the community. She felt that this objective had been reached: her training motivated her, she said, to be able to help her community with what she learned, and while she volunteered in her community before going, the training had helped her in concrete ways to work more for the community. A teacher said that although she felt the practical training goals were not achieved, while in the US she learned to esteem Guatemala more and to believe that it is possible to move her country forward in development. Others also stated that they felt that broader goals than the technical training had been fulfilled through their scholarship.

About half the Trainees said the U.S. training was applicable and relevant to their work and the other half felt it was not. One stated that she learned a great deal in five weeks, and felt that it was especially effective for rural people who were moved to go beyond their limitations. But all stated that this assessment changed greatly if the EIL Follow-on training was added to the consideration. They all saw the Follow-on training as being very relevant and applicable.

Overall, the teachers ranked their training an average of about 70 on a 0-100 scale; the health trainee ranked it a 98.

**Logistics:** Trainees were generally happy with housing and with their allowances.

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## **Experience America**

Given that many of the teachers felt that the training was not as innovative or as novel as they had expected, they had arrived at the conclusion [Evaluator's note: perhaps in previous conversations before this focus group took place] that the primary purpose of their trip was so that they get to know the United States, the people there, so that they would bring back a pleasant image of North Americans. This idea was most bluntly stated by the person who said that "they wanted us to fall in love with the U.S." Another felt that the objective was that the Trainees see that all people are similar, though North Americans know how to organize themselves better and for that reason they have excelled. The teachers disagreed on whether the culture of the U.S. was superior to that of Guatemala; one said that the high level of technology suggested that it was, while others defended the values and customs of Guatemala. She pointed, for example, to what she saw as the weakness of the family in the U.S. compared to its strength in Guatemala as a case where Guatemalan values were preferable.

Given this conclusion, the Trainees saw Experience America as the core of their CAPS fellowship. One stated that due to the trip they had the experience to see what the U.S. is really like, the kind of life that North Americans have, what they are like.

Three Trainees mentioned that they sometimes felt marginalized in the universities where they stayed, in which students would not share tables or join them. Another spoke very positively of the friendships created at a black university where she was sent.

A positive experience reported by all were homestays with U.S. families. One teacher reported that she firmly opposed the home visit because she disliked the idea of not being able to communicate well. After being obliged to go, she found it a very broadening and pleasing experience. One teacher

recounted her surprise when she saw her American host eat a tidbit of food left over on the plate of a fellow Trainee; she saw this as evidence that this family felt no feelings of discrimination against the Trainees. She added that it would be marvelous if all North Americans were like the family she got to know.

Another Trainee told of a visit to a Native American community in which they were well received and which taught them a great deal. Yet another described her interest in Epcot Center.

## **Follow-on and EIL**

The Trainees defined *seguimiento* as a process which reinforces what they learned in the U.S., which refreshes and expands what they know, especially in terms of how to transmit knowledge to others. One challenged the idea that the EIL training was "Follow-on" as such, since they are learning many new things.

Teachers were enthusiastic about the quality and experience of EIL Follow-on training; by consensus they rated it, on a 0-100 scale, at 100. They all agreed that the training has helped them in their professional advancement, as "multiplier agents," and to raise their visibility as leaders within the community. They also all agreed that Follow-on has had no impact on their salaries.

## **Planning a New Program**

In the planning exercise, the group suggested that training typically be for three months in order to combine both theoretical and practical issues. It should include both men and women, focus on the training of leaders, and give preference to teacher training and pedagogical techniques. Those with little formal training should be included in the program, since many who are capable do not have the opportunity to demonstrate this. The "empirical" teachers can be mixed with normal school graduates if their level

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permits. To avoid *cuello*, an investigation should be done on each candidate to see what they do in the community.

Indigenous people should be included, and the group recognized that indigenous folk make up a major proportion of Guatemalan society (though all were hesitant to hazard a percentage figure, one guessed 80%). The Trainees expressed their discomfort with the issue of how to select indigenous Trainees.

### **Evaluating the Evaluators**

The teachers expressed appreciation of the opportunity to voice their opinions on the training process and on EIL. One warned the evaluators to reproduce their views faithfully.

### **FOCUS GROUP #4:**

***EIL Community Development Group.  
6/18/91, held at the Casique Inn,  
Panajachel.***

### **Group Characteristics**

ine EIL Follow-on Trainees participated in this evening group held in the restaurant of the Casique Inn Hotel in Panajachel. Most in the group were volunteer community workers and health promoters attending EIL's Community Development, Module III, week-long seminar. All knew how to read and write Spanish. Some knew other languages as well. Five had finished elementary school (six years of schooling). Three had been able to complete three years of schooling only. One had no formal schooling at all. The meeting started soon after dinner. The group was not as talkative as other groups. The session lasted for about 90 minutes.

### **The Adverse Side of Volunteerism as Perceived by Returned Trainees**

In the sharing of their experiences as volunteer workers, one participant felt that Trainees, at one level, invested their time on others. Concretely he said, "One has the desire to help people, help them to advance (develop). But, in so doing, sometimes our own personal needs suffer." Another commented that in his community there are many needs, for example, more classrooms in the school. He said he is willing to do, as he actually does, the necessary footwork [to procure some benefits] but, since he is a head of household with a limited income, at times, he can't afford even a soft drink. (Evaluators' note: A lack of personal resources was implied in this participant's intervention.) As volunteer workers, they said, "We do not earn an income from the services rendered, and attending the EIL seminars is a financial drain for the very poor." "What we are spending here, could very well serve other purposes, [buying] food,

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clothing." Nevertheless, they felt committed to EIL's Follow-on training.

### **Candidate Pool and Trainee Selection**

Many participants stated that they were unclear as to the procedure for granting the scholarships. Nevertheless, they were ready to recount how, in their own cases, they got one. They also said that their personal initiative in obtaining the scholarship was a determining factor.

One participant said that he received scholarship information through a health promoter. Another one got information about it from a Peace Corps volunteer. Another previously held a post on the board of directors of an indigenous community association, and obtained the scholarship application, he said, from a consultant with the *Confederación Nacional Campesina*, who had received it from a person in AID. One of the women in the group stated that an extension worker obtained the scholarship for her to train herself as a health promoter, and to better deal with malnutrition problems in her community.

One said, "I got the scholarship from APROFAM." He mentioned the name of a doctor in that organization, and said that 14 or 17 Trainees were selected from that family planning group at one time. Another one got one from INACOP, an organization of cooperatives, by filling out a questionnaire, and attending a meeting in the capital. One more got the scholarship from DIGESA, an agro-services organization. The last one to share his experience in getting the scholarship stated that a health promoter came to his community looking for someone else but, since he knew the promoter, he shouted, "Let me go! let me go!" and, on the spot, he was invited to the Guatemala Fiesta Hotel for a predeparture meeting. Most, however, had to wait from one to nine months between the original completion of the paperwork and the notification of the scholarship award.

All in the group said that they were satisfied with the scholarship. The effort, along with the EIL training, represents a major "advancement," they said. The scholarship, they elaborated, had been very important in equipping people to better help their communities.

### **Predeparture Orientation**

All said that they received an orientation before leaving for the U.S. In that meeting, they responded to a question on "What do you think about going to the United States?" to which some replied, "To visit and bring back ideas." Most, however, stated that they did not know beforehand what was going to happen in the U.S. training. But, they stated that, in the welcoming ceremonies, they were instructed as to what forms to fill out and how to complete them. One participant said that his orientation was very limited.

Among some of the recommendations they heard at the orientation were: "Not to walk separate from each other." "No throwing garbage on the floor." They were also forewarned, "There are tortillas here, but not there."

### **Purpose of the Scholarship as Perceived by Trainees**

According to group participants the scholarships were issued as a way to achieve peace in Central America, and to try to change "our condition in life." Additionally, they felt that through the scholarship an orientation was given as to how to live better. They also felt that there were many problems in Guatemala stemming from the fact that people are not united. The scholarship, in their view, would help solve some of those problems. At a different level, participants said that the scholarship's objective was to gain more knowledge, and to achieve development. One alluded to the wording printed on a travel bag he received at the beginning of his program. It recited "*Becas para la Paz en Centro America.*" He

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considered the quote the main objective of the program.

### **U.S. Training**

In the sharing of their experiences, participants mentioned getting acquainted with U.S. customs, education, development, history, and culture. "People in the U.S. treated us very well." "They took us to see beautiful places." However, some of them said that not much was learned of how the U.S. society is organized because the facilitators were not from the United States; they were from Costa Rica and Chile. One seemed to capture the essence of the group's impressions in, "We went to the States but we did not interact with the people." Only one visited with an American family on weekends.

### **EIL's Follow-on Training**

Participants felt that EIL training was helping them to develop their leadership potential, and their country's development. Most of the participants in this session work toward developing their communities. One expressed that after EIL's first module, he went back to his community with more vigor. This feeling was echoed among all group participants.

All in the group had participated in EIL's Community Development, Modules I and II. They said that those modules helped them to obtain new knowledge and learn techniques needed to work in their communities to get community projects underway. They felt that EIL's training "was perfect and that everything is fine [with it]." One, however, wanted more profound, in-depth training to be able "to reach any objective."

Participants reported that, upon their return to Guatemala, some were contacted by AID, others by ASOPAZAC, the alumni organization. Still, others claimed "[they] were contacted by PAZAC, an organization that does not exist anymore." It appeared that, although the name of the alumni

organization was known to them, the functions of and the purposes of the organization as a whole were not known to them. Nevertheless, they perceived that ASOPAZAC was a helping organization in charge of fulfilling some of the alumni needs, a body where experiences could be exchanged, and an entity in place to provide Follow-on. But, they said, communication does not exist. According to some in the group, there were some regional boards or *Asociaciones Departamentales* and also a national board but, "PAZAC died," and ASOPAZAC with it.

In concluding the focus group, some felt that inherent in the training is a commitment to organize the community, i.e., that community projects should emanate from their activity. Nevertheless, they asked for "some help coming from CAPS and other institutions to facilitate this work." Because of their limited resources, and not having enough money for food, they will continue to attend EIL's "courses" keeping in mind that, at the same time, they have to bring bread to the family's table.

In a final series of statements, participants were concerned about what would happen after EIL's fourth—and last—training module. They expressed a desire for a certificate of their EIL training, and wanted to consult with EIL's personnel on the possibility of more Follow-on. Additionally, some stated that a diploma was not their concern, rather it is putting into practice that which they had learned. They also felt that it is impossible to train someone to be a leader in five weeks. More in the group, however, expressed the view that leadership is a trait that can be acquired with training.

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## **FOCUS GROUP #5:**

***EIL PYME Trainees (Short-Term).  
6/19/91, 8:30 p.m., held at the Cacique  
Inn, Panajachel.***

### **Group Characteristics**

The group consisted of nine persons, eight women and one man, all of whom were small and medium enterprise (i.e., PYME) Trainees. Their homes were dispersed throughout the country, including Jutiapa, Escuintla, Quetzaltenango, Retalhuleu, and Guatemala City. Ages ranged from 22 to 58, with an average age of 33. The Trainees reported an average household income of about Q.2,000 per month. Most were merchants: two had beauty shops, two had small general purpose shops, one sold material for shoes and another had a small factory for shoe materials, and two had food establishments. All but one had been in the U.S. for four to five weeks, and all but two said they were affiliated with ASOPAZAC.

### **Group Dynamics**

This was a lively group; the one young man, who spoke frequently and who identified himself, regardless of his clearly middle class outlook, as indigenous, sparked considerable debate and commentary with the eight female participants.

### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator described the form and the procedures of the focus group and asked for their open and sincere opinions. He assured them of confidentiality in using names for reporting purposes.

### **Selection and Predeparture**

The process of selection varied for individual members of the group. A female Trainee described how she was recruited through INTECAP, the national training institute, where she had been taking a course. A

trainer there was told to recruit eight from her region, and she was nominated. She was told to bring her business license; she sold bread to pay for the trip to Guatemala City, took a short exam there, and was selected. She had eight days between the trainer's announcement and the day she left. Others were recruited in INTECAP, at their vocational schools, or in their communities. Some took tests, others did not.

Several Trainees mentioned that in their groups there were persons who probably were not well chosen. Some of these were not in business. One cited two persons who treated the training as a sightseeing trip, with no desire to improve themselves. Trainees were aware that *cuello* was sometimes an issue, where a mayor's wife or others who were ineligible were sent. But one Trainee stated that this was definitely not due to PAZAC's or AID's role; it was rather due to the fact that AID had to rely on local institutions to nominate people. Specifically, they felt that "doña Elvira" [Saenz de Tejada, the USAID Training Officer] never showed any kind of political favoritism; the distortions came from the people who were charged with nominating candidates.

All but one of the group reported having at least a short orientation course in Guatemala City before leaving, either at the Hotel Fiesta or at PAZAC. One, who only had one day's notice, still received a brief presentation. The Trainees were not told what the content of their course would be. Several said that they were primarily concerned that someone be there to meet them in the U.S., and that they were open to learning whatever they were taught.

One Trainee mentioned that they were well oriented after their arrival at Meridian House in Washington; others seconded this.

### **U.S. Training Experience**

***Length of training:*** No one had more than five weeks of training, and several said that this was not enough time. "We learned the

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most basic, but with more time we could have learned much more," said one. One Trainee who was already studying business in the university said that the course was too short to teach him more than he knew; but he felt the course's strength was not in the technical training, but in the changed view of the world that it gave him.

**Training content and methods:** Trainees rated their training courses between 95 and 100, with the exception of one grade of 75. They agreed that they had reached their training goals.

Several Trainees said that their training included tours and visits to factories; one expressed disappointment that there was only one such visit after they had been promised more, and this to "see the machines, not the people." The lower grade mentioned in the previous paragraph was attributed to the fact that these visits were not made. Another Trainee pointed out that this first Trainee was in one of the very first training groups in 1985, and that by the time she had gone in late 1986 things may have functioned better. Several Trainees reported that in training they were broken up into smaller groups by the type of business they had, and the training was tailored, they said, to the particular needs.

In terms of relevance, Trainees argued that they returned full of self-confidence and in good spirits, with the idea that they could achieve their own goals. Their training also encouraged them to think how people in small businesses could help others. All, by consensus, agreed that they had applied what they had learned since their return.

**Training group makeup:** One group member mentioned the heterogeneous nature of his group, with indigenous folk who were barely able to read and write. He stated that the problems this created were not due to the fact that these Trainees were indigenous, but rather that their educational level was so low.

## **Experience America**

The Trainees returned with positive views of North Americans. They felt that their teachers were good and that Americans treated them well. They characterized North Americans as open, helpful, and punctual. On the other hand, one was shocked by the level of street crime in Miami.

Most had some formal EA activities, such as visits to Epcot Center, the Florida NASA facility, or the beach. They enjoyed these experiences and felt that they had learned a great deal.

## **Return and Reintegration**

**Direct impacts:** One Trainee said that during her training course she was motivated to set herself the goal of opening up a beauty academy at home, and she did indeed do this on her return. Another woman said that she learned how to organize her finances in her small business. Others added that the content of the course—planning, basic accounting, the break-even point, decision-making, setting goals and reaching them—had all affected the way they managed their small enterprises. One Trainee reported that his decision to import materials for his business derived from his U.S. experience, even though to date the importations were not from the United States.

Further, several recounted that they had passed on what they learned to others: other business people, members of the family, a friend, even clients. One Trainee said that the friend to whom she taught some of the topics she studied in the U.S. now had a small business and was doing well. Another said that, drawing on the EIL small training project support, she had organized a seminar with an INTECAP trainer.

Other impacts were less concrete. One Trainee talked of how the vision he acquired of the United States changed his understanding of the world and of his own potential. Another said that this trip served

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to "shake her up," making her realize that she must not remain on the same level, but rather should advance in her business and her goals.

### **Follow-on and EIL**

**EIL:** One Trainee said that after the exhilaration of the U.S. training, she felt abandoned to her own devices after her return. However, the EIL training seminars, which she and several other Trainees characterized as "marvelous," had changed all that. They have learned techniques in human relations, decision-making, and accounting. The seminars help to reinforce and to put into practice what they learned in the U.S. The teachers of EIL are good; they explain clearly. They offer the knowledge necessary to overcome problems that the Trainees encounter in their businesses.

As a result of the last module, one Trainee said that she had introduced some new items into her inventory. Another said that the Trainees in business had also established commercial ties among themselves. They learned from each other what worked, and were able to avoid pitfalls into which others fell.

The Trainees recognized that there was an association called ASOPAZAC; one said that it was designed "for us to help each other and to carry out activities in the community." But none were nor had been active in it.

One Trainee stated that after the EIL seminars ended, while everyone would like more help from AID, they recognized that they should take the initiative on their own to continue learning. They argued that they did not want direct financial help, but that they would like more practical training like EIL offers. Another said that "it is a great deal what AID has given us, our round-trip tickets, they've given us so much. For the future direction, we should do it ourselves."

Trainees pointed out that they made some sacrifices to attend the sessions; they had to

leave their businesses and their children in the hands of others for the week they were gone. When asked why Trainees sometimes failed to return to subsequent modules, Trainees mentioned such factors as a drop in income the previous month, family illness, the inability to close the business for a week, and, on the part of some PYME Trainees, a sense of discouragement that their businesses are failing.

### **Planning a New Program**

In this exercise, the Trainees took for granted that small business people would continue to be recipients of the *beca*. They decided that Trainees should be beginners, not those with the most experience, although those with struggling businesses already in operation made good candidates. Economic need should continue to serve as a criterion; those who can afford to go on their own should not be sent. When specific income figures were mentioned, the group decided on an upper limit of Q.3,000 per month in a family of five persons, though obviously those who earn less would be better [Evaluator's note: This is approximately double the figure now used for "economically disadvantaged"].

Trainees addressed the issue of indigenous identity by acknowledging that Native Americans were a majority of the population, but they themselves, save one, did not readily identify themselves as indigenous. The one who did so argued for a broader definition of the term and insisted that it is incorrect to think that indigenous people are only peasant farmers, although he agreed that urban relatives of his—whom he considered to be, like himself, indigenous—sometimes discriminated against Maya speakers from the countryside.

Groups should be homogeneous in language and in education. They should either be literate or be able to pass a simple exam. They felt that older people, who were often disqualified, should be included; and several noted that younger people often were the

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least productive in the courses, but went "just to pass the time."

Favoritism can be avoided through a more complete investigation of the background of candidates.

### **Evaluating the Evaluators**

The Trainees stated they enjoyed the chance to talk about the program and especially to contribute to the process whereby the activities of EIL would be better known. They felt that this approach, in which the evaluators tried to capture the point of view of the Trainees themselves, was valuable and appropriate.

### **FOCUS GROUP #6:**

***EIL Training of Trainers Group.  
6/21/91, 9:30 p.m., held at the del  
Campo Hotel, Quetzaltenango.***

### **Group Characteristics**

Eight persons participated, seven men and one woman. The group began late in the evening and ran close to midnight; at one point the woman participant, who had not spoken a great deal, excused herself and did not return. This group was highly articulate and well trained in training techniques; most were professional trainers themselves. These Trainees work in public health, the training of nurses, primary and adult education, agriculture extension, and cooperative management. Two had gone to the United States in 1985, six in 1987, and one for three weeks in 1989.

### **Group Dynamics**

Dynamics within this group were rather distinct from most of the other focus groups conducted. Several factors were at work: this group was attending its fourth Training of Trainers module; they were confident of their skills and their opinions; and they also work professionally in this field. Their levels of education were higher than any other short-term group. The members of the group knew each other well after their previous weeks together, and their seminar interactions carried over into the focus group. Finally, the late hour was reflected in the initial slow pace noted by both the moderator and the observer. But these observations do not obscure the fact that the members of the group had reflected both on their U.S. training experience and on the EIL training, and were able to express their views easily and articulately.

### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator asked if members were familiar with the focus group format. As

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several were, he asked one to describe it. The moderator also ensured group participants of the confidential nature of their remarks.

### **Selection and Predeparture**

The selection process of these Trainees was, with one exception, through the institutions where they worked. One working in a national cooperative institute was selected after two other candidates were unable to go. Another worked in a co-op in the department of Quiché, and went when the manager, who was selected, turned out to be too old. The nursing instructor went with a group from her institute. The person working in adult education went with a group of 20 from his office who were part of a program to stimulate nonformal education. One who works in another office for nonformal education attended an inaugural international conference in that field. Guatemala was known as having experience in that area, and he was chosen as a delegate. Others were selected through the government ministry where they worked. The 1989 Trainee was nominated by the PAZAC office after having approached them (as he approaches all institutions that he becomes aware of) in the hopes of financial support for small community infrastructural projects.

The Trainees could all cite cases of individual Trainees who had been selected as a result of *cuello*, that is, through influence and friendship. But they felt that such cases resulted as much from time pressure to select Trainees as from undue influence. One working in the Ministry of Education noted that he was involved in selection, and that they only had a short time to present their list. If they had had more time, he would have been able to pick people working in remote areas, but they presented the list on short notice. Several also noted cases of Trainees who were disqualified for pregnancy, age, health reasons, and "by the Embassy."

Most stated that their predeparture orientations consisted of a session lasting several hours; the 1989 Trainee said that his was a half day. Trainees agreed that the orientation was adequate in terms of the mechanics of travel, but several said that they received no information on the content of the course. One said that he only received an indication of course content after arriving, when he was given a schedule for the first week of training.

### **U.S. Training Experience**

*Training content and methods:* Group members had participated in different kinds of training themes: cooperatives, health, education, training of trainers, and agriculture. All the Trainees who expressed their views thought that the training sessions were well balanced between classroom and other activities, such as site visits and practical applications of classroom training. When asked to finish the sentence "My training was....," such answers as "very good," "satisfactory," "excellent," and "both practical and theoretical" were mentioned. One described a series of visits that they made: to a dairy farm, to see a drip irrigation system, to a winery. Grades given the training averaged about 80, with a few lower.

As for the relevance of the training, the nonformal education specialist said that his group saw the training as a reinforcement for what they were already doing. He felt that without their input the training would have only been 10-20 percent relevant, but his group shaped the course to their ends. Another said that due to the disparity of technological levels, much of what he learned would not be applicable to Guatemala, but as an apprenticeship it was interesting. Several said that the contrast in technologies and in material wealth stimulated them to consider on their own how best to apply what they had learned.

*Length of training:* The Trainees pointed out that in three to five weeks it was not possible to specialize in a field; rather, the

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period was more like an incentive, a stimulus to future work. At least two mentioned that they felt as if they gave more in their training sessions than they learned, and that they would only want to repeat the experience if it were longer and if it were clear that they were being chosen to share their own knowledge and experience, and not just as students.

### **Experience America**

The Trainees pointed out that all training was in Spanish, and several noted that they had only had contact with Spanish speakers, other Latin Americans. One Trainee from 1987 said that he spent the time in a hotel in Miami, and did not get to know any families. His only "at home" experience came when a trainer invited him to his house, an unplanned event. Apparently none of these Trainees had homestays or other experiences with U.S. families.

Still, the Trainees pointed to the experience of being in the U.S. in terms of how it broadened their understanding of the world. One said that while he did not learn a great deal of specifics in his field, he learned a great deal in general terms. Others agreed.

### **Return and Reintegration: the Impact of Training**

While the assessment of applicability described above was mixed, several Trainees articulated the impact of the training on their work. One said that the training led him to reformulate in a beneficial way the methodologies he used in his contact with community members. Another spoke of a "reordering" of the way he did his work while remaining in the same position. A third said that his training served as an incentive. One group member said that the training benefited him most in the sense that comparing the advances he saw in the U.S. with what Guatemalans have at home stimulated him greatly to do whatever he could to take those advances as an example.

A Trainee who works in public health said that the training opportunity awoke in him a great interest in improving the methods that he and his co-workers use in carrying out their work in the community. He added that his ability to communicate better helped him to achieve a better coverage in a recent vaccination campaign, and he has greatly improved his administrative skills in public health initiatives as a result of the training. He extended these advantages to over 200 health promoters who were able to participate in CAPS programs.

Several also pointed to the fact that there was a certain prestige associated with the scholarship, when their colleagues saw that they had won this honor. It was also a positive motivation to realize that one's bosses recognized their work by nominating them.

### **Follow-on and EIL**

Most of the Trainees had not participated actively in ASOPAZAC, and several stated that they saw no reason for participation. In the planning session, several spoke of an ASOPAZAC II that would be based at the level of the department or region. One Trainee who had been active in ASOPAZAC at the departmental level was reluctant to defend the organization, although he was less negative in his assessment than the others. He argued that the association was inactive because it no longer received support from PAZAC, which had closed. He mentioned that he had received a letter from Development Associates about the formation of a new alumni association, and he was looking forward to attending the meeting later in the year in which the association would be founded.

The Trainees were enthusiastic about the work of EIL. Several spoke of the value of learning new participatory educational methods which they can take with them to the work place, and of having more confidence in their own skills in the training

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sessions they undertake in their work. The grades, on a 0-100 scale for EIL training (removing the one low figure which, according to the Trainee, he stated to stimulate discussion), averaged 90.

### **Planning a New Program**

The Trainees spent a considerable portion of their time in this exercise outlining the characteristics of those who would be future Trainees. They should be leaders, identified with the community and representing it, regardless of their ages. They should be field or community people, not office workers. Their merit should lie in results, in their concrete works. New Trainees should be accredited by community committees or authorities. One suggested that they should not be over 40 years of age, have at least three years of primary school, and a preference should be made for bilinguals (i.e., those who speak a native language and Spanish). The moderator asked if high levels of illiteracy would not exclude many people, and the discussants agreed that practical knowledge, intelligence, and social activities, not merely education, should be the most important selection criteria. By preference, they should be educators; one insisted that the Trainees from the private sector were not as desirable, since they only thought in terms of their own advancement and not in their role in the community. Tribunals or other committees should be used to avoid *cuello* or undue influence.

Trainees should be asked to sign an agreement whereby they commit themselves to pass on what they have learned. The commitment would have to be at an individual level, and not through the Ministry of Education, since there are constant changes of personnel and leadership in the latter.

Training areas should be in development priorities, although provision should be made to include indigenous culture and language as a theme. Trainees should have at least a week of advance warning, and orientation

should be offered by returned Trainees. Follow-on training like that offered by EIL should be provided on the Trainees' return.

### **Evaluating the Evaluators**

The Trainees reminded the evaluators that they had a difficult task, given the fact that they were trying to understand a varied program with five years of experience. One suggested that we not take a totally "cold," analytical view, but attempt to enter into the substance of their experience.

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## **FOCUS GROUP #7:**

***Non-EIL Trainees (Male/Female).  
6/22/91, 10:00 a.m., held at Rafael  
Landívar University.***

### **Group Characteristics**

In terms of age and social situation, this was a mixed group, made up of six persons, four women and two men. Four were small business students, one was in cooperative administration, and the last was in a training of trainers group. One Trainee currently has a small business with her husband, a small workshop which makes leather cases. Another has a small textile factory which exports to El Salvador. One worked in vocational training and now operates the cafeteria at Rafael Landívar University, with business interests on the side, while a social worker also had a small business. Two were now management employees in businesses; one of these was an administrator of a small clothing factory. Trainees had been in the U.S. between 1985 and 1988; five had been in Miami, and one had gone to New Orleans. Average age was 42 years, with a range from 33 to 56.

### **Group Dynamics**

The group was cooperative, interested, and apparently enjoyed talking about their experience. This was one of the groups that was video-taped; for the observer, at least, it was difficult to note any particular impact of the taping process on the participants beyond the first few minutes when people glanced somewhat warily at the camera. All members of the group, both men and women, were talkative and expressive, though as is frequently the case some were more articulate than others. Indeed, once the general topics were outlined in the introduction to the group, several began expressing their opinions before the normal introductions could be made, and the moderator had to secure agreement from the

group that it was willing to return to his guide.

### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator touched on his expectation of having a somewhat greater turnout than the six who were present, and participants suggested that they, like other participants, schedule their Saturdays rather fully and this requires advance notice. Two to three days is required at a minimum. [Evaluators' note: This group had three days' advance notice.]

One Trainee asked whether the intent of the evaluation was a prelude to new offers of scholarships and whether previous recipients would be eligible for the new ones. We explained PAZAC II and the shift in policy in terms of Trainee selection.

### **Selection and Predeparture**

This group essentially reported a single way by which they were selected; they had been nominated by an institution with which they had some connection (e.g., a member of a small business class was nominated by the agency giving the course, INTECAP; a woman seeking a loan for her business from a foundation was nominated by the foundation).

When asked to comment on whether all their fellow students were well selected, most replied in the positive. One reported a case where an indigenous fellow Trainee was unable to speak Spanish well enough and was under such stress that he was sent home. The Trainee who studied cooperatives said that, while many in his group had the appropriate background, he noted that there were also secretaries with no post-secondary training, who stated that they were going "on vacation." A woman who was in a small business group noted that the Trainees were quite heterogeneous in their educational levels, and this created problems; but she also described how it broadened the group's understanding of their fellow Guatemalans.

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## **U.S. Training Experience**

***Length of training:*** One Trainee stated that she was satisfied with the training, but that five weeks was simply too short a time to be most useful. The group reached consensus on this view. One said he was able to "pasear," to tour, but that the training received was much less than desired. A female Trainee pointed out that the five-week schedule meant that, in reality, only three weeks were provided of actual training. A male argued that while obviously the Mission could not send them for, say, three years, training money would go further if it were carried out in Guatemala; he said that for the same amount they could probably offer a year in Guatemala and a week of Experience America in the U.S. Another seconded this.

***Training content and methods:*** A woman PYME Trainee suggested that a greater focus on site visits or on-the-job exposure, instead of classroom studies, would have been best for her. A Trainee who attended a course in cooperative and small business management noted that very little was actually done in relation to cooperatives.

***Training group makeup:*** The issue of homogeneity of groups was raised again. In general, the PYME Trainees felt that the wide range of business backgrounds—small shop owners, tailors and seamstresses, indigenous weavers, small factories—was not desirable, since their experiences were so diverse. In sum, the group recommended homogeneity in terms of work, occupation, educational level, and region of the country.

When the moderator noted the high levels of illiteracy in Guatemala and the intent of the program to include the disadvantaged, a 1985 PYME Trainee said that in her group, beyond three administrative employees, all the rest had small businesses and exhibited low levels of education. She spoke approvingly of the way the Trainers, through case analysis, were able to tailor their training to these Trainees, and noted that

these small businessmen generally had considerable practical knowledge if not formal education. The trainers also worked in terms of the cases of the Trainees themselves, many of whom had businesses which were not going well. She cited a concrete case where the trainers helped a woman with a workshop in Antigua to dramatically redesign her business.

## **Experience America**

Trainees pointed out that all their training and Experience America was conducted in Spanish, and they felt frustrated by the language barrier. Another Trainee in a Miami course noted that they dealt almost exclusively with Latin Americans, not North Americans. Some felt that their experience had been more with other Latin Americans in the U.S. than U.S. citizens.

A Trainee who was in a "training of trainers" group in Miami felt that the hotel environment effectively prevented any real contact with Americans and the United States. They were too tightly controlled, in his estimation, and were not allowed out of sight of the hotel or to go out past 10:00 p.m. Another Trainee who was in New Orleans countered that in his group several men went out to bars and got drunk, and that another of their number "escaped" in order to remain in the U.S.; he felt that the controls on behavior were justified due to the demonstrated immaturity of his companions. Several women noted that they did not expect to go to bars late at night, and so they did not feel the weight of the rules.

A Trainee said that she appreciated the chance to visit the historical sites and the capital, although she pointed out that it was not feasible to expect the Trainees to understand North American culture through a one-week trip. Another countered that the goal was not to understand U.S. culture, but simply to see how North Americans live.

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One Trainee noted the importance of how a lack of basic courtesy can affect an entire group: a trainer, who received them in the airport, apparently insulted or spoke harshly to one Trainee, and the group as a whole, he reported, felt insulted by this. They jointly complained of the treatment, and the Trainer improved his behavior.

A Trainee who studied at an HBCU was happy with his experience, though he noted that he had little chance to meet people outside the institution.

A female Trainee found North Americans helpful and friendly on a day when she and her group were set the task by their trainers of moving about Washington. Two others countered that they found North Americans unwilling to listen to their efforts to communicate.

### **Return and Reintegration**

The Trainee who had studied cooperative management reported that he had returned to his office ready to share what he had learned, and was disappointed that his supervisors never requested a report. He felt that the day-to-day necessities of the business prevented him and his managers from taking advantage of the knowledge he had gained. The small businessmen had a different experience, however, and one stated that he had directly applied the idea of cash flow and the break-even point to his business.

### **Follow-on and EIL**

One Trainee said that her group had tried to get together after returning, but the dispersal throughout the country made it impossible. Other Trainees recognized that the Association (ASOPAZAC) should be the means to do so. One female PYME Trainee said that although she had not formally joined the Association, she received an invitation to attend a gathering in the Hotel Sheraton. The meeting was so large and diverse that she considered it a loss of her

time. One said that the general meeting included people from all kinds of groups with which she shared nothing; she felt that "to go to drink coffee, that she could do at home." Another said that she felt that the meeting she attended was not sufficiently organized in terms of clear topics, and that she spent her time simply meeting people and talking. Four Trainees had gone to at least one meeting; the description of one was that of a re-entry seminar. They had participated no further. Another said that she had received bulletins, but they had quit coming.

Several of these Trainees, who had not participated in EIL seminars, were aware of their existence. One said that it was easier for independent small businessmen to take part; as an employee, she had little free time and could not go. Others said they were simply too busy to take on any outside activities; for example, one man had two small businesses and a full-time job, and he was looking for no other ways to occupy himself. [Evaluator's note: The respondent professed to be unaware of the EIL seminars, though one mentioned ASOPAZAC training, reflecting the first notification letter's text in 1989.]

### **Planning a New Program**

As an exercise, Trainees planned a new program in which they acted as an advisory council in designing a new scholarship similar to CAPS. Training should be in the fields of literacy, business administration, health, small enterprises, and community development. AID could ask for lists from the GOG ministries as to the needs of the people and use that as a guide. Each candidate should have an individual interview. Most of the training should be in Guatemala, with one week of getting to know the United States through travel. If training is here, Trainees would not have to leave their work and could take the courses at night. The group was undecided whether the Experience America or any U.S. training should be with

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non-Hispanics. More English language training should be included.

On returning, the same group, by field of study, should meet from time to time. The scholarship providers should meet monthly with the Trainees at the beginning, and join them together by field, as well as by geographic region, when they become numerous.

### **Evaluating the Evaluators**

Trainees liked the evaluation. With small groups, one can say what one likes. One Trainee stated that on questionnaires one limits oneself to the question, while talking it is possible to open up the topics much more. A Trainee stated she felt that the evaluators should try to join together the good and the bad points in order to improve the program. Another seconded this, saying it was worthwhile if the results of their conversation are applied to future programs, but this was a waste of his time if the comments "simply remained on the tape." Several said they appreciated the chance to get together with other *ex-becarios* again.

### **FOCUS GROUP #8:**

***Non-EIL CASP Trainees (Long-Term).  
6/27/91, 7:00 p.m., held at the Alamo  
Hotel, Guatemala City.***

### **Group Characteristics**

Five young people participated in this group, four men and one woman. The average age was 23 years; four were single, one married. All resided in the Guatemala City area. Two men were currently students; the woman worked as a telephone operator, and the other two as technicians.

### **Group Dynamics**

The group was cooperative, although not particularly talkative at the beginning. They warmed to the task and proved to be an informative and pleasant group. Five persons is somewhat below the normal size for a focus group; more had been invited and had confirmed their participation but did not appear.

### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator explained the purposes of the evaluation and ensured the confidentiality of their comments in terms of revealing their identities.

### **Selection and Predeparture**

One Trainee had known about the CASP program for several years prior to selection; several of her fellow students at the School for Household Education had been selected in past years. The school had received fifty applications, and she was supplied one on graduation. Five graduates were selected.

Other Trainees learned of the program during their first semester in the university or in a vocational institute. One had been in an INTECAP program and was informed of the possibility of applying by a teacher.

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After being selected, one Trainee said his trip was postponed because the college which was to be the site of the CASP training was not prepared to receive them. A second Trainee reported that he was given little time between final notification of selection and his departure date.

One Trainee reported that a few days before leaving he and his group were provided a pamphlet which described the content of the course they were to receive. Another said that he and his fellow Trainees only knew they were to study "agriculture," and that, since his group was the first to be accepted by the college, there were many problems during their stay.

### **U.S. Training Experience**

*Length of training:* Three of the Trainees spent twenty-one months in the U.S.; the two who studied agriculture were in programs which only lasted ten months. One of those Trainees in the latter group said he was unaware that his program would not be the full twenty-one months, and only learned this after arriving in the U.S. His companion affirmed that he, however, was indeed aware that the program was for the shorter period.

*Training content and methods:* For the first period in the United States, the main task of the Trainees was to learn English. One reported that he attended four hours of English classes per day. He recounted the difficulty of learning a language in order to take college-level classes in it.

A Trainee who was attending a class in clothing design said that she and her fellow Trainees thought at first that they were going to learn to be high fashion designers, but that instead the course was very basic. She believes that the trainers assumed that Central Americans knew nothing. The Trainees began to demand a higher level of training than they were receiving; overall, she said that the level was disappointing.

A Trainee who studied computer repair said that he was concerned about the way he would be able to apply what he was learning. A third Trainee was happier with the training, but was surprised to learn that his college was in a small town; he was unaware that there were small towns in the United States. Yet another Trainee felt he was given good information in terms of the content of the course and that the training was good. The difficulties arise, he said, on returning home.

This group of Trainees were mixed in their ranking of the applicability of the training. On a ten-point scale, two ranked it very low, the other three averaged 9. Four of the five ranked the level of training "between medium and low." They did report regular visits from Georgetown staff and were happy with their relations with the central office.

The most important benefit of the training, according to a consensus among the Trainees, was having learned English.

### **Experience America**

Trainees reported positive experiences in those aspects of the program outside of training; they ranked the Experience America component considerably higher. They spoke of the value of the homestays and of getting to know U.S. citizens. They were less happy with their relationships with certain CASP Trainees from other countries, especially the Costa Ricans.

The contact with North Americans led several of the Trainees to reflect on their own country and especially to recognize the importance they place in their family ties. One mentioned that at moments the idea of remaining in the U.S. was attractive, but that she always was also anxious to return. One friend did marry a North American. Several mentioned the difficulties they underwent on returning home, however, when families were at first unwilling to recognize the changes their children had undergone as CASP Trainees.

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## **Return and Reintegration**

Several Trainees mentioned that the return to Guatemala was a greater shock than they expected. One was unemployed for a time, taking advantage of a respite from work and study. Two of the five said they were currently working in their field. One worked as an English teacher. One Trainee who is currently in the university worked for a while, but has not held a job in the past year.

## **Follow-on**

Trainees had differing relationships with the CASP office in Guatemala after their return. Two reported little contact, due to the crush of work and university studies. Another said that he participated in the alumni association. Trainees were aware of a variety of activities related to CASP Follow-on: English classes, speakers, career workshops, meetings, and community activities. One Trainee mentioned a project of an experimental farm in Cobán with the association. Trainees in general felt that the Follow-on program had been very effective.

## **Impacts of Training**

Trainees spoke of the changes they feel they see in themselves as a result of the CASP experience. Most important for several Trainees were the experiences outside the classroom, in which they were led to contrast U.S. values with their own. One Trainee said that what they had received had helped to modify the character of each one of them. "There [in the U.S.], you depended only on yourself;...when you are there far away you had to gain confidence in yourself."

## **Evaluating the Evaluators**

Trainees said that they appreciated the opportunity to reflect on their U.S. experience and its impact on their lives. One liked sharing experiences with other CASP Trainees. Another said that meetings like this one could lead to solving problems that people saw as intractable as individuals: "a problem that before had no solution now has five."

## **FOCUS GROUP #9:**

***Non-EIL CASP Trainees (Long-Term).  
6/28/91, held at the Alamo Hotel,  
Guatemala City.***

## **Group Characteristics**

Participants in this group were long-term, CASP returned Trainees who, independent from one another, studied in the U.S. sometime between 1985 and 1990. Most were continuing their education in local institutions. Others were employed in Guatemala's private and public sectors.

## **Trainee Selection**

According to participants, the Trainee selection process included the completion of an application, a review of the candidates' curriculum by the intermediary agency, and personal interviews. Some supporting documents were also solicited from candidates.

Candidates who were teachers obtained the applications through their school principals. Upon receipt of these applications, teachers would fill them out in order to be eligible for a series of interviews. Some claimed going to six or seven interviews; others went to two or three; still others stated that a single interview was sufficient to be nominated.

Those enrolled in school became aware of the opportunity through various means—word-of-mouth and printed announcements—and obtained applications. Merit, at times, determined the securing of an application. At the normal school, for example, the top six of the class were given an application. One participant said that he initiated the effort by going directly to PAZAC to apply, and one stated, "Nobody nominated me. I went to AID to apply. I was not selected in the first round, but later I was called in."

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In the course of the session, participants offered some suggestions as to how to improve the selection procedure: "Those who select ought to know the needs of the country, and the appropriate training fields to be offered." Within these parameters, they also suggested giving scholarships to those who needed them the most, community leaders, and those who would commit themselves to return to Guatemala.

### **Trainee Impressions on the U.S. Training**

According to participants, the U.S. experience was great, "something that won't happen again." "I learned a lot." "I learned English." "It was a nice experience, a marvelous one," and "A good opportunity." In recalling the training, some identified two aspects of it as major: one technical and one social. Some felt that they got more out of the social aspect of the training than from the technical. But this view was not generalized.

Some success stories were recounted: "I didn't know anything about electronics," claimed one, "but they gave me a class and the equipment [to practice]. It was excellent." He continued, "Those who already knew about electronics, were able to learn the use of up-to-date equipment." Nevertheless, he also felt that "the program was better [fit] for those who already knew something about the subject."

Others complained that the U.S. training was limited, and that some important subject matter they expected to receive was barely discussed. One gave the example of a modeling class, where the emphasis was on marketing and the "know-how" portion of the training was relegated to a second priority. Another participant complained that the training was difficult and "somewhat deficient." A teacher in the group said that in her training they wanted to introduce subjects she had already mastered and taught in Guatemala. Some participants were in custom-made programs where the courses they took were not part of the general

college curriculum and said that, under those circumstances, some of the courses they would have liked to take were unavailable to them.

### **What Trainees Liked Best of the U.S. Training**

"Everything," said one. "Meeting people, being by myself...because with the family one does not develop [fully]." Another participant added, "Those two years [of training] have been the best of my life as a student." One more commented that she "liked the availability of materials and books." She also liked the fact that during her training she had access to and borrowed all the books she wanted. Some participants were impressed with the training facilities and the equipment available in them. Others appreciated and were impressed by the trainers' responsibility and punctuality.

Aside from all the positive comments about the U.S. experiences, participants also recounted some "undesirable" experiences. For example, one stated that his training group was almost kicked out of an apartment complex where they lived, because "they didn't like us." The landlady, "Chinese or Asian, wanted to kick us out because she didn't like Latins and their partying." Another participant stated, "Sometimes we had to take the bus, and the Americans boarding the bus after, would stay away from us." One, who lived a similar experience added, but "later they began to accept us." According to another participant, discrimination was more from other Latins. In contrast to the views thus far expressed by others in the group, a participant said, "I was in California, with Americans, and there were no [discrimination] problems."

On a related issue, some participants explained that when Americans heard that the Trainees were in the U.S. on U.S.-supported scholarships, the general comments were regarding tax dollars spent on foreigners. This was a fact that some Americans disliked, they said.

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## **Homogeneity/Heterogeneity of Training Groups**

Participants, in general, felt that when the training groups were homogeneous a lot was accomplished and learned. Conversely, they perceived group heterogeneity as an obstacle to having a good training experience. As defined by the participants, the homogeneity/heterogeneity concepts were in terms of age, level of schooling, and country of origin of those grouped for training purposes.

Above all, having gone to the U.S. for training was considered a "good opportunity" by the majority in the group. Elsewhere in the discussion, some suggested that the scholarships would be put to better use if those who had a university degree were targeted. This view, however, was not generalized. The average rating ascribed to the experience by participants was 95 on a 0 to 100 scale.

## **Returning Home**

According to participants, after training, some Trainees remained in or returned to the United States in order to enjoy a better standard of living. To the question: "What can we do about it?," they responded, "We have to make them aware that the country needs them." Others suggested, "Make sure that Trainees return to Guatemala by having them sign a contract [when they get the award]." With the same spirit, others favored the establishment of "training in areas of specialization needed in the country, and to create favorable conditions in the country" leading Trainees to jobs upon their return. On this issue, some participants suggested that the Chamber of Commerce should engage in exploring, and making explicit, the labor fields most apt to hire returned Trainees.

## **Impact and Applicability of the U.S. Training Experience**

In opening this segment of the discussion, a participant commented that, due to the

scholarship, she had learned to have more confidence in herself. This was a comment echoed by other participants. When applicability of the training to the Guatemalan context was probed, some participants declared, for example, "What I learned in the U.S. was useful but, upon my return [to Guatemala], I found out that there are some programs that I should have learned but I didn't. Only personal computers were taught." (He was a Computer Science CASP student.) Others replied that they apply the U.S. training: "Not much," "some," and "nothing." One further stated, "It is hard to apply what I learned in the U.S. here; I can only apply a little of what I learned." And another commented, "In my case, what I got [in the training] I am not applying because I am not working in the field. I am in the university, and, at the present time, I am teaching English, but if I decide to work in computers it will be OK."

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## **FOCUS GROUP #10:**

***Non-EIL, JYA, and CASP Group (Long-Term, Academic/Technical, Mixed Fields). 6/21/91, held at the Alamo Hotel, Guatemala City.***

### **Group Characteristics**

Seven men and women returned Trainees participated in the group. All were long-term participants, some in the academic, others in the technical classifications. Five resided in Guatemala City, and two were from nearby communities of Villa Nueva and San Miguel Petapa. Their ages were between 23 and 41 years. All participated in the group in a cordial manner regardless of the range of ages. This group lasted about 70 minutes. It was audio and video recorded. The moderator obtained permission from the group to show an edited version of the video to AID afterwards. Before the group was concluded, one of the participants excused himself because he had other appointments. As he was leaving, the new custom, that is, running on a schedule, was alluded to as something learned in the U.S.

In the group, there were six single persons and one married. The latter, a lawyer, graduated with a Masters degree in International Law from Georgetown University under the CASP Program. The other two professionals in the group were a psychologist and a researcher, both CASP scholars. The psychologist had attended both Georgetown University and the University of New Mexico. At the UNM she obtained a second degree in Business Administration. The researcher studied at Georgetown and Tulane universities. (One of this professionals was carrying the latest copy of a U.S. magazine.)

The rest of the group was composed of younger participants who had returned to school or are in the labor market. Those in school were completing their academic

degrees. Of these, some were also working while going to school. Those employed were in different enterprises. One taught English in a private school.

The participants' declared monthly combined incomes ranged from Q.600 to Q.3,500, approximately \$126 to \$736.

The duration of their U.S. scholarships varied. Some were in the United States only for one year while others stayed two, two and one half, and three and one half years. In some cases, Trainees obtained scholarship extensions.

### **Trainee Selection**

These participants got their scholarship applications in different ways. Some went directly to USAID to request an application prompted by an announcement that, according to them, appeared in the local newspaper. Others became aware of the scholarships through friends and followed up the lead to obtain an application and enter the screening and selection process. Still others were students at the *Universidad del Valle* where, they said, their applications were processed. At the time of application for the scholarship, some thought that the scholarship was going to be to study in Guatemala, but were happily surprised that it was to study in the United States instead. As part of the screening process, participants said that they took exams and that their academic records (grades) were reviewed.

### **Predeparture Orientation**

Some participants received up to two days of orientation. Others, however, stated that the time devoted to orient them the program was limited. Some even said that, whereas the general field of study was known to them before departing, they were not told the location until they were in the airport ready to leave.

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## **U.S. Training**

In general, these participants were very satisfied with the training they received. Those who earned a professional diploma now appear to be enjoying the fruits of their U.S. experience. For example, the lawyer in the group is also a Notary Public, a title highly regarded in the Guatemala judicial system. The psychologist also seemed to be an established professional in her area. The others also gained much from their experience. As returned scholars, they had pursued their careers further, and they had gained some prominence within academic circles. Besides the academic proficiency they obtained, their fluency in English was considered, by them, a valuable asset. (Evaluators' note: Different from some other long-term Trainees, many in this group were able to transfer the U.S. college credits to a Guatemala institution.)

## **Other Experiences in the U.S.**

In general, those who were placed in small U.S. communities and had first-hand, close relationships, with Americans were more satisfied with their out-of-school experiences than others. For example, one participant who was in a small community living with a religious family recalled the great experience that he had. From what he said, the family integrated him in the household's every-day-life and, by so doing, transferred to him the essence of American culture. Another participant lived among Mennonites and also reported having a very good experience. She later went to live with one of the secretaries of the university she was attending and also received the best of treatments.

In this same area, some of the experiences recounted were not so pleasant. For instance, one participant recalled her days in the college dormitories where, according to her, her American roommate would make her life miserable. After a while, however, a new girl came in and everything was normal. Another incident at the "dorms" was recalled by a young participant who had to "put up

with [his] roommate's music he disliked" and, as he put it "racial discrimination."

After further deliberations on ethnic relationships, the group suggested that, in order to know Americans, one has to experience life in the U.S. outside the somewhat guarded environments of college administrations and cafeterias. They felt that advisors and cafeteria personnel are already used to foreigners and, therefore, treat them well but, outside those environments things change. One participant told the group about a trip to a Southern state where, according to him, his group was singled out by the police. His perception was that it was because his friends were "Africans" and he was a "Latino."

Many in the group said that they still maintain a close relationship with people in the States, the families with whom they lived, and friends made during their U.S. stay. Above all, the U.S. training and parallel experiences were deemed valuable by all. As an interesting result of the experience, some said that they learned how to appreciate Guatemala more.

In a role playing exercise, the group was asked to portray themselves as the Board of Directors of a new scholarship program and to plan for the recruitment of Trainees and other scholarship-related matters.

During this exercise, participants suggested that the recruitment should include the rural areas, and that when the rural areas were targeted, individuals who knew the *campo* should head the recruitment and selection effort. Additionally, they saw the need to widely publicize the scholarships at least a year before they would be granted; this, according to them, would facilitate the candidates making plans for a better experience. The group also suggested defining, more precisely, the objectives of the scholarship. During an earlier segment of the discussion, some felt that the main objectives of the scholarships were to have the Trainees get acquainted with Americans,

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and to learn new techniques for application in Guatemala. One participant, however, stated that he knew that the program had its origins in some recommendations made by Henry Kissinger. (Evaluators' note: He apparently thought the two things were necessarily different.)

#### **FOCUS GROUP #11:**

***Non-EIL PIET/JYA Group (Male/Female, Mixed Fields). 6/21/91, 11:25 a.m., held at the Alamo Hotel, Guatemala City.***

#### **Group Characteristics**

Seven male and two female returned Trainees participated in this group. As an introduction to the session, brief descriptions of the evaluation, and of the focus group methodology were given. All participants were Junior Year Abroad (JYA) Scholars. One was enrolled in a community college; the others were enrolled in various institutions: the University of Maryland, Florida State University, South Florida University, Iowa State University, the University of New Mexico, and the University of Tennessee.

Upon their return to Guatemala, all have continued their education in local institutions. The *Universidad Francisco Marroquin*, *Universidad de San Carlos*, and *Universidad Rafael Landívar* were mentioned as schools they were currently attending. In the group, five were working and studying at the same time. Of these, three worked full time and, concurrently, carried a full-time course load.

The fields of study represented in the group included Geology, Finances, Computer Science, Business Management, Animal Science, Agronomy, and Architecture. To dispel any undue expectations, at the end of the first segment of this session, the moderator explained that the focus group was, in no way, a screening procedure for new scholarships.

#### **Selection Procedures According to Participants**

The selection procedures Trainees underwent were different for different programs. To begin with, the information

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about the scholarships reached them by different means. As one recalled, "We were at the University when information about the scholarship came out. We got the applications, and went back home to complete all the paperwork. I got the scholarship very quickly." One of the women in the group said that she read about the scholarship in the newspaper "when PAZAC made the announcement." When radio and TV were probed as possible information dissemination media, participants said that these media were not used. Later they said that information dissemination via radio "would be best, because we all have radios."

On the same issue, some asserted that the selection process was "institutional," that is, university committees would send candidates' documents to Washington [sic] where final selections were made. A few participants felt that some people who were not fully qualified obtained the scholarships. This view was not generalized, however. They also felt that better selection procedures would include an evaluation of the candidates' objectives, and more information exchange between AID and the local universities.

### **Training Objectives**

Some participants said they didn't know before embarking on their training program precisely what they were going to do. All, however, knew that "[they] were going to have an experience in another country, an international experience." Some had the idea that they were going to take classes not offered in Guatemala, academic subjects that could help in their future school work. When they saw that this was not the case, they felt frustrated. As one strongly put it, "It was a lie. I didn't go there to see [learn] anything new. We have all of that here. I learned things that won't serve [help] me. Some of the things that could have helped me in the area of communications, I couldn't take."

Participants thought that some Trainees were not prepared emotionally for the U.S. experience, "[they] got there and had to call home all the time." For this reason, they couldn't take full advantage of the training.

Participants suggested that program results depend, in great proportion, on the coincidence between AID's and the Trainee's goals. As to what the principal goal of the training should be, most participants said, "the improvement of Guatemala."

### **Significance of the Scholarship as Perceived by the Scholars**

Several participants offered their views about the significance of their scholarship and the U.S. training experience. They said that the experience was "valuable. It opened up all doors." "The scholarship gave me the [needed] influence to obtain a job." "It opened up options." Other concrete results were expressed by assertions such as, "Now, I work for an American company."

On the adverse side of the experience's assessment, some participants were troubled because, according to them, the U.S. school credits obtained were not accepted by higher education institutions in Guatemala. Others felt that they just went to the United States to learn English, and that this was something they could have studied in their country. These few Trainees felt that the courses they took in the U.S. "did not justified the year [spent there]." They added that some Trainees took the scholarship as an opportunity to tour the U.S. and dedicated themselves to wander (*pasear*) without even learning English. (Elsewhere in the discussion one participant felt that "touring the U.S. [was] the only way to get to know the American people.")

Participants gave conflicting reports as to whether U.S. school credits were transferable to institutions in Guatemala. Some stated that U.S. credits were not accepted at the *Universidad de San Carlos*. Others declared

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that their own U.S. credits had been validated and accepted at *Universidad Francisco Marroquín*. Still others claimed that the *Universidad Rafael Landívar* had worked some transfer agreements with some U.S. institutions, but would not give any credits if an agreement had not been filed. This issue was a source of much attention and complaint among group participants, especially from those whose credits had not been accepted.

During their U.S. stay and study, some would have preferred a closer type of supervision from the contractor and academic advisors. They felt that "there was no control." and, according to them, "an academic advisor should be attentive for what [they] were doing." Others, however, felt that they learned a lot with the loose contact with program coordinators, by taking the initiative on most matters, and by having the option (liberty) to do as they pleased. By doing so, one participant said, "I got to know who I am."

### **Training Contractor Support**

According to participants, at the beginning of their training, they received some instructions from PIET but, thereafter, PIET "didn't do much." It didn't supervise and follow up the institutional training programs. Trainees felt that there was a certain degree of "conformism" on part of the agencies involved in their training. In support of their argument they stated that PIET's representative would come by to encourage them to "take advantage [of the training]" During those visits Trainees would request other classes, and the representative would just say "we will see," and nothing would happen.

### **Trainee Dissatisfactions**

Some participants claimed that their training sites were far away from the places that they lived. That, according to them, represented an obstacle, especially when this fact was compounded with lack of or scarcity of

transportation services. Other complaints included an allegation that contractors put them "wherever possible," and the feeling that in some universities they were unwelcome. One participant recalled an unbalanced experience: "In Tampa, some were housed in hotels, others in kitchens." A fortunate participant said that, in his case, he had access to a swimming pool and other amenities. In general, living accommodations at the different sites appeared to represent a spectrum from good to not-so-good.

On a 0 to 100 scale, participants ranked their academic studies with scores between 50 and 80. The low scores were given by two participants who felt that, contrary to what they were led to believe, that is that the U.S. higher education system was "extraordinary," after their experience, they felt that the education in the U.S. and Guatemala were comparable. These two participants also complained about the administration of the program saying, "We were supposed to take certain courses, but didn't get them because of financial or planning problems." One participant pointed out that the ratings given were only for the academic part of the scholarship and didn't include any "social or moral" considerations.

### **Applicability of U.S. Training to Guatemala's Context**

Many Trainees had used and profited from their training in the English language but, because of the industrial and managerial procedures being unequal in the U.S. and Guatemala, many had been unable to put into practice that which they learned. An engineer in chemistry, for example, stated that the procedures employed in Guatemala's industry lag behind those used in the States, therefore, applicability of the computerized procedures he learned didn't exist. "I learned new techniques, but they are not applicable. We live two different realities; we are antiquated, while they [the Americans] have a better technology," he concluded.

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### **Views Held About ASOPAZAC**

All but one of the participants thought that they belonged to ASOPAZAC, the alumni organization. Some knew that the organization had conducted some activities, and had accomplished some community projects. None of them, however, had attended meetings, excepting the recent one, when the short-term Board of Directors was elected. At that meeting, some long-term returned Trainees helped during the registration of attendees.

Participants felt that ASOPAZAC had been conceived as a community development organization that would allow returned Trainees to put into practice what they had learned in the U.S., for the benefit of the communities. But ASOPAZAC, according to them ended up "being nothing." They recalled that, when it started, there were plans to organize for the representation of the short-term returned Trainees; subsequently, they were going to organize the long-term Trainee representation as well, but "nothing more has taken place [since then]."

Drawing on the analogy of a vehicle, participants were asked if, in their opinion, ASOPAZAC needs a "tune-up." They replied that what it needs is a "starter" and some "gasoline." Following up with the analogy, many in the group suggested the need to "change the vehicle." Others submitted that a Board of Directors should be in the "driver's seat." As the future of the alumni organization was further discussed, several participants pointed out the fact that some potential association activists just don't have the time, nor the resources to build the organization, and without these two elements not much can be accomplished. Participants stated that AID had asked them to "discover" ways to help their society, and to set some appropriate goals, but that AID had not supported them with even providing a place to meet. "We are disorganized," one claimed.

### **Trainee Perception as to Why a Scholarship Program to Study in the U.S. Exists**

When participants were queried as to the reasons for sending Guatemalans to study in the U.S., they responded that, among other reasons, there is the need for knowledge to be able to help in the community, and the desire to combine an academic and a social experience. Also they pointed out the need for scholars to help in raising education levels in the country, and, one mentioned, because of the need to "counterbalance Soviet influence."

### **Views on Program Evaluation and on Focus Groups as an Evaluation Methodology**

All participants felt that program evaluations are "indispensable." One preferred to contribute to a program evaluation "right after getting back, say six months." They also expressed their desire for "more frequent meetings of this type, [because] one learns how to express oneself." Many said they had not had a chance to do this kind of interchange before. To the question asked by the moderator "How could we do our work better?," one participant replied, "Take our opinions directly to the authorities, so they can achieve good results." Finally, as the group concluded, all participants stated that the "round table" was good.

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## **FOCUS GROUP #12:**

***Non-EIL META/JYA Group  
(Male/Female, Mixed Fields). 6/29/91,  
Noon, held at the Hotel Alamo,  
Guatemala City.***

### **Group Characteristics**

This group was made up of nine people, eight women and one man, all in their early twenties. All had studied for one academic year in the United States, in 1989-90. All continued to study in the University, and most all also had other jobs. These jobs ranged from two who worked in the Bank of Guatemala, one who worked in a computer firm, and one who worked in a major hotel. In terms of social origins, these young people mirrored other long-term academic students in that they appear to be solidly in the middle class. This is not surprising, since they were recruited, like the other JYA group (see Group #13) from the universities. This is not to suggest that some may not come from households of limited resources.

### **Group Dynamics**

The group was friendly, cooperative, and reflective. Most all of the group members participated actively; two people who were somewhat reticent to speak nevertheless made insightful comments when called upon directly. They communicated a desire to contribute to the evaluation and were willing to address any issues posed. Many group members also clearly knew each other from the time of their training.

### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator explained the focus group format and assured personal confidentiality.

### **Selection and Predeparture**

Recruitment for this program took place through the universities, but it also included articles or announcements in the newspapers,

and the students learned of the program through both methods. One saw a poster on the wall in the university; two heard about it through newspaper ads, and others were told by faculty members or other advisers in the university. Some knew of the program before they were recruited, others did not.

Most said that they sent in their applications and took their medical exams, only to hear nothing for some time, up to five months. They were finally called to a general meeting when the results were announced. Most said that they had two weeks, others only a few days, to prepare before they left. Only one group member, who had been asking for an answer from AID (or PAZAC), knew ahead of the general announcement.

When asked if some students had gone to "play around," they denied this. One pointed out that they had to work very intensively on English, and they simply did not have the luxury to play around. One said that in his group only one person took the minimum number of courses required; the rest took on greater loads.

While Trainees said they had several days of predeparture orientation, they rated their sense of preparedness, on a scale of 10, an average of 5. One said she only knew the names of the school and the program. Another knew the name of the family with whom she would stay. One who said that she was prepared attributed her preparation to the fact that she worked with North Americans in Guatemala, not to the predeparture orientation. A major element in their sense of unpreparedness was that only a few had studied English, and the language barrier concerned them. Nevertheless, they all received good instructions on travel and support upon arriving, which made the first days easier.

### **U.S. Training Experience**

***Training sites:*** The students were placed around the country: Pensacola and Tampa, Florida; Colorado; Bangor, Maine; and

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Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The experience of the students varied in terms of their initial contacts with their universities. Some were well received and supported in the initial weeks, while other universities seemed less prepared to receive them.

*Training content and methods:* From the first day to the last, as one Trainee put it, this group studied English. The goal was to get them to a level of English fluency so that they could take normal university classes. Some were able by the fall semester to sit in on regular classes, and most did in the spring semester. One said that she was taking five university courses during the last three months of her stay.

Most of these students were engaged in liberal studies, hoping to take courses which would advance their university careers. The degree to which they were able to do this depended, naturally, on the course offerings of the institutions in which they were located. One student said that her institution only offered two or three courses directly related to her field of administration, and she noted that summer courses which she hoped to take were canceled due to lack of registration. Another said that she was able to find relevant courses in finance and banking. A third said that for most of the year her English was not good enough to rely on in order to take courses integral to her career studies, and she therefore took those courses that attracted her interest. In sum, the students agreed that they opted for one of two strategies: either taking general education courses which they knew they could not get in Guatemala, or striving to stick with courses directly related to their majors at home.

Students were in agreement that university students in Guatemala must work harder, in their view, than North American college students. While lacking the technological benefits of U.S. universities, these Trainees thought that Guatemalan students exhibit a greater dedication to their work. One also thought that professors in Guatemala expect

more from their students than do North American faculty; a course which only employs one textbook there would use three or four books in a Guatemalan university, and students would be expected to go out and find even more. Another student countered that she believes that an important difference lies in the independence that North American students enjoy, in which much of the work should be done out of class. Guatemalan students spend proportionally much more time in the classroom.

### **Experience America**

While these students generally lived in dormitories, they stayed with U.S. families at Christmas and each was "assigned" to a family with whom to maintain relations. While the effectiveness of this system varied (some never warmed to their families, another had "their" family move away), most seemed to have had significant ties to North Americans. One mentioned that her family became the main family of contact for the entire group of 11 students at her institution. Another who never followed up on the family tie created many other U.S. ties by marrying a North American (this couple now resides in Guatemala).

Most of the students spoke of very warm ties with the U.S. families with whom they entered into relationship, and they generally seemed to have positive feelings towards North Americans. One described North Americans as "uncomplicated" and informal; another as friendly and good. A third said that these contacts dramatically changed the view of North Americans that she had obtained from television.

Several students also had negative experiences. One young woman spoke of her shock and discomfort when her female dorm roommate returned with her boyfriend, both drunk, early one morning to the room she shared with the Trainee, when the latter was preparing for an exam. She left when the boyfriend stayed, and had to change her

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room. Similar other experiences were recounted; yet most felt that these were isolated cases.

Another characteristic that surprised the students was the lack of knowledge that North Americans exhibited about Guatemala. One reported that people asked her if they were "backwards" or if people lived in trees. Another student defended North Americans, arguing that the fault lay with the educational system which did not teach people where things are.

Perhaps the most profound aspect of Experience America came with daily life as a university student, and the realization that they could do whatever they desired: get up early or late; go to class or not; play sports or not. This "freedom to be able to choose," as one student put it, was a great contrast with their situation in Guatemala, where most still live with their parents and in a broader network of kin ties and obligations.

### **Recommendations for Improvement**

The Trainees were asked how the program could be improved. One felt that more control, or more interest, should be exhibited over their academic program; she pointed out that if she decided not to go to class, no one seemed to notice or care. She said that if a professor shows interest in her and whether she goes to class or not, she feels more motivated to excel.

Another suggested, after describing how he had become lost soon after arriving, that Trainees be provided some basic English training before leaving, so that they could at least communicate in a basic form. Another argued for a more complete orientation before leaving. The schools should also be screened for their academic prestige and for the degree to which they offer the courses in the Trainees' fields. Guatemalan universities should be required to accept the credits earned.

The students reported that their contacts with META, their placement contractor, were very satisfactory, and several said that META had taken their side in disputes or problems with the schools.

Students recognized the high cost of their training, but argued that the program should be longer rather than shorter. They recommended that fewer students be sent for two years, in order to finish a degree and to be able to take full advantage, through practice, of the skills acquired in English.

### **Return, Reintegration, and Follow-on**

All the students have returned to the University, and none had yet finished. None of them—with the possible exception, under review, of a student at Rafael Landivar—were able to transfer the credits earned in the U.S.

While all were "supposedly" members of ASOPAZAC, they have done nothing, and have heard nothing from the association since the PAZAC office closed.

*Impact of the Experience:* When asked what significance their year abroad had for them, one woman said that the most helpful aspect was the fact that she learned English, which she uses regularly in her job in the bank. Another pointed out that, in spite of not being able to transfer credits, her mastery of English was a distinct advantage in passing the language proficiency exam that all Guatemalan university students were required to take. Several spoke in more abstract terms of the impact; one said that it was an experience that brought about change in her, and that she learned to be more demanding with herself. Another learned that he was capable of adapting to a foreign culture and of achieving goals that he set for himself. A third said that she was able to confront the fear of the unknown and of failing, and to realize that she could accomplish things, even such mundane things of adults as managing a monthly budget. Yet another Trainee said that the experience

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gave her the opportunity to value what Guatemalans have, not only their family and friends, but also their country as well. She said that they were pleasantly surprised to find that they were more prepared academically than North American students, and that they could succeed, even with language difficulties, at a level equal to or better than the U.S. students.

One said that, although they had not yet been able to take full advantage of the year abroad due to the time involved in work and finishing her studies, she knew that it would be an advantage in her future job searches as well as in her general understanding of the world.

In concrete terms, they argued that all the META JYA students whom they knew, with one or two exceptions, were now enrolled in the universities and finishing their studies.

#### **Evaluating the Evaluators**

The Trainees said that they found this evaluation of the program very valuable; they said they wished this kind of meeting had been held earlier, because it gave them the chance to reflect upon and appreciate the opportunity they had had. They also enjoyed getting together again and recalling their experiences.

#### **FOCUS GROUP #13:**

***EIL Small Business Enterprise (PYME) Group (Short-Term). 6/30/91, held in Quetzaltenango.***

#### **Group Characteristics**

Eight returned Trainees participated in the group. They were recruited for the focus group in conjunction with the EIL Follow-on activities in Quetzaltenango. All, but one, were women. The single male participant was the owner of a tailor shop. Other participants were engaged in small business ventures in the areas of cosmetology, dress making, and natural medicine. One was a bilingual secretary and one a teacher.

The declared monthly combined income for the members of this group ranged between Q.400 and Q.1,900, approximately \$84 and \$400. All were short-term, five-week, CAPS returned Trainees. Except for the man who was 36 years old, all participants were younger, in the low twenties. Three were married and five single.

Only one participant was from Quetzaltenango. The rest had come to the EIL seminar, PYME Module I, from different places in the departments of Mazatenango and Suchitepeques. All seemed enthusiastic to take part in EIL's training reinforcement seminar.

#### **Trainee Selection According to Trainees**

Some participants heard about the scholarship opportunity through the civil authorities in their departments. At the offices of each department they were able to pick up scholarship applications. Once the applications were completed and turned in, candidates were instructed to go to Guatemala City "to PAZAC offices" where more paperwork was completed.

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Other means of scholarship information dissemination included community organizations and important individuals in the community who took the initiative to get groups of people together and prepare "lists" of candidates to be submitted to PAZAC.

As PAZAC received and reviewed the applications, those who advanced to the next screening tier were notified by telegram. Upon receipt of the communication, candidates traveled to Guatemala City for a medical exam, and confirmation of eligibility. At times, some would be immediately told the day and time to be at the airport for departure.

As part of the requirements, all candidates had to take the medical exam at an out pocket cost of Q.90 for women and Q.65 for men. In cases where the candidates had to be in the city overnight, they had to provide for own room and board at an additional expense. They said that, in total, applying for the scholarship would cost one approximately Q.400, that is, about \$84 or, put in another way, the monthly income of one of the persons in the group. On this same issue, one said "but what we received as *per diem* during training offset the costs involved [during the application period]." What also helped, they pointed out, was that they didn't have to pay all the Q.400 at once, otherwise, the amount would have fallen outside their limited budgets.

One case was brought up of a group of women who belonged to "a place where they would give [them] small business loans," *Genesis Empresarial*, were recruited, as a group, and sent to the States, all fifteen of them. A common eligibility pre-requisite for these participants was a business ownership license, *Patente de Comercio*.

One more Trainee selection case recounted was that of a group of small business persons who, within hours of taking an exam at the PAZAC offices, and going through an evaluation procedure there, were selected as

Trainees on the spot. They were delighted by that. Others, however, had to wait several weeks for the notifications.

At times, selection procedures targeted specific communities where, for example, groups of up to forty applicants would be pared down to a group of twenty Trainees. (Evaluators' note: In general, it appeared that the Mission made use of various candidate selection and Trainee appointment strategies depending on programming pressures but, always, trying to incorporate qualified individuals who met the established criteria of leadership, and economic and social status. No major complaints were heard about Trainee selection from this group.)

Immediately after being accepted as CAPS Trainees, participants said that they were asked to go to the Hotel Guatemala Fiesta for a meeting. Most said that they had a two-day orientation session.

### The U.S. Experience

Some of these Trainees spent the five weeks of training with American families. They lamented, however, not knowing English. Nevertheless, they were able to communicate with their hosts, and were glad they had the opportunity to share their life [*convivir*] with them. "They were great," "It was a wonderful experience," and "getting acquainted with other people and other customs was great" were some of the comments voiced by the group. Some of the host families, they said, used a dictionary to establish communication. One participant was included in special familial event, a wedding.

Some Trainees were located in small U.S. communities. Of these, some enjoyed a "credit card" given to them by the training contractor. With it, they were able to eat in different restaurants in the community, something they appreciated much and led them to judge the program as a "well organized" one.

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Those who commented on other components of the U.S. experience, were pleased with the interaction with training facilitators, and by the availability of teaching/learning supplies. Also, appreciated were the programming and scheduling of activities. Most recounted enjoyable experiences with program personnel and the logistics employed. Many remembered their trainers by name, and referred to them as good people, *buena gente*, always giving good advice.

The training consisted of survival English classes and custom-made training modules according to the Trainee's trade or area of interest. All the training was in Spanish. It was provided by American, bilingual staff and U.S. Hispanics, all well prepared individuals. On an average, the group assigned the U.S. training a rank of 90, on a 0 to 100 scale. However, some in the group complained that when the group was separated into two subgroups which were taught separately, the learning was not uniform and the process suffered.

Another high point of the training was the small business management component, in which some of the group participated. In it, they were able to develop their own business plans and marketing strategies. One Trainee said that she was able to visualize her own business mistakes and, most importantly, that, as a result of the training, she now knew how to address those mistakes. Another one stated that she learned new "tactics" about how to deal with clients.

Another welcome component of the training were the site visits to small U.S. enterprises. There, Trainees were able to see in action some of the business practices learned during training. Also important, according to the Trainees were opportunities to attend recreational visits to amusement parks and community events such as a Rodeo festival that one had the opportunity to attend.

In response to the question "Would you do it again?," all answered in the affirmative.

At that point, some recounted the farewell parties offered in their honor by the U.S. hosts and the trainers. Also mentioned in the case of those who were placed in small communities was the fact that some of them were featured in the media.

There was one participant in the group, a returned Trainee who had been in the South for her training, who expressed displeasure with racial discrimination. She was instructed by the trainer not to go to the other side of town, where the community was Black. She elaborated that she was told: "If [you] want to go [there], it has to be during the day, and in groups of at least six."

#### **Returned Trainee Participation In EIL's Follow-On Seminars**

All in the group appreciated being an EIL Follow-On participant. They said that it had provided them with "motivation" and a space for "sharing." One of the incentives to the training was the reimbursement of 80 percent of the expense incurred for transportation. They said that without the reimbursement, many would not be able to attend. One, however, was reluctant to say much about the significance of the EIL seminar, but expressed "I will give my opinion at the end of the course."

The two objectives that appeared to be clear in the minds of participants were to improve their small businesses and to help their communities. One in the group spoke about the need for potable water where he lives and the installation of latrines "so everything is clean."

Above all, the U.S. experience was highly regarded. One summarized it by saying "we realized that we were asleep [here], and we went there to wake up. Now we [walk] with our eyes open."

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## **FOCUS GROUP #14:**

***EIL Natural Resources Group. 6/30/91, 9:00 p.m., held at the del Campo Hotel, Quetzaltenango.***

### **Group Characteristics**

This group was perhaps the one with the least formal education and the most limited economic resources of the entire focus group series. Six of the eight participants were *gülas agrícolas*, who constitute the bottom rung of the agricultural extension ladder. They live in small communities, most are farmers themselves, and they earn a small salary as advisers to their fellow agriculturalists. Several were from highland areas; Spanish was their second language.

### **Group Dynamics**

This was a lively group who had gathered that afternoon to attend a week-long seminar in natural resources. The topic they were to study was reforestation. These Trainees, all male, were exceedingly generous with their time and opinions and maintained an active interchange until quite late; the moderator finally reminded them of the hour in order to end the discussion. The next day, an EIL Trainer commented that they did not generally schedule evening activities for this group because they are normally accustomed to going to bed soon after sunset. Their high level of interest in the focus group was a sign of their interest in discussing their training.

### **Introductory Remarks**

The moderator described the evaluators' activities in Guatemala and the plan to incorporate the Trainees' statements and that of others into a report.

### **Selection Process**

Most Trainees reported that they were recruited directly by their employer,

DIGESA, the national agricultural extension agency. Two of the Trainees report that they were also approached by DIGESA extension agents.

### **U.S. Training Experience**

The members of the focus group had been participants in training groups in 1985 and 1986. They had all been trained in agriculture in Puerto Rico; most had also spent a week in Washington, D.C.

***Length of training:*** The only negative statements made about the training were that it was too short and too hurried. One called the tight calendar the "enemy" that they struggled with. Another said that he felt as if they were always only being given half the time they needed to learn something, and then they would be carried off to do something else.

***Training content and methods:*** Trainees were very satisfied with the U.S. training. One mentioned being impressed by the way planning is done and order maintained. Another liked the way the trainers would present the "theory" in the morning session and then have the Trainees practice what they had learned in the afternoon. One Trainee said that the training was better than he had expected, and that it provided him with useful skills and knowledge.

The content of the training sessions was well remembered by the Trainees. Several gave lists of things that they had learned and places that they had visited during their course. When asked to grade their training using a 0-10 scale, they averaged 8.9. Two mentioned that they were unhappy at the time with the tools they were provided to work the demonstration plots with.

When Trainees were asked if they would recommend to others that they accept CAPS scholarships, one said, "Yes, 200 percent, if only every Guatemalan could travel in that way to the U.S." Another agreed, saying that Guatemala is essentially an agricultural

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country, and Guatemalan farmers could learn a great deal from the training they had experienced.

These Trainees felt they had been able to share what they learned and apply it to their work at home. One mentioned that he had been able to share a great deal with his fellow cooperative members.

*Training group makeup:* From their accounts, the training groups were largely composed of individuals similar to themselves, with a strong representation by extension agents and "agricultural guides."

### **Experience America**

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the travel provided by their CAPS scholarship for this group was the realization that people in Puerto Rico and in the U.S. were "almost just like us." On the other hand, they were impressed with the high levels of literacy in Puerto Rico, contrasting it with the situation in Guatemala. Several mentioned the issue of punctuality, which they compared favorably to cultural practices in Guatemala.

One Trainee said that he was impressed with the way that the U.S. was "lending a hand" to Guatemala and other countries in order to try to combat underdevelopment. Another Trainee, when asked what he liked most about his exposure to the U.S. and Puerto Rico, mentioned environmental factors, listing "clean water, good forests, protected lands, all the environment."

After five and six years, the Trainees were still enthusiastic about their visit to Washington. One detailed what he had seen in the capital, including the refrigeration system at Mount Vernon. Another commented on the beauty of the National Zoo, and added that in Guatemala they would probably have eaten the animals before much time passed. A third Trainee recounted in some detail his group's visit to the U.S. Capitol to see the Senate in session, and said that he was surprised that they were

permitted to do that. Another added that in Washington they saw aspects of American culture, how U.S. citizens work, and things that they do there that are not done in Guatemala.

One Trainee also spoke of the value of the personal interchange that they had with Puerto Ricans and U.S. citizens. As farmers, they had all participated in labor exchanges with their hosts.

When asked what they liked least about the U.S., most mentioned their perception of the U.S. family: much divorce, the fact that people are less united. Several Trainees mentioned their concern with the welfare system in Puerto Rico, which they identified as "a colony of the United States." One said that he was troubled by the way the government gave everyone work. Another said that he did not like the way that people were given money even if they do not work. As he put it, "Here, if you don't work, you don't eat." Others mentioned drug addiction. One, who proved to be something of a humorist, said that his principal dislike was that North Americans did not eat corn tortillas. When one Trainee mentioned that he most disliked his inability to speak to U.S. people, several concurred.

### **Return and Reintegration**

Several of the agricultural guides said that they receive little support from their institution, especially in terms of ongoing training. The CAPS scholarship provided a much needed input into their own training. The training did make even more clear, however, the lack of facilities and services from which they suffer in Guatemala. One of the two who was not a guide said that upon his return he expected to be offered the post of guide as a result of the training, but the offer never came. He has continued his activities as a volunteer. One guide said that he was reassigned to a new post on returning from this scholarship and found it difficult to get people moving in the new community. On the other hand, a third

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Trainee reported that his home community received him with excitement, and in a public meeting he and his neighbors set goals to be met.

### **Follow-on and EIL**

All the Trainees were enthusiastic about the EIL training. One said that it "regularizes" what he knows and puts names on concepts. Another stressed the importance of the participatory techniques; he said that thanks to the EIL training he was overcoming the fear he felt about speaking before a group. All were pleased to be able to attend the seminars.

### **Impact of Training**

Several said that the first impact of their training was the opportunity to see the world and to know more about it, especially about the different standards of living that exist. One Trainee said that as a result of the training he felt more involved and committed with his community. An agricultural guide, he said, a leader in the agricultural community, and the training helped him in his leadership capacity.

Another Trainee pointed out that he now works with thirty families, meeting with them regularly. Yet another added that "as a volunteer, all you learn you give to your community." He said that beyond his extension work, he also volunteered in a hospital; his motivation to do that work came from his attendance at EIL seminars, where he said that he learned to "be able to work for the good of the country." Two Trainees added that they held community meetings to motivate and inform people; another worked with his wife in a movement involving 180 people.

All but one are working in reforestation, especially in establishing community nurseries.

### **Evaluating the Evaluators**

The Trainees said that they appreciated the opportunity to participate in the group. One said that it gave him the chance to remember the training experience, which he had not talked about for some time. Another said that recalling the experience served to make him feel more enthusiastic about his work again.

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## **FOCUS GROUP #15:**

***In-Country Evaluation Interviewers.  
7/2/91, held at the Rafael Landivar  
University.***

### **Group Characteristics**

This focus group was conducted with five interviewers who worked in the evaluation survey. All but one were men. They knew each other and, because of this, their friendly interactions yielded a free flow of opinions regarding the U.S. scholarship program which they delivered openly from the initial moments of the session.

### **Focus Group Sixteen Rationale**

As part of the evaluation survey work, these interviewers had just completed a combined total of approximately 130 interviews with returned Trainees, over a period of two weeks (almost a third of the sample in the target population of the evaluation.) Because of the face-to-face format in which the interviews were carried out, and the unique dynamics that usually emerge from open-ended questions, which constitute an important portion of the instrument, it was expected that these interviewers had accessed a number of significant data, made available to them first-hand. This particular focus group, therefore, was conceived as a crosschecking tactic, and a validation test for some of the information obtained in the other fifteen focus groups with Trainees and, of course, for some of the information obtained through the other evaluation methodologies. Aside from the specific function of this particular focus group, during the data analysis phase of the evaluation, the information derived from it was treated as second-hand data.

### **Role Playing**

Participants in this group were asked to "enter into character," adopting the personality of one, or several, of the

Trainees they had come in contact within the course of doing the interviewing work, and to try to faithfully represent the Trainees' views and perceptions toward the U.S. training, as well as to report on any experienced significant behavioral change resulting from that scholarship experience. Group participants were also asked to attempt to leave their own bias aside. The extent to which this is possible is debatable; nevertheless, they assented.

### **Results of the Focus Group**

A role playing "returned Trainee," opened up the discussion with "I am very satisfied with having participated in the training. It was important to learn new techniques and to establish new goals toward the future. [I am] looking forward to succeed in the future." He went on to say that candidate selection at the heart of the institution where he was recruited was tough because of the high number of nominees. To the question "Did someone recommended you?" posed by another group participant, he responded "What I liked about my own case is that no recommendations, nor pull [*cuello*], was necessary. (He was referring to the undue preferential treatment obtained through friendly ties with influential individuals.) One interjected, "In my own case, the Ministry of Health disseminated information regarding qualifying criteria [for the scholarships] and the selection was made based on [the individual's] curriculum vitae. Another participant submitted that in the area of El Quiché, Alta Verapaz, the National Bilingual Education Program of the Ministry of Education was one of the recruiting institutions.

After this first round of deliberations it was agreed that the recruitment was conducted, mainly, with the help of institutions. Nevertheless, one participant stated that he went directly to USAID on his own initiative; there, he took a test and "in a few days time I got a telegram saying that I had been chosen." As another selection mechanism, participants recounted some

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nomination activities carried out by a health technician who was able to "appoint [sic] a certain number" of candidates. In fact, they said, recruitment and selection was not a standardized activity.

One participant was "bothered" because, according to him, an excessive number of scholarships "were assigned to health [workers]." He claimed that out of 40 scholarships granted to the Isabal Department at a given time, all recruited and selected were health workers. Another participant said that a feature he was not particularly fond of was the "heterogenous" nature of the training groups. He was a worker in agriculture and his group was formed with a majority of beauty shop owners. Another feature perceived as "incomprehensible" was the idea that private schools not the public schools, *escuelas oficiales*, were approached with scholarship offers. Above all, participants agreed that the selection was fair. Basically, they said, it was based on the candidate's personal qualifications and not only those pertaining to schooling, but to the experience gained by managing small businesses. This last comment on this segment of the group discussion was "I didn't know how to administer my small business, but those five weeks were an intensive training, and those of us who went with an interest in learning, learned."

Some participants felt that some of the Trainees shouldn't have gone to the training because of their partial or complete illiteracy. They pointed to "social promoters" and "members of cooperatives" as subgroups that, in general, fit that category. In support of their argument they said that "they, almost exclusively, would only speak in their own [indigenous] language." After further discussion on whether or not illiterates should be included, given that they constitute a considerable proportion of the population, the group suggested that the problem was, in fact, placing people from different backgrounds in the same training group. The practice, according to them, had been to

include professionals with non-schooled Trainees in the same group. No consensus was reached on this issue, but one participant closed this segment of the discussion by saying that illiterates should be included but grouped separately. (Evaluators' note: Guatemala's Spanish-language proficiency and ethnicity were two hard-to-handle issues when introduced to focus group discussants.)

### **Predeparture Orientation**

Participants reported that the orientation they received prior to departure for the U.S. was rather limited. In some instances, it was given in a two-hour session that touched on how to go through the airport upon arrival in the destined city in the U.S. One participant said that climate in the U.S. was an orientation topic covered. And one felt the need for survival English classes that were not part of the orientation. In general, "Trainees" felt that the orientation did not prepare them well for the journey.

### **U.S. Training**

The ratings given to U.S. training were 75, 30, 80, 80, and 75, on a 0 to 100 scale. The low score was given by a role playing "Trainee" who decried, "They didn't assist us in the college [that I attended]. We were isolated and enrolled on an auditing [*oyente*] basis. I quit the program and got a janitorial job. I would sporadically attend classes though." "Trainees" who cast better scores did so because "We were accepted well." "The course content and organization were excellent." "The classes were designed according to our capabilities." "I assimilated some bilingual education techniques." "We were allowed to visit bilingual and Chicano communities." "We were introduced to a bilingual education typology." "I am very satisfied with the institutions and the facilitators." "I lived on a small ranch. There were four tractors there. You can't imagine how much I would like to have one of them here, but it's impossible." "[I

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learned how] time can be utilized to the maximum during the crop season.”

One “Trainee” Assessment of Trainers and Facilitators in the U.S.: “The ones in charge were *latinoamericanos*. A Costa Rican man got on our case from day one. He would tell us not to try to remain in the United States, because Immigration was watching us closely. We hadn’t even thought about staying there. It was not a good experience with U.S. Latins. They were well organized, but would treat us very badly. We felt better with the people of New Mexico; we felt their support. But, the Central Americans would not let us go out. Chicanos were good people though.”

#### **A Tale on Food Services**

“The food was not very good, but one day the Ambassador came to visit us and, that day, they served us very well.”

#### **Experience America Component**

Role playing “Trainees” recounted two out-of-classroom experiences in the U.S.: “I lived with an American family for two weeks. They treated me magnificently, and named one of the cows after me.” “They took us to Washington. It was a rewarding experience.”

When queried as to what these “Trainees” were doing as a result of the scholarship the following was heard: “I had a small business, and, with the courage that I got as a result of the scholarship, I applied for [and got] a loan and expanded my business.” “I used to study agriculture and went off to study [in the U.S.] for two years. [Upon my return], I saw that I could get a better benefit using my ability to speak English so, I now work as a stewardess.” “I think that the scholarship helped me to develop my full potential.” “I learned English there, and although I continue my studies to become a veterinary here, I support myself teaching English.” “I used to have a small business, but I have gotten three loans [which have allowed me] to employ four operators, and sell the

clothes I produce.” “The U.S. certificate helps me a lot. I opened up a clothes-making academy.” “I just finished *tercero básico* (twelve years of schooling), but even a business management graduate benefits from what I know, which is what I learned there. He has the theory, but I have the practice.” “As a teacher myself, I learned new techniques. I enjoyed seeing all of the teaching materials.” “It was interesting to see that a teacher has only 16 or so students but, unfortunately, the students are disoriented.”

On the adverse side one stated: “Before the training I worked as a teacher in the primary school. Upon my return, I went back to the same place. What I got for going to the U.S. was losing a year of employment seniority. The administration asked me for a formal certificate of the courses I took, but the U.S.-issued certificate that I produced had no value here.” “Some of the young women in my group went just to have a good time, nothing more.”

To the question “Would you do it again?” all answered in the affirmative. One, however, added “to make some dollars.” (When in training, he had abandoned the program early and obtained a job.)

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