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USAID/PARAGUAY

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORTS

OCTOBER 31, 1994 - MARCH 31, 1995

USAID/PARAGUAY SAR PORTFOLIO REVIEW
May 1995
SPRING 1995 PORTFOLIO STATUS
USAID REPRESENTATIVE'S NARRATIVE SUMMARY REPORT

I. OVERVIEW

None of the projects in USAID/Paraguay's ongoing \$7 million portfolio have major implementation problems. They are close to meeting their proposed objectives and are basically on schedule. Of the total of 15 projects, only 1 project presents an A rating, being the remaining projects of a B rate. In the last SARs, the Mission rated most of its projects as A, but this has changed after receiving a clearer explanation in the last SAR guidance cable, where it is stated that it is normal to have most of the projects rated as B, and that A projects should be those where Mission believes are real success stories. For more information on the rating of projects, see Matrix included as Attachment A.

USAID/Paraguay has recently completed an Implementation Plan for USAID Population Assistance to Paraguay and the country's Monitoring Plan. It has also completed a local government assessment (conducted by Florida International University), a Democratic Initiatives Assessment and an Environmental Assessment. These documents depict major problems within the three approved strategic objective areas of USAID/Paraguay sustainable development assistance program and identify priority activities to be carried in the next few years.

In addition to the cluster of projects within the S.O.s of democracy, the environment and population/family health, USAID/Paraguay has been authorized to pursue a very limited number of supportive cross-cutting activities.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES NARRATIVE

Following are the major accomplishments in the Mission's portfolio of projects during the period October 1, 1994 - March 31, 1995:

Judicial Reform. In 1994, the Paraguayan judiciary reduced by 20% the number of criminal cases pending more than a year in the Asunción courts. A key element in this success was the new Judicial Management Information System financed by the project. The system, initially operational in Asunción, links the judiciary, the Attorney General's office, and prisons in a computerized case tracking system, helped reduce by 20% the number of inmates in the highly overcrowded Tacumbú maximum security prison.

Also, a judicial library has been established to provide specialized reference materials for judges and prosecutors.

USAID/USIS Administration of Justice Joint Project. Four judges were sent to the U.S. to observe the judicial system. In addition, nine judges/prosecutors attended a training program in San Diego, CAL. focused on the U.S. prosecutorial and oral process.

Legislative Strengthening. The Information and Resources Center for Development (IRCD) through a contract with CEAL (Chile), has continued to provide technical assistance and training to both congressmen and legislative staff members in the area of legislative administration, the technical aspects of bill drafting, and in building stronger member/constituent relations. In addition, the project has promoted the need for the legislative branch to exercise oversight of the federal budget, investigating crime and corruption, and pushing a positive agenda in privatization, the environment, the social sector, and local government strengthening. Some 100 congressmen, 360 staff members, and 60 journalists were trained in legislative administration and technical areas under the IRCD sub-contract with CEAL.

Health Systems Management & Accountability. The Ministry of Health has completed installation and is utilizing a computer-based budget and financial tracking system which has been designed for replication in other Ministries and local government organizations. The new Decentralized Health Services Project, scheduled to start in FY 1996 will assist in replicating the experience in selected states and municipalities.

National Environmental Education Program. Owing to the good working relationships established with the Congress, the project has been instrumental in the passage of the National Law for Protected Areas, which gives legal status to the Master Plan for Protected Areas (SINASIP) developed with USAID financing. This plan, presently being implemented, will help preserve representatives of the major ecosystems of Paraguay and increase the number of protected areas. In addition, the project has continued promoting initiatives to help expand bio-diversity and private protected areas.

The Moises Bertoni Foundation, with project money, trained over 500 environmental change agents, and the Ministry of Education has adopted environmental awareness in its formal primary school curricula.

The Foundation for the Sustainable Development of the Chaco was recently founded by the NGO community, local officials and businessmen to preserve the Chaco's unique ecosystems, wildlife and indigenous indians.

Capacity for Local Environmental Action. The Paraguayan NGO **Alter Vida** is presently initiating activities under this project. The goal is to create capacity in key state governments, and the municipalities within them, to conserve and develop their resources in a sustainable way. Areas of focus include solid waste management, urban/industrial pollution, and land-use planning.

Parks-in-Peril (The Nature Conservancy). The project assisted the Moisés Bertoni Foundation establish a management system in the Mbaracayú Reserve, as well as developing alternative economic activities to deforestation in the "buffer zone" surrounding the reserve. Additional funding is being requested to include the Defensores del Chaco national park under the PiP project the next year. This park is representative of the unique Chaco eco-system, a region expanding to Bolivia and Argentina.

Voluntary Family Planning (IPPF). The project continues providing family planning, voluntary surgical contraception, and community contraceptives delivery services through CEPEP clinics. At present about, many women depend on CEPEP for their contraceptives. Contraceptive prevalence among eligible Paraguayan women remains very low at 32%.

In collaboration with the Global Bureau, USAID/Paraguay completed an evaluation of its population and family planning activities for the purpose of developing a strategic objective. An objective tree was developed, program outcomes were defined as well as indicators to measure program impact. The S.O. has been approved and funds programmed for a significant increase in population assistance.

Economic Policy/Trade/Investment. The Center for Economic Liberty and Social Justice (CEPPRO), with project funds, has helped develop an economic policy framework in support of sustainable development which has gained wide support and dissemination among key players in both the private and public sectors of the economy. CEPPRO has continued promoting consensus on its "social market economy" model among the political leadership and economic planners. It has also published as a book the corrected version of the "National Economic Policy Framework," originally designed to provide economic policy inputs to candidates during the 1993 presidential election. This book is being used as a reference by key private and public sector officials. CEPPRO has also provided technical assistance and training in the area of social and economic issues and conducted an evaluation of the environmental impact resulting from economic development.

Development Services & Training Program. The Information and Resources Center for Development (IRCD), a local affiliate of the Partners of the Americas, is continuing to send qualified Paraguayans for graduate training in the United States, Costa Rica and Chile. A total of 23 participants are now studying for masters and doctorate degrees in economics and business administration, of whom 80% were placed in Chile and Costa Rica at an average cost of only \$50,000 per two-year program. This cost is considerably less than a comparable academic program in the U.S.

Drug Abuse Prevention (MARANDU). The project has continued supporting the activities of the NGO members of Coordination Group for Drug Prevention (CONPRED). The project has assisted the Congress in writing drug prevention bills and the Ministry of Education (MOE) in the training of teachers in the design, presentation and distribution of drug prevention training materials. Cooperative agreements were signed with the MOE and the Ministry of Health for the training of schoolteachers and health promoters.

The Data and Information Center (CID Marandú) expanded its data base and reference library and substantially increased its clientele.

Peace Corps Training and Support. Over 60 local counterparts joined Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV) for three-day Project Design and Management workshops held for health workers and for participants working in the education and small business sectors. Ten rural community leaders benefited from a practical workshop on "pu mp building and repair" which was held at a rural site

in the Department of Guairá. Similarly, twenty agricultural extension workers and farmers attended a soils conservation workshop held in Caacupé. Here, 19 PCV's worked side by side with work mates in practicing soil conservation techniques.

Five Small Project Assistance (SPA) activities were financed during the period. Some of the activities included the design and implementation of public water supply systems for small communities. These projects were very successful in generating community participation and in leveraging counterpart financial support from local organizations.

Other USAID/W Activities

Labor Management Relations (AIFLD). Seven training seminars on trade union and democratic participation education were held during the period for 210 union leaders (20% women). Most of the seminars were held in the interior of the country, and topics included labor legislation, collective bargaining, labor/management relations; and other related topics.

Low-Cost Cooperative Housing (CHF). The low-cost house improvement program (Ñande Roga), a joint USAID effort with Peace Corps and CHF, is successfully being implemented by the Federation of Savings and Loan (CREDICOOP). To date the program, with financing from the National Housing Council (CONAVI), has made more than 1,200 loans to cooperative members with 100% repayment rate.

Plans are well under way for a \$20 million Housing Guarantee (HIG) scheduled to start in FY 1996. As it stands now, due to the market potential, the loan will put emphasis on infrastructure improvement such as small community water systems, in contrast to its original concept of concentrating on expanding home improvement loans.

Also, USAID's policy dialogue and technical assistance to the Paraguayan Congress and CONAVI has assisted in expediting approval of a \$54 million IDB housing loan that laid dormant for three years for lack of agreement on such items as the need to direct housing subsidies and other basic issues.

Farmer-to-Farmer (Partners of the Americas). The program has continued concentrating its technical assistance support in the areas of dairy production improvement with the La Lechita women's dairy cooperative; improvement of cattle nutrition; development of a national meat grading and inspection system; and improvement of citrus production. The technical support provided by the FTF volunteers has resulted in more efficient production practices on the part of both extension agents and producers.

- Data as of : October, 1994 - March, 1995

USAID/Paraguay Semi-Annual Portfolio Review - Attachment A

- Date completed : May 30, 1995

(Ref. State 97319 April 02, 1995)

Indic.	1 PROJECT NAME AND NUMBER	2 DATE OF INITIAL OBLIG.	3 PROJECT DESIG. (A,B,C)	4 STATUS OF CP's	5 SIZE OF PIPELINE	6 AGE OF PIPELINE	7 ACCRUED EXPEND.	8 UNCOMM. BALANCE	9 EOPS 1	10 EOPS 2	11 AUDIT 1	12 AUDIT 2	13 EVAL 1	14 EVAL 2
1-	<u>598-0616.06 - III</u>				✓	✓	✓	✓						
-	IRCD - Development Training	09/28/1992	B											
	- Drug Abuse Prevention	07/28/1993	B											
-	Econ. Policy/Trade/Inv. (CEPPRO)	03/02/1992	A	N/A	-	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
-	Health Management	09/18/1992	B											
-	Environmental Awareness (FMB)	09/28/1992	B											
-	Environmental Action (ALTER VIDA) (*)	09/30/1994												
-	Peace Corps Training	06/29/1993	B											
2-	<u>598-0591.06 - Human Rights Initiatives</u>													
-	IRCD - Legislative Strengthening	09/28/1992	B											
3-	<u>598-0642.06 - Administration of Justice</u>													
-	Judicial Reform (**)	09/25/1992	B											
-	USIS/A.I.D. Grant (**)	05/31/1991	B											
4-	<u>Central and Regional Projects</u>													
-	Parks in Peril		B											
-	Fam., Planning Program/IPPF		B											
-	AIFLD - Labor Management Relations		B											
-	Low Cost Cooperative Housing		B											
-	Farmer to Farmer		B											

(*) New project

(**) Also has a limited Human Rights Initiatives funding component

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