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FAMILY
PLANNING
MANAGEMENT
DEVELOPMENT

A project of Management Sciences for Health
in collaboration with
The Centre for Development and Population Activities

Family Planning Management Development (FPMD) is a five-year project designed to provide practical solutions to the management problems faced by senior- and mid-level family planning program managers in both the public and the private sector. FPMD is a world-wide project, assisting family planning managers in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, Eastern Europe, and the Near East. It is implemented by Management Sciences for Health in collaboration with The Centre for Development and Population Activities (CEDPA).

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE CENTRE FOR AFRICAN FAMILY STUDIES - A MONITORING VISIT

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FAMILY PLANNING MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Centre for African Family Studies was established in 1975 as an institution of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in response to a need for training of senior and mid-level personnel in dealing with the practical issues of family planning.

During the period from 1986 to 1990, the Family Planning Management Training Project (FPMT) provided support and technical assistance to CAFS in the areas of management training and course development. In May 1991 an FPMD needs assessment of CAFS took place in Nairobi, Lome and Cotonou. The assessment was conducted by a two person team from Management Sciences for Health, under the Family Planning Management Development Project. The team interviewed some 30 members of CAFS' staff, observed part of a training course, and reviewed documents. The recommendations of the team were incorporated in a buy-in from REDSO/WCA, which came into effect in the fall of 1991. The scope of work (see annex I.) consisted of 5 distinct sets of activities, 3 of which concerned the entire organization of CAFS, and thus took place in Nairobi, 2 of which were particularly focused on strengthening the CAFS sub-regional office in Togo.

As the work under this buy-in nears completion, a visit to Nairobi was scheduled, taking advantage of a trip to Rwanda, to meet with staff of CAFS and REDSO/ESA to discuss work completed by FPMD consultants. The visit was short, only two days, and did not pretend to be a full scale evaluation. Rather, the visit was meant to be an informal inquiry into the quality of the FPMD work and it was hoped that some insights would be gained that would help the project learn. Another purpose of the trip was to discuss a new REDSO/WCA buy-in to the FPMD project which scope of work is limited to activities in Togo, with the CAFS West Africa office.

II. METHODOLOGY

Interviews were held with the Director of CAFS, the head of the administration, the head of the training division, the head of the research division, and several other staff members at different levels of the hierarchy. Each conversation focused on the work with FPMD the various staffmembers had been directly involved in, as well as work in other areas in order to see if s/he had noticed any difference. (Question guide is presented in annex II). The questions focused on the work in the personnel area, undertaken by FPMD consultant Peter Shipp, and in the computer training domain, conducted by Joyce Goodman. The activities conducted in West Africa to strengthen management training and office efficiency were not covered by the assessment. The shipment of books to Nairobi to strengthen the library and for distribution to course participants was simply acknowledged and did not require any further assessment.

III. FINDINGS

PERSONNEL SYSTEMS

According to the scope of work, a staff handbook was drafted which will be presented to the board shortly. In addition, a number of recommendations were developed and explained in a report by the consultant. However, from CAFS point of view the work was not completed. Some confusion existed in the terminology used: the personnel handbook mentioned in the scope of work refered to the staff handbook. The personnel handbook, as interpreted by CAFS does not exist yet. This is thought to be a handbook with well-articulated procedures and regulations governing personnel management, such as recruitment procedures, supervision, career and promotion management, annual performance appraisals, etc. It appears that, during the Shipp consultancy, his scope of work was expanded to include the drafting of such a procedures manual. However, under the buy-in such extended work was not budgeted. As a result, CAFS feels the work is not completed, despite a number of fairly detailed descriptions of various personnel management procedures.

Despite the fact that expectations weren't completely met, CAFS felt the work completed was comprehensive, especially the staff handbook and counterparts were pleased with the work done by Shipp. CAFS expressed the hope that Shipp could return for one two-week consultancy to complete the draft of the personnel management handbook.

Interviews with staff not directly implicated in the personnel work, indicated only vague knowledge of the changes being brought about. Most people knew about the new staff handbook and performance appraisal procedures, acknowledged their presentation at the staff consultation, but were not clear if and when this new handbook and these new procedures were to come into effect. Although given the opportunity to make comments (in fact, requested to do so), none seemed to have used the opportunity to shape the performance appraisal procedures, and a general lethargy or inertia seemed to be predominant.

INTERNAL COMPUTER TRAINING AND MANAGEMENT

The effects of the work done by FPMD consultant Joyce Goodman had both personnel (staff) development and institutional development aspects. From the interviews it appeared that the only impact that could be discerned was related to the personnel/staff development aspect. No progress was made in the institutional arena. The discrepancy between people's readings of what happened, or had not happened, was striking. Most people directly implicated in the work had strong views on why nothing had happened since the consultancy took place in April 1992. The following main reasons were cited:

- the final version of the draft report had not been received yet from Boston
- the computer utilization committee (CUC) had not (yet) presented a detailed implementation plan
- the CUC has no support to do its work
- the recommendations were too politically sensitive to implement
- there were no resources to implement the recommendations.

However, on the personnel/staff development level, the consultancy has had positive effects. The two staffmembers responsible for most of the in-house computer training, were generally seen as more competent, with less need for continuous troubleshooting, better training support and a general upgrading of computer proficiency at lower levels. However, the training was still done in a fairly ad-hoc and non-systematic manner, and with internal computer literacy training still seen as a low-priority activity.

Nevertheless, staffmembers interviewed expressed satisfaction with the work done, the consultant's workstyle and the comprehensiveness of her recommendations. The fact that they were not implemented was consistently blamed on circumstances completely beyond her control.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

CAFS is going through some difficult times. Several key staffmembers have left or were in the process of leaving, and most staff interviewed acknowledged the depressed state of morale. There is a general apathy and inertia which has an immediate impact on institutional development efforts. Staffmembers either do not want to make waves, or are very skeptical as to the purpose of any proposed activity. Especially in the area of computers, staff interviewed saw others as being responsible for changes, with a pervasive sense of personal disempowerment and an absence of personal responsibility for the state of current affairs.

The current buy-in is moving towards completion with only one intervention remaining (management training documentation - frequently rescheduled, now proposed for April 1993). The proposed activites were meant to strengthen CAFS as an institution, an assumption that is still valid on paper: staff and personnel handbooks are needed to bring clarity and unambiguity to personnel management procedures, and the upgrading of computer skills is a necessary pre-condition for CAFS to stay with the times. However, is is clear that the activities did not actually strengthen the institution. Even if all recommendations made had been completely implemented, they would still only have been necessary pre-conditions, rather than having actually strengthened the organization.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

CAFS is about to enter its next, and last 5-year cooperative agreement with USAID. Hopefully it will use this resource to build up its strength so it can sail under its own wind afterwards. CAFS's strength comes from its people, a force that is being eroded at the moment. What seemed to be missing was a sense of mission among its staff and a sense of responsibility for CAFS's future, as if the future of its personnel and that of the organization were not intertwined.

The next buy-in to the FPMD project concerns the CAFS' office in Togo. Concerns from

CAFS senior management that the Togo office is treated like a separate entity were, hopefully, adressed to their satisfaction during discussions in Nairobi. The work in Togo will focus both on internal organizational issues and the quality and pertinence of the work done in the region. A meeting is scheduled for December with the Lomé office director to discuss the details of the proposed activities and set dates.

VI. PERSONS CONTACTED

REDSO/ESA
Angela Franklin-Lord
Mary Wright (consultant)
Noreen Jewett (consultant)

CAFS senior management and staff

FPMD/Nairobi
Suzanne Fenn

ANNEX I: SCOPE OF WORK BUY-IN REDSO/WCA NR. I (1991-1993)

1. Personnel Systems Development

The Contractor is requested to make available the services of a personnel specialist to work closely with CAFS senior management in the following areas identified by CAFS leadership as their major priorities for management improvement: development of career and promotion strategies and policies, staff development strategies and policies, and an expanded personnel handbook and a supervision/performance appraisal system.

2. Documentation for Management Training

The Contractor should make available a staff expert in training materials development and management training to participate in the work sessions to complete a set of three supporting manuals for management training and to contribute both FPMD materials and experience to the finalization of this documentation.

3. Internal Computer Training Capability

The Contractor should provide the services of a computer training expert to assist CAFS in structuring an effective program to ensure that all staff obtain the level of computer skills that are necessary for CAFS programs.

4. Institutional Development Support for CAFS' Lomé Office

The Contractor should provide necessary office, computer, fax and telephone equipment to the Lomé office. Also, the Contractor should ship to Lomé and Nairobi FPMD publications for staff use and for distribution to participants.

5. Advanced Francophone Senior Management Course

The Contractor should make available the services of a senior FP management training expert to work with Lomé management training staff on the development of such a sequence and the strengthening of CAFS staff to conduct such courses.

ANNEX II: EVALUATION QUESTIONS CAFS BUY-IN I

PERSONNEL SYSTEMS

Handbook: Is there a handbook, draft? How far along, what else needs to be done?

If yes: who has reviewed it? who got the feedback? what happened then?

if yes: who is using it? how do you know? what is different as a result?

Supervision: what happened to the proposals made by PS? Where did feedback go (if any)? What has happened since? what is different as a result?

Annual performance review: what happened to the proposals made by PS? Where did feedback go (if any)? What has happened since? what is different as a result?

Staff development and training: what happened to the proposals made by PS? Where did feedback go (if any)? What has happened since? what is different as a result?

Career development: is there a clear policy now? has everyone seen it? What has been feedback? Given to whom? What happened as a result?

COMPUTERS

What has happened to the draft report written by Joyce? Who has it, what happened with respect to the recommendations she made?

What happened to the traning materials she left behind? Has anyone used them? Do people know about these materials?

Has the staff she trained been training others? In which applications? What has been the impact of that training?

Have they been developing other/new training programs?