

PD-ABL-479
93500

**PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT
Drug Awareness and Education Project**

Grant 515-0253.00G with the
Professionals' Association for Integral Costa Rican Family Development (ADIFAC)
March 24, 1990 - June 15, 1992

I. Summary:

On March 24, 1990, USAID/Costa Rica signed a \$500,000, 24-month Grant Agreement with the "Asociación de Profesionales para el Desarrollo Integral de la Familia Costarricense (ADIFAC)", a local PVO, to partially finance a community awareness and education program on drug abuse.

2. Project Status vs. Planned Outputs:

Planned EOPS:

1. 840 members of the "Drugs No" Committees trained in the prevention of drug abuse.
 - Under the Project, more than 300 "Drugs No" Committees were established with an average of 7 members, 3 of which received intensive training in the prevention of drug abuse. They were then acting as multiplying agents in their communities.
2. 8,000 members of 91 communities aware of the danger of using drugs.
 - Project personnel and committee members conducted courses, workshops and conferences on drug prevention in 310 communities of 72 "cantons" around the country. These activities were attended by more than 8,500 people, mostly community leaders.
3. Didactic materials developed and publicity campaign established as a basis for development of sustained drug awareness projects in each community.
 - 24 bulletins were prepared and distributed. An audio visual on the "Impact of the Project on the National Community" was completed, but the final professional editing work had not been finished at the time the project was terminated.
3. Planned vs. actual inputs: Inputs were provided as planned.

4. End of Project Status:

The original PACD for this Project was March 30, 1992. By then, the Project had been very successful and all of its objectives had been met or exceeded, even though activities were initiated two months later than planned. However, the Project was plagued with a Board of Directors whose interference with administrative matters in the Project was impeding good project implementation and causing possible points of vulnerability for the Mission. The Project staff had an excellent record of implementation, but the Board was always accusing them of mismanagement.

At the end of the 2-year Project period, the Board requested a Project extension to be able to use the approximately \$160,000 which had not been used during the life of the Project. The Mission was interested in granting this extension, which would strengthen the activity's self-sufficiency and permit institutionalization of the excellent work being done in the communities by the more than 300 "Drugs No" committees formed under the Project. However, the Mission felt the extension would not work if the Board were to continue to interfere in administrative matters as they had been doing in the past.

AID had several meetings with the Board to discuss related issues and came to agreement that they would stay out of administrative issues if AID placed a concurrent auditor in the Project to review all administrative actions and payments as the Project was implemented. In addition, continuation of the project was made contingent on satisfactory results of an audit of Project expenditures and implementation over the past two years. There were no major findings in the audit, so the Project was extended through September 15, 1992, and the Mission, with its own funds, provided the concurrent auditor.

Unfortunately, on the 4th of June, the Director and Deputy Director of the Project were fired by the Board. This constituted a violation of our agreement which could not be accepted by the Mission because Project implementation and management would be compromised by this action, leaving AID in a position of accentuated vulnerability. Therefore, by Implementation Letter No. 7, dated June 11, 1992, the Mission Director officially informed ADIFAC that AID was terminating the Project Agreement, for cause, effective June 15, 1992.

Based on the fact that the Project was terminated due to ADIFAC's failure to comply with the conditions established prior to the extension, the Mission informed the Board of Directors that the equipment purchased with Project funds, i.e., two microcomputers, one printer, one copying machine, one video camera, one VHS and one giant-screen T.V., had to be returned to the AID offices. The Board's first reaction was that they would rather let AID take them to Court than to release the equipment. They later sent a letter asking the Mission to reconsider its decision concerning the equipment and expressing their intention to continue using the equipment for a similar project on drug education for children and teenagers ADIFAC was also carrying out. At that point, the Mission decided

that it was not cost-effective to start a legal action against ADIFAC, especially knowing that the equipment was going to be used for almost the same purposes for which it had been purchased originally.

5. Progress Towards Planned Purpose:

The EOPS section above, indicates that the Project surpassed its targets in most cases.

6. Post-Project Monitoring Requirements:

None

7. Lessons Learned:

- There is increasing concern on the part of both the public and private sectors over the growing use of "recreational drugs" by the general populace, especially the youth. Several organizations have been created to raise awareness to prevent the misuse of drugs.
- At the time the Project was approved, there was a real need for information, didactic materials and training on how to prevent the use of drugs. Therefore, the Project was very well received by the communities.
- Unfortunately, the sudden termination of the Project, after it had been extended or six additional months, affected very negatively the work being done in the communities by the more than 300 "Drugs No" Committees created under the Project, which could not understand why AID was deobligating funds they could use to continue their activities.
- Given the constant conflicts between the Director of the Project and the Board of Directors of ADIFAC, the Project should not have been extended, especially since all the planned outputs had already been achieved by the original PACD.
- The role of the Board of Directors of any PVO should be well defined, in order to avoid interference of the Board members in the day-to-day management of the project. This was the main problem encountered by this otherwise successful Project.