

APPENDIX D
A.I.D. EVALUATION SUMMARY - PART I

J-ABL-025
ISN 94516

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

IDENTIFICATION DATA

A. Reporting A.I.D. Unit: Mission or AID/W Office <u>Panama</u> (ESH# _____)		B. Was Evaluation Scheduled in Current FY Annual Evaluation Plan? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Slipped <input type="checkbox"/> Ad Hoc <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation Plan Submission Date: FY _____	C. Evaluation Timing Interim <input type="checkbox"/> Final <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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D. Activity or Activities Evaluated (List the following information for project(s) or program(s) evaluated; if not applicable, list title and date of the evaluation report.)					
Project No.	Project /Program Title	First PROAG or Equivalent (FY)	Most Recent PACU (Mo/Yr)	Planned LOP Cost (000)	Amount Obligated to Date (000)
525-0317	Improved Electoral Administration	FY 92	12/94	\$4,220	\$4,085 ⁷

ACTIONS

E. Action Decisions Approved by Mission or AID/W Office Director	Name of Officer Responsible for Action	Date Action to be Completed
Action(s) Required Institutional Re-organizational Plan of the Electoral Tribunal to be completed.	Robert Murphy	May 31, 1995

(Attach extra sheet if necessary)

APPROVALS

F. Date of Mission Or AID/W Office Review Of Evaluation:				(Month)	(Day)	(Year)
G. Approvals of Evaluation Summary And Action Decisions:						
Name (Typed)	Project/Program Officer	Representative of Borrower/Grantee	Evaluation Officer	Mission or AID/W Office Director		
	Roger Yochelson	Dennis Allen	Robert P. Mathia	David E. Mutchler		
Signature	<i>[Signature]</i>	<i>[Signature]</i>	<i>[Signature]</i>	<i>[Signature]</i>		
Date	12-06-94	29/12/90	1/26/95	2/7/95		

ABSTRACT

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

COSTS

I. Evaluation Costs

1. Evaluation Team		Contract Number OR TDY Person Days	Contract Cost OR TDY Cost (U.S. \$)	Source of Fund
Name	Affiliation			
Henry Johnson	Cecchi & Co.	59	\$55,573.00	Project
Mila Brooks	Cecchi & Co.			
Martha Villaveces	Cecchi & Co.			

2. Mission/Office Professional Staff
Person-Days (Estimate) 14

3. Borrower/Grantee Professional
Staff Person-Days (Estimate) 30

A.I.D. EVALUATION SUMMARY - PART II

S U M M A R Y

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

Address the following items:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Purpose of evaluation and methodology used | • Principal recommendations |
| • Purpose of activity(ies) evaluated | • Lessons learned |
| • Findings and conclusions (relate to questions) | |

Mission or Office:

Panama

Date This Summary Prepared:

November 14, 1994

Title And Date Of Full Evaluation Report:

Final Evaluation of the Improved Electoral Administration Project(525-

0317)

The Improved Electoral Administration Project (525-0317) was signed by USAID/Panama in September 1992 to provide continuing institutional strengthening support to the Electoral Tribunal and to support free, fair, and open general elections in May 1994. A key overall indicator of success of the Project was to be the conduct of the 1994 general elections and acceptance of their results by the Panamanian public and international observers.

At the time the Project was signed, the Electoral Tribunal was attempting to recover from a total loss of public confidence with the annulment of the 1989 elections. Under new Magistrates after 1990, the Electoral Tribunal demonstrated progress in regaining public confidence as well as capability to carry out its functions on a limited scale in the partial elections of January 1991 and the Constitutional Referendum of 1992. But a diagnostic study completed in 1992 identified institutional constraints that would inhibit the Electoral Tribunal from effectively complying with its responsibilities during a full-scale electoral process such as the 1994 elections. To address these constraints, the Improved Electoral Administration Project provided technical and commodity assistance to the Electoral Tribunal for cleansing and updating the civil and electoral registries, for developing and installing an improved information technology system, and for supporting a civic education/voter motivation campaign.

With the approach of the Project's completion in December 1994, USAID/Panama contracted for this final evaluation to evaluate the progress achieved and identify lessons learned. A three person team spent two and a half weeks in Panama in October 1994 reviewing documents and interviewing key participants from the Electoral Tribunal, implementing organizations, USAID/Panama, and the U.S. Embassy. Two members of the team traveled to Costa Rica for two days to talk with additional participants in the project, and the third member traveled to the interior of Panama to visit Provincial Electoral Tribunal offices.

The evaluation team found that the Project was notably successful in meeting its objectives. By all possible measures, the 1994 elections were a surprising success. Former President Jimmy Carter and members of his international observer delegation called the elections the cleanest and most transparent they had witnessed in Latin America. Voter participation was high, violence was non-existent, there were no complaints of error or fraud, unofficial results were reported rapidly, and results were accepted immediately by the candidates who all conceded to the winner by early the following day.

The role played by the Electoral Tribunal was critical to this successful election and would not have been possible without Project assistance. Significant accomplishments under the Project in strengthening the Electoral Tribunal's institutional capacity included an improved information technology system, strengthening of the planning and training functions, and improved accuracy of the civil and electoral registries. A further major contribution to the successful election was the voter motivation and education campaign. This aggressive, creative, and effectively managed campaign had a significant impact on raising voter registration and encouraging voter participation in the elections.

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While significant advances were made by the Electoral Tribunal, pressures generated by the 1994 electoral process prevented further institutional improvement efforts that the Electoral Tribunal itself recognized as necessary. Now is the time to take advantage of the post-election respite to consolidate advances made and move ahead with additional efforts needed. Based on its findings, the Team suggested some specific steps including: (1) to complete and implement a reorganization plan; (2) to develop a plan for continuous updating of the civil registry; (3) to initiate legislative proposals for reforms needed in the Electoral Code; (4) to record, evaluate, and utilize experience gained in the 1994 elections; and (5) to improve coordination among regional directors at the provincial level and involve them more in planning at the national level.

Factors which contributed to the Project's accomplishments suggest some lessons learned that could usefully be taken into consideration in the design and management of future programs to improve electoral administration.

- Sense of mission and commitment from the outset was of paramount importance

The Project responded to and benefitted from an atmosphere of high commitment to holding free, fair, and open elections in 1994 that was shared by President Endara, the Electoral Tribunal Magistrates and their staff, the political parties, and the citizenry. To a considerable extent, accomplishments and success of the Project were due to this very favorable atmosphere and the ability of Project implementors to take advantage of it.

- Coordination at all levels was generally very effective

Also striking was the teamwork that prevailed throughout the electoral process. Good cooperation existed at all levels. Relations within the Electoral Tribunal, with and among the implementing organizations, and with USAID/Panama were excellent and greatly facilitated achievement of Project objectives.

- Building confidence in the Electoral Tribunal and the civil and electoral registries was crucial

Trust of the Panamanian people in the electoral registry was key to gaining trust in the Electoral Tribunal generally. But studies had shown there were many deficiencies in the electoral registry and the civil registry on which it depends. Cleansing the registries therefore became a central objective. The approach taken to seek actively to involve the citizens in the process not only got the public involved in actually helping with the cleansing process but also helped build public confidence in the resulting electoral registry. The many imaginative ways (the publicity campaign, kiosks, fairs, tee shirts, use of telephone and other bills) by which the Electoral Tribunal involved the public were a major factor in the successful election and undoubtedly could be usefully replicated elsewhere.

- Improved information technology played a key role

USAID/W/IRM contributed significantly to the information technology improvements which, in turn, led to the improvements in the civil and electoral registries, the identity card system, and the election day support systems. The USAID/W/IRM advisor was not limited to just approving the equipment to be ordered but was brought in at the planning stage and was able thereby to make a more effective contribution. The lesson suggested here is that for a project of this nature, in which information technology plays such an important role, USAID/W/IRM resources should be called upon not just for approval of the equipment list but for planning and development of the system as well.

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S U M M A R Y (Continued)

- Assistance was professional, competent, and timely

Assistance was universally praised by everyone the evaluation team interviewed as having been competent and timely. Also, not only did the advisors bring their own expertise but they were able to respond to the receptive environment and committed Panamanians with whom they worked. They all felt part of a team effort and sought ways to coordinate their inputs for greater total impact. This sort of attitude and approach on the part of external advisors should be replicated wherever possible.

- Flexibility was an important key to success

The Project was refocused shortly after the Project was signed because the Referendum in November 1992 showed that deficiencies in the electoral registry were more serious than originally thought. No amount of planning at the Project design stage could have revealed the extent of these deficiencies. Project success was due in part to USAID/Panama and the Electoral Tribunal being prepared to be flexible in reallocating resources. USAID/Panama also demonstrated flexibility in (1) choosing for cost saving and efficiency reasons to use the Fundacion Cruzada Civilista Nacional/Centro Pro-Democracia (FCCN/CPD) mechanism for a portion of the technical assistance instead of going entirely with Centro de Asesoría y Promoción Electoral (CAPEL) as originally planned, and (2) using direct USAID/Panama rather than host country procurement to side step the conflict between the Contraloría and the Electoral Tribunal.

- Exchanges with Electoral Tribunal personnel from other countries were very helpful

CAPEL deserves credit for stimulating such exchanges. They bring peer pressure which adds to motivation. They facilitate cross fertilization of ideas. For example, Panama used to very positive effect the Cuerpo de Delegados concept developed in Costa Rica. To the extent such exchanges are among Latin Americans, i.e. South-South dialogue, as the former director of the Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos (IIDH) characterized them, they have more credibility and impact than exchanges just with Northern democracies.

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