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Center for International Health

**Boston University / Tribhuvan University
University Development Linkages Project
Agreement No. DAN-5063-A-00-1113-00**

Annual Activity Report
30 October 1992

I. Activities, problems and progress under each Linkage objective.

Objective I: Steering Committee - Guide the Evolution of the Linkage program.

The first year of the BU/TU Linkage project has required substantial effort on the part of Steering Committee members to thoughtfully and determinedly guide the project through its early internal university approval processes. This has been especially true on the Tribhuvan University campus where changes in the University administration at all levels have required our Nepali colleagues to acquaint new administrators with the goals, philosophy and mechanics of the Linkage project and to build support for the project throughout the University system.

Progress on formalizing the project at Tribhuvan University has been steady but slow. The new Dean of the Institute of Medicine, Dr. Karmacharya, gave the project his support in the spring of this year. The University Vice Chancellor approved the project in late June. Project papers were then submitted to the Ministry of Education and Culture, the National Planning Commission, and the Ministry of Health. Approval from these offices was finally secured only last week. Now, the project goes to the Finance Ministry for their scrutiny, after which the Vice Chancellor and the Institute of Medicine Dean will again review the final papers. At every step along the way during this process, Dr. Mathura Shrestha and Dr. Yogendra Pradhananga have briefed the necessary officials and built support for the Linkage on the Tribhuvan campus. Without their devotion and perseverance this process certainly would have floundered along the way. In this Annual Report we would like to gratefully acknowledge their efforts toward making the Linkage a recognized and official association on the Tribhuvan campus.

At Boston University, the signing of the contract between AID and Boston University was a fairly straightforward process which was accomplished in late October of last year. Support for the Linkage had largely been developed and secured during the proposal writing process at BU and, since that time, there have been no personnel changes in the upper echelons of the University. To facilitate the contractual process with AID, meetings were held after the award was made with heads of the relevant departments and offices at the University to reacquaint them with the Linkage project and address any questions.

Our Project Implementation Plan calls for Steering Committee members to promote the Linkages on campus. This work has begun in an informal fashion but formal activities await the outcome of the first Steering Committee meeting during which all project activities will be reviewed and discussed in detail for their relevance given current university and department objectives, staffing and needs.

Similarly, the selection of PhD and Masters candidates as well as awarding student and faculty exchange grants are on hold pending the outcome of the first Steering Committee meeting.

As noted in our Annual Workplan for year two of the Linkage, current plans call for the inaugural meeting of the Steering Committee to take place in Kathmandu in December. We are now finalizing dates, working around the very tight schedules of all of the players involved.

Activities that have been helpful to us in guiding and managing our Linkage this year include the AID meeting held in October, 1992 just after awards were made. This gathering was very helpful in providing us with an understanding of the workings of AID and of how the UDLP came to be and is now situated within the University Center. While the discussions around reporting requirements (in particular, for trainees) was daunting, we came away with a very positive feeling for the latitude that the Center was giving us to define project objectives and activities which were responsive to the evolving needs of the Linkage partners. From that point on, we have felt that we have a voice in shaping the UDLP initiative and a very understanding and supportive listener in the UDLP Director, Dr. Ruth Frischer.

The two meetings held in Worcester with other Linkage awardees from Massachusetts were very useful as well. At the first meeting, held in December, both project management staff (Ms. Amanda Reed and Ms. Catherine Schlager) and financial administration staff (Ms. Lisa Johnson) attended and shared ideas and experiences with their counterpart colleagues from Worcester Polytechnic, University of Massachusetts, and Harvard University. These discussions were very helpful to us in anticipating potential problems and managing creative solutions. Throughout the year, frequent phone calls to our colleagues at the University of Massachusetts (who also are linking with TU) provided us with insight and ideas into the workings of AID and TU offices in country. This was especially helpful in December when our travel plans were delayed due to the mission's concerns about the UDLP initiative. The gathering in Worcester in September gave Catherine Schlager an opportunity to touch base with our Worcester and Amherst colleagues once again. The conference managed by our colleagues at Worcester Polytechnic provided Ms. Schlager with a window on the team building and priority definition processes that were being used by the Ecuadoran and U.S. faculty attending. Ideas were taken away from that gathering that will influence our Steering Committee meeting agenda. Discussions with Dr. Ruth Frischer about project management and sustainability were both helpful and thought-provoking.

An unexpected visit from a TU Institute of Medicine faculty member in September, Dr. S.K. Gupta, was another of the year's highlights. Dr. Gupta is Chairman of the General Practice and Emergency Medicine Department at the Institute of Medicine. Dr. Gupta was in Boston for a training seminar at Harvard University and called us upon his arrival in order to bring greetings from our colleagues in Nepal and to inform us of the progress that the Linkage approval process was making. Dr. Gupta met with the Dean of the School of Medicine at BU, Dr. Aram Chobanian, who was pleased to greet the first Tribhuvan University faculty member to visit BU since the UDLP award had been made. Over the course of a number of meetings and a relaxed dinner, Dr. William Bicknell, Ms. Catherine Schlager and Ms. Amanda Reed learned quite a bit more about Tribhuvan University and about the current political situation in Nepal from Dr. Gupta. Because the Linkage project had experienced delays in the form of cancelled Steering Committee meetings due to political instability in the Nepal, it was very helpful to learn more of the situation from someone who had been such an astute political observer. Certainly, Dr. Gupta's visit made the Linkage project activities feel excitingly imminent. The enthusiasm conveyed by Dr. Gupta on his own behalf and on behalf of our colleagues at the Department of Community Medicine was heartening indeed.

Objective II: Manage the Linkage Program.

Following on the signing of the Cooperative Agreement with AID, BU accounting and information management systems were developed and formalized. Management of the Cooperative Agreement on the BU campus has required close communication between the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Financial Affairs office, and the Center for International Health. Billable time and cost-sharing time is recorded daily and tallied monthly. Direct costs are tracked and summarized monthly as well. All systems are running smoothly.

The writing of a draft version of the subcontract between BU and TU was accomplished in June with the assistance of the Office of Sponsored Programs and the Office of the General Counsel. This draft document is now being sheperded through the necessary offices at TU by our Nepali colleagues.

AID reporting requirements have been met without much difficulty. It was challenging for Linkage Project Officer Ms. Amanda Reed to dovetail our Macintosh-based software with the IBM-compatible spreadsheet provided by AID. However, the process has become more straightforward and later budget report preparations should take less time.

Objective III: Establish Faculty Development Program.

Activities under this objective will commence after the first Steering Committee meeting is held.

Objective IV: Expand Academic Resources at TU Department of Community Medicine.

Activities under this objective will commence after the first Steering Committee meeting is held.

Objective V: Develop Public Health Student Training Program.

Activities under this objective will commence after the first Steering Committee meeting is held.

Objective VI: Develop Public Health Research Agenda.

Activities under this objective will commence after the first Steering Committee meeting is held.

II. Progress toward ensuring the sustainability of the Linkage.

While formal Linkage program activities have not yet begun, we believe that the work described above related to laying the institutional groundwork for our association has direct relevance to issues of sustainability. The Steering Committee has been faced with some unforeseen challenges in its first year that have required well considered, culturally sensitive reactions from all members. The tendency of many so-called linkage projects between developed and developing country institutions has been for the former partner to dictate terms and priorities to the latter. We are keenly aware of the dangers of this approach which, while it might result in timely completion of project activities, results in an unbalanced and unsustainable relationship that lacks any spirit of true partnership. Our Steering Committee is committed to the development of a joint vision which emerges organically, over time through our activities. In this spirit, we have not pushed at all costs to begin formal activities before insuring that the appropriate institutional foundation has been laid so that our TU counterparts are operating within a very supportive institutional framework. We would advise new Linkage awardees to consider our experience in this regard. One can feel compelled to conform to the timeline outlined in a proposal written more than one year ago even in the face of new institutional players, political developments and instability, and the like. Progress toward sustainability is made from the start if all developments are attended to with consideration for the integrity of the association for the long term.

III. Quantitative outputs of Linkage activities.

To date, quantitative outputs include the signing on the Cooperative Agreement between AID and BU. In addition, the following reports have been submitted to AID: one Project Implementation Plan, two Annual Workplans, two Semi-Annual Expenditure Reports (including the one enclosed), and three Quarterly Activity Reports.

IV. Assessment of the impact of the Linkage on the internationalization of Boston University.

The impact on the internationalization of Boston University by the Linkage to date is slight as activities which will drive this process have yet to begin. There is a very high level of interest in the Linkage among the students and faculty at BU. Certainly, the school community is aware that the long term association between TU and BU has been funded so that opportunities for studying, teaching and interning in Nepal will expand. However, the Steering Committee has not formally presented the project and its activities to faculty and student groups as the goals and agenda of association have not been carefully reviewed and defined by the BU / TU Steering Committee.

V. Assessment of the impact of the Linkage on strengthening Tribhuvan University's capabilities to meet its societal development needs.

Progress on meeting societal development needs in Nepal has yet to begin.

VI. Notation to Year I Budget.

All expenses incurred on the BU campus fall under Objective II: Managing the Linkage. BU staff time is the primary component of the expenditures; there are minimal direct costs for telecommunications and postage.

While our colleagues in Nepal have spent substantial amounts of their time on project-related work, we do not yet have a vehicle for moving funds to the Department of Community Medicine. Therefore, no monies have been expended by TU to date. We will discuss the appropriateness of retroactive payment for these expenses at our first Steering Committee meeting in December.

Funds which were unspent this year we plan to carry over to fund activities in later years. We understand, as per discussions with Dr. Ruth Frischer, that this is acceptable to AID.

VII. Statement regarding agricultural commodities.

Our Linkage project has not utilized funds for any testing or breeding feasibility study, variety improvement or introduction, consultancy, publication, conference or training in connection with the growth or production in countries other than the United States of an agricultural commodity for export which would compete with a similar commodity grown or produced in the United States.

BOSTON UNIVERSITY/TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY				
UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT LINKAGES PROJECT				
AGREEMENT NO. DAN-5063-A-00-1113-00				
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE REPORT				
OCTOBER 1991 - October 1992				
Cost Element	A.I.D.	Recipient/ Others (Non-Federal)	Recipient/ Others (Federal)	Total
OBJECTIVE I:				
STEERING COMMITTEE				
Salaries & Wages	0	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits	0	0	0	0
Indirect Costs	0	0	0	0
Consultants	0	0	0	0
Travel, Transportation & Per Diem	0	0	0	0
Nonexpendable Equip.	0	0	0	0
Participant Training	0	0	0	0
Other Direct Costs	0	0	0	0
Subcontracts/Agrmnts.	0	0	0	0
OBJECTIVE II:				
MANAGE LINKAGE PROGRAM				
Salaries & Wages	12830	21050	0	0
Fringe Benefits	3231	5347	0	0
Indirect Costs	0	30704	0	0
Consultants	0	0	0	0
Travel, Transportation & Per Diem	0	0	0	0
Nonexpendable Equip.	0	0	0	0
Participant Training	0	0	0	0
Other Direct Costs	387	0	0	0
Subcontracts/Agrmnts.	0	0	0	0
OBJECTIVE III:				
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT				
Salaries & Wages	0	0	0	0
Fringe Benefits	0	0	0	0
Indirect Costs	0	0	0	0
Consultants	0	0	0	0
Travel, Transportation & Per Diem	0	0	0	0
Nonexpendable Equip.	0	0	0	0
Participant Training	0	0	0	0
Other Direct Costs	0	0	0	0
Subcontracts/Agrmnts.	0	0	0	0

