

PD ABL-679

96105

FINAL EVALUATION

**SALVADORAN ENVIRONMENTAL
NGO STRENGTHENING PROJECT**

**AID IQC AEP-0085-I-00-3003-00
Delivery Order No. 17**

Prepared for:

**Productive Resources Office (PRO)
U.S. Agency for International Development
San Salvador, El Salvador**

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September 1995

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Project

The rapid growth of population in El Salvador and the aggressive use of natural resources has resulted in a situation in which soil, water, forest, and wildlife habitat resources are consumed faster than they are able to regenerate. The control of excessive and inappropriate exploitation of renewable natural resources is urgent to avoid irreversible ecological damage.

Because of the failure to protect the natural resource base, environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have begun to promote environmental awareness and wise natural resource management. These NGOs are young, most having appeared in the last five to ten years. Few have paid administrative staff, and most depend on volunteers. They lack management and financial skills. Memberships vary from less than 50 to 200 per group, and many are simply small, informal groups of friends concerned about environmental degradation. As nearly all are still institutionally immature, they need management skills and technical expertise to become effective, self-sustaining advocates and leaders for the proper management of El Salvador's threatened natural resources.

The Salvadoran Environmental Non-Governmental Organizational Strengthening (SENS) Project (Project No. 519-0400) was designed to work with national level NGOs aspiring to expand their technical capabilities and structures to become more influential in Salvadoran natural resource management and policy. The Project Goal is to protect and promote sustainable use of El Salvador's natural resources. In striving to achieve this goal, the Project Purpose is to strengthen Salvadoran environmental NGOs to be self-sustaining advocates for natural resource management.

Purpose of Evaluation

This end of project evaluation has two purposes. The first purpose is to evaluate the performance of the SENS Project, including the benefits and effects that the Project has had in strengthening a core group of Salvadoran ENGOS. The evaluation assesses the participating NGOs progress in developing their mission statements and objectives, the effectiveness of the subgrantees' administrations and their technical staffs, and the ability of the participating institutions to raise diversified funding sources that contribute to the viability of each NGO. The second purpose of this evaluation is to present USAID/El Salvador with guidelines and possible project activities

for a proposed 16 month project extension. The evaluation presents what new activities would be included in the extension without fundamentally changing the purpose of the original Project.

The evaluation involved rapid appraisal techniques through which information is collected from several sources (document review, USAID project officers, implementing agency staff, and interviews with beneficiaries) and triangulated to establish the past and present situation. The documents reviewed and persons contacted are found in the Annexes to this document.

Findings and Conclusions

1. Expanded Project Participation

The project was originally designed to work only with the "subgrant NGOs," those receiving institutional strengthening funds along with training and technical assistance. However, when the selection process was completed and the NGOs identified for subgrants, the NGOs not selected asked to participate in the training process even without a subgrant. They were allowed to do so, and thus the project has two sets of project NGOs: "subgrant NGOs" and "collaborator NGOs." Most of the latter took advantage of this opportunity, and some collaborator NGOs now have higher representation by women on boards of directors, use logframes, and have improved project administration and planning skills.

2. Improved Strategic and Annual Planning

Most of the NGOs had little experience in planning before the project but were required to produce strategic and annual planning documents before receiving their subgrants. The experience was not easy: most NGOs had few or no full-time personnel. It was hard for board members to find time to develop plans, and this was the primary cause for the staggered start-up of NGO subgrants. The subgrants began as follows, including total months in the SENS project as of July 1, 1995:

	<u>NGOs</u>	<u>Subgrant date</u>	
1.	AMAR:	01 Jul 93.	Months completed: 24
2.	CEPRODE:	15 Jul 93.	Months completed: 23.5
3.	CEDRO:	01 Aug 93.	Months completed: 23
4.	FUTECMA:	30 Nov 93.	Months completed: 19
5.	SALVANATURA:	24 Feb 94.	Months completed: 16
6.	MONTECRISTO:	15 Apr 94.	Months completed: 14.5
7.	ASACMA:	15 Nov 94.	Months completed: 7.5

The NGOs now have 2-3 years of experience in preparing plans, and they now use them in orienting the daily operations of the NGO.

3. Improved NGO Administration

Training and orientation was provided for boards of directors concerning board composition, relations with paid staff, and how to run meetings. All NGOs now have separated board members from staff members, and boards have a higher percentage of women. The project also set up computerized accounting systems, and all NGOs are capable of producing monthly financial reports. All NGOs now produce logframes for project proposals, which helps them receive donor grants to carry out environmental projects. Most of the NGOs also now have policies and procedures governing purchases, job descriptions, personnel, and NGO property.

4. Membership and Fundraising

With the exception of the two NGOs with close ties to the business community, the NGOs had few or no pre-project membership or fundraising policies or procedures. Membership followed a pattern of an initial group of interested individuals, many of whom dropped out, and a few new members entered each year. Membership lists were rarely kept up to date. Dues were low in order to not limit membership and were collected in a haphazard way. Fundraising was considered only when the NGO needed funds for a specific activity or piece of equipment, and once the needed funds were raised, fundraising was forgotten. NGOs had no membership or fundraising committees, nor personnel assigned to the task full-time or even half-time.

The project has had less success in this area due in part to personnel problems. The first individual was ineffectual and not rehired after completing a year, and the position was vacant for several months. Training was provided, and each NGO now has a membership and fundraising plan, but the plans are weak and often incomplete. The NGOs need a strategy based on presentation, communications, marketing, and public relations. They need to present the NGO as attractive to both possible members and potential donors and communicate both the environmental message as well as their own role in improving the situation. They need to market the NGO as an attractive product with potential donors and sponsors, and they need good public relations with donors, members, other NGOs, the press, and international NGOs.

5. Grantmanship

The project NGOs are implementing agencies: their role in great part is to implement projects in local communities, funneling the grant funds made available by donor agencies interested in improving the environment and life for local people. A critical measure of the success of the SENS project is thus how well the project NGOs are functioning in securing funding grants.

The NGOs have received some funds from international NGOs, but in spite of a training session on how to make these contacts, few have been made. The best source of funds has been the Initiative for the Americas Fund (FIAES), established through a loan-forgiveness program by the U.S. government; there is also a similar Canadian-financed fund, called FONAES. Both funds provide opportunities for the NGOs to acquire funds for project implementation. Six of the seven

NGOs have submitted projects to FIAES for financing, and three of the seven have projects either have submitted projects to FONAES.

The Social Investment Fund (FIS) is another source which project NGOs have accessed. Two projects were funded for the 1993 growing seasons, and 16 project NGOs (including collaborators) had funding in 1994; all were reforestation projects. For 1995, 23 reforestation projects were approved, but based on an evaluation of non-project reforestation projects showing very poor survival rates, FIS funded no reforestation projects at all in 1995.

The project also called for special activity grants. Just five of the planned 30 grants were given out because they were reserved for projects which were innovative in some way. In the extension, these funds should be reserved for presentation and public relations projects, including videos, slide shows, and other materials to raise awareness, present a positive image, and raise funds.

6. Participation by Women

This project has been a model for the participation of women, beginning with the NGO selection criteria, the first of which required that the board of directors be "open to members of the NGO...with representation by both genders." The SENS project target was a board with one-third women members, and most boards have achieved this balance. Of the seven subgrant NGOs, three have women board presidents, and three of the seven Executive Directors are women as well. Regarding training, the SENS project has supported participation in 91 training events with a total of 1187 participants, 549 women and 638 men. Women have attended international events, such as the agroforestry for women training sessions in Costa Rica.

7. Recommendations

- **Improved communications/presentation:** The project should hire an expert locally to assist NGOs in improving their presentation skills, including the production of quality materials, the development and implementation of corporate fundraising and press strategies, contacting the international environmental NGOs, and working with NGO membership in this improved presentation of the NGO message.
- **Existing subgrants:** All subgrants should be continued for at least four months until the end of 1995. The SALVANATURA and FUTECSMA subgrants should be terminated at the end of 1995. The other NGOs should have their subgrants extended through the end of the extension.
- **New subgrants:** MES and ASPAGUA, which were collaborator NGOs during the project, should receive subgrants in the project extension. These subgrants should be slightly higher to include the purchase of computers, printers, photocopiers, software, and office equipment.

- **Gradually reduced subgrants:** Reducing the amount of funds each month has been shown in other AID-financed projects to stimulate subgrantees to work at acquiring funds from other sources. The SENS project should determine how to reduce the amount the NGOs actually receive each month or each quarter, so that they become accustomed to locating other funding sources.

8. Lessons learned

- Operating grants for NGOs should routinely include an explicit plan for discontinuing that assistance, including gradually reducing funds over time.
- Operations grants are not the only mechanism possible for institutional strengthening, and very likely are not the best one. Organizational analysis and structural redesign, administrative training, Board training, training in project design and logframes, and the computerized accounting modernization can contribute very positively to an NGO without an accompanying subgrant.
- Fundraising is an important aspect for strengthening NGOs, and all sources need to be considered when looking at fundraising. If the NGO membership cannot provide adequate funds, fundraising must consider other sources and not attempt to solve its recurrent cost problems through increased membership.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Project Setting

The rapid growth of population in El Salvador and the aggressive use of natural resources has resulted in a situation in which soil, water, forest, and wildlife habitat resources are consumed faster than they are able to regenerate. Deforestation, which produces erosion and sedimentation problems, and water pollution from agrochemicals and sewage, threaten critical infrastructure and ecosystems, including sustainable agriculture and commercial fisheries.

The principal factors contributing to this continued degradation are demographic, socio-political, and socio-economic, and they include unbalanced human/land ratios; inequitable and insecure land tenure and policies that force people to inhabit and erode fragile lands; lack of financial and policy incentives for sound resource management; and failure to disseminate existing technological methods to increase yields of food and other agricultural or forestry products on the lands for which they are best suited.

The control of excessive and inappropriate exploitation of renewable natural resources is urgent to avoid irreversible ecological damage. USAID and other donor assistance can help El Salvador to overcome these problems which, if left unattended, will permanently retard economic development. Assistance should address the lack of resources and the absence of adequate skills and technical capacity on the part of government entities, NGOs, and private citizens to permit needed reform of key policies, strengthen private sector institutions to take responsibility for natural resource management (NRM), and effectively promote sustainable management of renewable natural resources.

Because of the increasingly apparent failure to protect the natural resource base and use it wisely, environmental and development NGOs (ENGOS and DNGOs) have sprung up in recent years at the national and local levels. Though small and unfocused, the ENGOS have begun to promote environmental awareness and wise natural resource management, while DNGOs increasingly include environmental activities in their programs. Press, radio, and television messages with environmental themes are more frequent and have begun to raise citizen awareness; some ENGOS have opened national policy debates in the media and other fora. National level ENGOS have increasingly demonstrated the ability to focus on issues and lobby effectively for change.

These ENGOS are young, however, most having appeared in the last five to ten years. Few have paid administrative staff, and most depend on limited numbers of volunteers. They generally lack

management and financial skills. Memberships vary from less than 50 to 200 per group, and many ENGOs are simply small, informal groups of friends concerned about environmental degradation. While ENGOs are generally concerned and committed, nearly all are still institutionally immature. They need management skills and technical expertise to become effective, self-sustaining advocates and leaders for the proper management of El Salvador's threatened natural resources.

B. Project Strategy

The Salvadoran Environmental Non-Governmental Organizational Strengthening (SENS) Project (Project No. 519-0400) was designed to work with national level NGOs aspiring to expand their technical capabilities and structures to become more influential in Salvadoran natural resource management and policy. Emphasis was placed on ENGOs with some experience and roots in order to enhance the prospects for sustained viability as a result of the strengthening effort.

During the first six months of the Project, up to 20 NGOs were to participate in workshops on options for institutional improvement, to define goals and mission, and to develop 3-5 year strategic plans and annual operating plans. This process was to lead to NGO proposals for up to eight Operational Strengthening Subgrants, with selection based on proposal quality and the NGO's ability and assessed potential to implement proposed NRM activities and to generate a significant level of membership participation and support.

Selected NGOs were to adopt Strategic Plans followed by Annual Operating Plans. The Project would then provide significant commodity and TA direct assistance for strategic planning, financial systems, fundraising planning, office equipment, and training materials. The NGOs would be expected to be operated by a rotating board and be governed by policies encouraging a broad spectrum of the public to be members. Subgrants would also require each NGO to invest appropriate amounts in non-administrative programs and services, and to submit to annual financial audits. They would prepare written policies for administration of personnel, budgets, maintenance, planning, and financial controls.

In addition, the NGOs would be eligible for small activity grants, including a fee for non-direct costs as a means of inducing them to take appropriate management steps and to value fee income as a way of covering such costs. The NGOs were also to attempt to raise at least 50% of their annual recurring costs locally or as income from services.

The Project was to be carried out by a technical assistance team from Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) made up of specialists in NGO strategic planning, administrative systems and procedures, finance, and membership fundraising. The subgrants would be renewed for a second year based on the performance of the first year.

C. Project Objectives

The Project Goal is to protect and promote sustainable use of El Salvador's natural resources. In striving to achieve this goal, the Project Purpose is to strengthen Salvadoran environmental NGOs to be self-sustaining advocates for natural resource management.

The End-of-Project Status (EOPS) contains the following four elements:

1. Up to eight NGOs will have a track record demonstrating their private sector environmental leadership and the potential for their long range institutional sustainability.
2. The participating NGOs will be perceived by the environmental community as credible advocates of one or more environmental issues as represented by the impact on community consciousness raising and NR policy.
3. The participating NGOs will have established linkages with SEMA/CONAMA, local NGOs, FIAES, appropriate government institutions, international NGOs, and international support organizations.
4. The NGOs will have established a network of linkages among themselves and other national NGOs working in natural resources.

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation lists five outputs against which this Project should be evaluated:

1. Operating environmental NGO planning systems
2. Trained NGO boards and staff
3. Functioning administrative systems
4. Implemented fundraising strategies
5. Functioning Project NGO funding mechanisms

D. Purpose of the Evaluation

This end of project evaluation has two purposes. The first purpose is to evaluate the performance of the SENS Project, including the benefits and effects that the Project has had in strengthening a core group of Salvadoran ENGOs. As such, the evaluation will document the experience gained and lessons learned from the implementation of the project and assess whether the project has reached its EOPS. The evaluation will assess the participating NGOs progress in developing their mission statements and objectives, the effectiveness of each of the subgrantees' administrations and their technical staffs, and the ability of the participating institutions to raise diversified funding sources that contribute to the viability of each NGO.

The second purpose of this evaluation is to present USAID/El Salvador with clear guidelines and possible project activities for a proposed 16 month extension to the SENS Project. The evaluation will present what new activities would be included in the extension without fundamentally changing the purpose of the original Project.

E. Methodology

The evaluation involved standard techniques of rapid appraisal methodology through which information is collected from several sources (document review, USAID project officers, implementing agency staff, and interviews with beneficiaries) and triangulated to establish the past and present situation. The documents reviewed and persons contacted are found in the Annexes to this document.

The evaluation specialist, Dr. Stephen Stewart, brought to the evaluation process a background of 20 years of experience in development work in Central America, including 12 years of experience in the design and evaluation of AID-funded projects. His experience includes extensive work with NGOs in Latin America. Dr. Stewart is the secretary of the board of directors of a development NGO in neighboring Guatemala, and thus brought an insider's viewpoint to the evaluation of this project.

II. PROFILES: SUBGRANT AND COLLABORATOR NGOS

The SENS project was originally designed to work only with what are now called the "subgrant NGOs," those receiving institutional strengthening funds along with training and technical assistance. However, once the selection process was completed and the NGOs identified for subgrants, the NGOs which had not been selected asked if they could participate in the training process even without a subgrant. They were allowed to do so, and as a result, the SENS project now refers to two sets of project NGOs: subgrant NGOs, which receive subgrants for institutional strengthening, and collaborator NGOs, which do not receive subgrants but which participate fully in training and other activities. This section looks at the subgrant NGOs, while the collaborator NGOs are dealt with in the following section.

A. Subgrant NGO Profiles

1. CEPRODE: Centro de Protección para Desastres

The impulse for starting CEPRODE was the 1986 earthquake which devastated much of San Salvador, but while CEPRODE still holds that sudden natural disaster prevention and protection is part of its mission, its primary focus is now in preventing slower but more devastating human-caused ecological disaster. CEPRODE focuses its activities toward action-research, the formation of Ecology Groups with adults and school children, and the implementation of projects in high-risk areas.

Much of CEPRODE's efforts have gone into reforestation. It worked with a community in San Miguel to plant trees in an agroforestry system as live barriers to prevent soil erosion. A key activity for the Ecology Groups is tree planting and care, along with environmental education and environmental clean-up. CEPRODE currently implements seven projects, six of which involve reforestation or fire control, and other projects yet to be funded (Annual Report, 1994) were primarily in reforestation.

CEPRODE is well-administered and well-organized, and in this sense, CEPRODE appears to be one of the better examples of what the SENS project was trying to achieve, although it has had little success with fundraising and has been content to acquire operating expenses from project overhead. The Executive Director, Lidia Castillo, is the driving force in CEPRODE and an excellent administrator.

2. CEDRO: Centro de Educación y Desarrollo Rural

CEDRO began around 1990 focused on agricultural production and soil conservation, moved more towards environmental concerns (fire control and soil, forest and water conservation), and has now settled on the term "eco-development" (ecodesarrollo) to describe its focus, which integrates people, natural resource protection, and production.

The recently completed 1994 Annual Report shows CEDRO focusing on two ecological programs, the National Reconciliation Forest on the Guazapa Volcano and the reforestation campaigns with two cooperatives in San Vicente. Two sustainable agriculture projects are a fire prevention campaign program funded by SEMA and a soil conservation project funded by Catholic Relief Services (CRS).

CEDRO is perhaps the NGO best connected to the international community, in part because of the energy of American-born Barbara Dole, wife of CEDRO's Executive Director, Francisco Acosta. CEDRO raises funds with U.S. churches, organizations, and individuals, and it even has an international council of advisors, including the well-known American linguists Noam Chomsky and Dell Hymes. These international connections are key to the success of CEDRO's fund-raising efforts.

3. AMAR: Amigos del Arbol

In spite of its name, AMAR is best known for its work with sea turtles at the Barra de Santiago. However, this sand bar fronts a large mangrove forest, and AMAR has a recently signed a long-term agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture to manage both the sea turtle egg-laying beach and the 2725-hectare mangrove estuary behind it. AMAR has advanced considerably in management of this protected area. It has a turtle and mangrove educational museum right on the beach, and raises a few young sea turtles for educational purposes in the corner of a nearby school yard. It allows some harvesting of the mangrove, but harvesters must sign an agreement to carry out supervised replanting of mangroves, the health of which represent a key element in fish and shrimp industries.

Because of its experience, AMAR seems to be heading in the direction of a niche as beach-and-mangrove specialists. AMAR developed slowly in the SENS project, apparently because the previous Executive Director was a poor administrator, but the NGO has improved rapidly with the new Executive Director, Rubén Quintanilla, who was formerly vice president of the board of directors.

4. SALVANATURA

SALVANATURA's principal task is the administration of a protected area under a long-term agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), in this case, the mountainous El Impossible dry tropical forest (5000 hectares), which is directly north of the Barra de Santiago but separated from it by farm land. This agreement was the first such agreement between the MAG and an

NGO. SALVANATURA has purchased some of the remaining private land in the area and eventually hopes to acquire all of it, but there is still coffee grown in the area.

SALVANATURA eventually plans organized ecotourism in the area, but has limited it until it can be carried out properly. The NGO has also embarked on a program of reforestation of treeless areas through planting local species raised in a nursery at the area's edge.

SALVANATURA is the NGO best connected to the moneyed Salvadoran upper classes and has been quite successful raising funds locally. SALVANATURA also carries out environmental education and is the only subgrant NGO with a stated interest in one of the "brown" environmental issues: the treatment of solid waste.

5. FUTECMA: Fundación Técnica de Protección del Medio Ambiente

FUTECMA is similar to SALVANATURA in having a fairly substantial business membership with close to 20 members paying C.5000 for membership which, added to the C.50,000 it makes from its yearly fundraising dinner, has brought it C.150,000 per year. It plans to make another C.100,000 by the end of the year on a calendar, and FUTECMA's goal is to eventually cover basic operating costs through fundraising.

While it has small projects in Chalatenango and San Miguel, FUTECMA originated in Santa Tecla, and its programming goal for several years has been to manage the Deininger protected area (1400 hectares), just 30 minutes by road from Santa Tecla toward La Libertad. In contrast with many other such areas, which are under the overall supervision of MAG, Deininger has been administratively under the direction of the Salvadoran tourism institute, ISTU, and it is only recently that an agreement for FUTECMA to manage the park appears imminent.

FUTECMA in the short term plans to concentrate its efforts at Deininger. It has carried out some reforestation and has worked with neighboring communities on buffer zone activities, including planting multi-use trees for firewood. It now has a park management plan developed by VOCA volunteers, although it has still not been translated into Spanish, on which FUTECMA will base its activities. It plans to solicit funds to build fire control towers and water catchment basins to use if fires break out. Its environmental education and ecotourism activities also are focused on Deininger.

6. MONTECRISTO: Asociación Montecristo para la Naturaleza y el Desarrollo Sostenible

MONTECRISTO was begun as the effort of a group of teachers in 1985 which was later formalized as a legally recognized association. MONTECRISTO's entry into the SENS project was actually delayed until legal recognition was granted in February, 1994, and the agreement between SENS and MONTECRISTO dates from April 15, 1994. The NGO's prime mover is its Executive Director, Daisy Dinarte, who was previously also president of the board of directors.

MONTECRISTO maintains strong links with its beginnings in focusing on environmental education with student groups: it has an agreement with the Ministry of Education to carry out environmental projects and published a short "Young Environmentalists Manual." But it has also carried out reforestation and soil conservation projects, had a project approved to raise white-tail deer in captivity, and is negotiating with MAG to manage a protected area, although not the cloud forest park on the Honduras-Guatemala border which the association is named after.

7. ASACMA: Asociación Salvadoreña de Conservación del Medio Ambiente

ASACMA has developed slowly as an environmental NGO in spite of the fact that it has been a member of International Union for the Conservation of Nature (UICN) since 1990, and it was the last NGO to receive a SENS subgrant (in November, 1994), because of difficulties in producing a strategic plan.

ASACMA's focus at present is on the San Marcelino protected area (1482 hectares) following the signing of an agreement with MAG in May of 1994. While the boundaries of this area include parts which have been farmed for centuries, it also includes primary forest around the San Marcelino volcano and in other areas near the Izalco volcano. ASACMA's challenge is to define areas for protection, carry out a rapid ecological assessment, and develop buffer zone activities.

In fact, ASACMA's activities to date focus on the buffer zone, which is dominated by cooperatives which have arisen from the land reform programs in the last 15 years. To lessen pressure on the forest, ASACMA has trained people in the construction and use of improved cook stoves, and the NGO plans to develop firewood groves in the buffer zone.

ASACMA took advantage of the problems in AUDUBON (see below) to acquire its present Executive Director, Mario Vásquez, who has helped ASACMA to advance in the SENS project and in general. The president of ASACMA's board of directors, María Elena Vásquez (no relation), works closely with the Executive Director.

8. Sociedad Audubón

The Audubon Society is the one failure in the SENS Project, although it does not appear to have been the Project's fault. As has been the case with other NGOs both in El Salvador and elsewhere, Audubon was begun by one person or, in this case, by one family, the Pérez family. The original Audubon offices were in the Pérez home, and Zoila Pérez was the president of a board packed with family members. In order to qualify for SENS, Audubon was convinced to move out of the Pérez house, and Zoila Pérez was to become a full-time Executive Director instead of board president.

However, it was learned that she had not resigned her position at a local school as agreed, and PADF received guidance from USAID that she or Audubon would have to return half of her "full-time" salary. The Pérez family left Audubon en masse, and it was taken over by Ovidio Hernández, a Christian Democrat politician, and following a new board election in November of

1994, the board had become packed with Christian Democrat politicians, who may use the NGO for purposes other than what it was started for.

PADF's sole interest at present is establishing control over the accounting to close out Audubon's subgrant, followed by an audit. Audubon should not be reconsidered for a subgrant, but if it continues to participate as a collaborator NGO, it might receive limited funds for special projects as other collaborator NGOs do.

B. Profiles: Collaborator NGOs

1. MES: Movimiento Ecológico Salvadoreño

MES was begun by an old-timer in Salvadoran environmental circles, Alberto Hellenbuyk, who became involved in the Amigos de la Tierra (Friends of the Earth) begun in the 1950s but is now defunct. MES was begun in the 1980s with others from Amigos de la Tierra, most of them fairly old, but when the opportunity to receive a subgrant came along to boost the organization through SENS, board president Hellenbuyk vetoed the idea. He has since left the organization with most of his friends, a new board has been elected, and the organization is quite different now compared to two years ago.

MES devotes much of its efforts to the Danta Botanical Garden and Wildlife Area, which is located in Renderos next door to San Salvador and which contains a spring which supplied the first potable water for the city. The efforts of MES are directed toward control of gully erosion and maintaining the area as a park. While the park is just 10 hectares, the board is not looking to expand activities until the park is well under control, which they feel will require at least three years.

MES is an NGO teetering on the brink of non-functionality. The NGO has funds for just the rent (now overdue), utilities, a half-time secretary who lives on the premises, a part-time accountant, and a few expenses. At a recent board meeting, at least 10 board members showed up. All appeared to be concerned and intelligent, and no one member dominated the meeting. If MES had been in this position two years ago, it would certainly have qualified for a subgrant under the SENS project.

In fact, the board credits SENS and the participation MES has had with the changes that have occurred in the organization. MES has participated in training and in the monthly breakfast presentations, and the focus, methods, and systems of the SENS project have attracted and influenced the MES board.

2. ASALDI: Asociación Salvadoreña de Desarrollo Integral

ASALDI is not a purely environmental NGO but rather a "generalist" with programs in rural health (with AID funds), micro business (with CRS funds), job training (local and European

Community funds), and low-income housing (with local funds), as well as environmental education. Their project portfolio demonstrates the general health of the organization.

ASALDI credits SENS with having been a positive influence in a number of ways. They have benefitted from the training for technicians, staff, and board of directors. ASALDI feels an important effect has been to bring the NGO into contact with the environmental NGOs for networking.

The SENS emphasis on fundraising was also important. ASALDI had always operated on the idea that if it carried out good project implementation, new donors would always be there to fund the next project. They are now looking to acquire funds through interest from their micro-business revolving fund, have increased membership dues from C.10 to C.100, have modified their health programs to include at least symbolic payments for services and medicines, and they are considering opening a paying clinic to help finance community service activities.

Planning is another area where ASALDI has improved through participation in the SENS Project. Previously, the NGO was disorderly and poorly documented. They now have developed a strategic plan, have an annual operating plan for the whole NGO instead of just on a project basis, and have learned to use the logframe. The fact that a Canadian fund source requires the logframe makes them very happy to have learned to use it.

They also credit the project with helping them in ways not related to training. SENS helped ASALDI to acquire a computer by alerting them to an opportunity SENS had heard of. SENS helped ASALDI apply for FIS funding, although the funding did not come through. The Project's stress on improving the participation of women was credited with the fact the ASALDI board now has a higher percentage of women.

ASALDI would like to see three aspects of training and technical assistance stressed in an extension. First, they would like training in organic agriculture, since organically-grown foods have a higher value than those using agrochemicals. Second, they feel weak in the area of project development and writing, and they feel they could benefit best from direct TA one morning per month or as needed. Third, they would like to see a program for training of NGO membership in preparation for future service on the board, perhaps a system which the present board could provide for its membership.

3. ILOPANGO: Fundación Amigos del Lago de Ilopango

ILOPANGO was begun in 1993, with the first meeting coming in February and the Executive Director hired in August, even before the legal constitution of the foundation in November. The recent beginning of ILOPANGO made it a poor candidate for a subgrant when SENS began. Its focus is very clear: the recovery of El Salvador's largest and deepest body of water, Lake Ilopango, which has suffered from industrial pollution from its closeness to San Salvador as well as human waste pollution and severe damage to its watershed.

From its late start, ILOPANGO has advanced rapidly. While it has had just one paid employee since its inception, it is now hiring two more personnel to manage a FIAES-funded project. It has produced four bulletins or newsletters (10/93, 12/93, 6/94, and 12/94) and a yearly report on 1994 (2/95). It has developed both a strategic plan and a work plan for Lake Ilopango. It has established a technical and scientific cooperation agreement with SALVANATURA for assistance from SALVANATURA to ILOPANGO.

ILOPANGO is similar to SALVANATURA in that its members are mostly successful businessmen and industrialists, a membership which allowed it to hire its Executive Director so quickly. Its offices at present are located within the business offices of ILOPANGO's board president, Ernesto Freund, who also provides office services for ILOPANGO's activities. He would not be adverse to seeing the offices moved elsewhere, however.

ILOPANGO participated little in SENS activities. The Executive Director attended some of the monthly breakfast presentations but not the training activities which were open to the foundation. While the reason for its absence is not entirely clear, it may be that the Executive Director was simply unaware of just how this training might benefit ILOPANGO. The Executive Director and the President had no idea of what a logical framework was, for example, while ASALDI has already learned to benefit from it, although both ILOPANGO and ASALDI were not subgrantees but rather collaborators in the SENS Project.

Nonetheless, if ILOPANGO had achieved its present level of development two years earlier, it seems obvious that it would have been considered for a subgrant. While not national in scope, 10-15% of the Salvadoran population live in the Ilopango watershed, which includes part of three different departments. It is an energetic organization with 56 founding members and an aggressive membership and fund-raising strategy, and it boasts a flawless and attractive eight-minute video on ILOPANGO and Lake Ilopango.

ILOPANGO lacks several elements which the SENS project could have provided, such as tighter planning procedures, better project development, and networking with other NGOs, among others. The inclusion of ILOPANGO in the SENS project extension could provide it with much of what it is lacking.

4. ASPAGUA: Asociación Salvadoreña de Profesionales del Agua

ASPAGUA began after the 1986 earthquake as a group of professionals concerned about the situation of water in El Salvador, who gave talks and carried out educational events to raise the level of consciousness of the people of the country to the magnitude of the problems. In 1992, ASPAGUA evolved more toward environmental problems in general and began to look for ways to implement projects which would have some impact on the water problem. ASPAGUA has been invited by the National Center for Natural Resources (Centro Nacional de Recursos Naturales - CENREN) to administer a protected area, an activity which many of the true environmental NGOs are involved in.

At present, ASPAGUA has carried out or is carrying projects financed by FIS in environmental education, composting toilets, and improved cook stoves in 52 communities; by the Pan American Health Organization in environmental and health education with 400 school children in marginal areas; and by FIAES (with APRENDE, another NGO) for watershed management in Usulután-Chinameca including reforestation, soil conservation, gully prevention, and organic coffee growing. They have other projects pending with other funding sources.

ASPAGUA to date has operated out of a small office in the Engineers and Architects Professional Association building with volunteer labor and donated time and money. While the NGO has survived, it has not prospered economically. It has not learned how to justify overhead or operating expenses with donors, and most of the funds raised have been raised to cover a specific need and spent immediately.

In spite of time limitations, ASPAGUA has been an active participant in SENS Project activities open to collaborating NGOs, such as training and breakfast presentations, and ASPAGUA claims that this participation has aided the NGO making needed improvements. First, it made ASPAGUA reflect on what its overall strategy should be and to plan accordingly, and they learned how to use a logframe. Second, the NGO looked at its membership and found that only perhaps five of the original 42 members participated, and it has since increased its active membership. Third, ASPAGUA feels that this training has helped it bring about a much more active participation by its board, including training on how to run board meetings.

The SENS Project has been helpful to ASPAGUA in other ways as well. It has benefitted from technical training on watershed management, control of pesticides, and reforestation technology. SENS has also helped ASPAGUA by putting them in contact with possible funding agencies, such as CREA, CARE, FIAES, and the Canadian PRS program.

ASPAGUA could profit immensely from inclusion in the SENS subgrant program. SENS has been able to effect important changes in ASPAGUA just through the training process, and it would appear that its effects would be much greater if ASPAGUA were included in the subgrant process in the Project extension.

5. COMCORDE: Comité Coordinador para el Desarrollo Económico del Oriente

COMCORDE is a general development NGO and will work in any program designed to contribute to the well-being of the most needy people in the eastern third of El Salvador (that part of El Salvador east of the Lempa river). COMCORDE was begun in 1986 during the height of the civil war as a way to sustain economic development in the eastern part of the country centered around the city of San Miguel, at the same time the conflict was causing serious damage to the economy on a national level. COMCORDE provided credits, particularly agricultural credit, to those previously served by banks and government agencies, as well as training, and it had no problem with either side in the conflict.

COMCORDE grew very rapidly during this period, as it was virtually the only option open to those wishing to channel assistance to the community level. Since about 1991, however, COMCORDE has had an increasingly difficult time maintaining its high level of activity, as government and private agencies entered areas previously served only by COMCORDE and as donor entities provided progressively less for general operating expenses. COMCORDE staffers recently were forced to forego one-third of their salaries to cover expenses, and it presently owes about C.40,000, including three months rent.

In spite of the difficulty of driving two and a half hours from San Miguel to San Salvador, COMCORDE has participated fully in SENS project activities, and they feel they have benefitted considerably from the experience. They have learned to develop logframes and to appreciate their application. They have participated in the "root-trainer" reforestation technology, and they have both reforested themselves and sold plants for others to use in reforestation. They also mentioned as particularly interesting training on improved administrative procedures, solid waste disposal, and how to formulate and present projects. COMCORDE also mentioned the important role SENS and PADF have played in keeping them in contact with the situation in development and the environment.

However, COMCORDE did not mention training and technical assistance regarding fund-raising and has not taken advantage of it, in spite of the fact that this is precisely the area where COMCORDE needs strengthening. It would seem logical for the NGO to target its own local business and professional base, since it is the nearly the only local NGO with environmental programs and one with strong programs and background in other areas. They simply do not seem to know where to start and how to proceed.

The SENS project extension could provide very positive assistance to COMCORDE in the form of a small grant or subgrant with very specific terms. The grant would include a minimum of operating funds beginning at perhaps C.12,000 the first month and reduced by C.1000 each month. The subgrant would also include the salary for one year of a professional dedicated full-time to developing and implementing a fund-raising and campaign, plus a modest amount for implementing the campaign.

COMCORDE would also like to participate in training activities in some specific areas, including additional training in the logframe and in solid waste disposal. In addition, COMCORDE is interested in becoming a protected area administrator and would like training to prepare it to assume this role.

6. Other Collaborator NGOs: PROHUMES, PROCADES, ASAPROSAR

Time constraints did not permit the evaluation to contact the other collaborator NGOs directly. PROCADES and ASAPROSAR are NGOs which focus primarily on rural health and which participate in the AID-financed maternal-child health program, SEMI. The two NGOs plus a third, FUNDEMUN, coordinate their activities on a geographical basis, with ASAPROSAR in the west, PROCADES in the central area, and FUNDEMUN in the east.

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

A. Subgrant Selection Criteria

In order to be eligible for participation in the subgrant component of SENS, each NGO was required to meet and/or agree to certain criteria. These criteria were:

1. Have a Board of Directors open to members of the NGO and made up of a sufficient number of people, with representation by both genders and subject to periodic and systematic change.
2. Have Board members available for action and activities.
3. Allow the SENS project to examine the NGO's books at any time.
4. Develop a strategy for local level fund-raising to benefit the NGO.
5. Define a clear and specific mission as regards preserving natural resources.
6. Adopt policies and specific actions to reach proposed goals and objectives.
7. Express public support for the defense of natural resources.
8. Establish actions to raise public consciousness concerning the situation of natural resources in El Salvador.
9. Establish cooperative relations with other organizations.
10. Want to be a SENS project beneficiary and accept its support.
11. Have a national focus.

These criteria were meant to limit the project to NGOs which were either solely or at least heavily committed to natural resource protection; national in scope, or at least regional, but not purely local; willing to cooperate fully with the SENS project and allow PADF full access to its books; organized as an NGO with ample membership and rotating Board of Directors; and express publicly its commitment to natural resources. NGOs not selected were generally those

only peripherally involved in natural resources as one of many project areas, those unwilling to establish an open relationship with SENS, or those with a purely local focus.

Twenty-five NGOs participated in the initial orientation meeting, and 20 of these sent the project a letter expressing interest in participating. Once the NGOs had developed strategy statements, a self-selection process based on the above criteria took place in which over half of the NGOs determined that they did not fit the project profile for participation. Just nine NGOs made the short list, and then MES (see above) decided not to participate, leaving the target number of eight NGOs.

B. Planning: Strategic, Annual, Logframe

Most, if not all, of the NGOs in this Project had little experience in planning before SENS. A common commentary was that they had of course talked about what they wished to do, about what was wrong and needed attention, but they had never sat down and hammered out plans in any systematic way. The experience was not an easy one: most of the NGOs had few or no full-time personnel, and it was difficult for their Board members to find time to concentrate on the development of strategic plans.

In fact, the difficulty in developing plans was the primary cause for the staggered start-up of the NGOs as subgrant institutions. The subgrants began as follows, including total months in the SENS project as of July 1, 1995:

1.	AMAR:	1 Jul 93.	Months completed: 24
2.	CEPRODE:	15 Jul 93.	Months completed: 23.5
3.	CEDRO:	1 Aug 93.	Months completed: 23
4.	AUDUBON:	5 Nov 93.	Months completed: 12
	(Participation suspended. See above.)		
5.	FUTECMA:	30 Nov 93.	Months completed: 19
6.	SALVANATURA:	24 Feb 94.	Months completed: 16
7.	MONTECRISTO:	15 Apr 94.	Months completed: 14.5
8.	ASACMA:	15 Nov 94.	Months completed: 7.5

Nonetheless, since the development of a strategic plan was a prerequisite to beginning participation in the project, they were eventually completed. It should be noted in passing that both FUTECMA and SALVANATURA alone among the NGOs had sufficient paid staff and resources before the project began to have produced strategic plans on time, and begin their subgrants early, but they did not do so.

1. Strategic Plans

The strategic plans were developed using a format provided by the SENS project in the form of questions to be answered by each NGO. The questions were the following:

1. What are the principal causes and conditions of the deterioration of natural resources in El Salvador?
2. Which of these causes and conditions does your NGO work with?
3. What other support or service programs, in addition to your own, are administered by other entities in your area of action?
4. What are the goals of your NGO for the coming year?
5. What are the goals of your NGO for the next three years?
6. Why do you believe that your NGO can achieve these goals?
7. How do the goals of your NGO fit in with the national environmental strategy?
8. How does your NGO differ from others also working the environmental area?
9. How has your NGO changed during the last 12 months?
10. What is the mission of your NGO?

Included with the format were instructions elaborating on the kind of answers expected by SENS. The process was repeated after the first year as a prerequisite for a second year's funding by SENS, but the real reason for the exercise was to prod the NGOs into carrying out strategic planning on a regular basis.

Several NGOs commented favorably on the process, saying that they and their members had known that they were interested in improving the environment and the natural resources situation, but they had never actually reflected on their own position in the environmental arena, on who they were, what they wished to do, and how they wished to go about doing it. There is no guarantee that they will continue to do it in the future after their participation in SENS has ended, but at the very least they will know HOW to do it if they want to.

2. Annual Operating Plans

Each NGO was also required to produce an annual (or one-year) operating plan, and in this case also the NGOs were provided with a format of 10 questions to answer:

1. What projects will your NGO implement in the coming year?
2. To administer your project portfolio, what personnel are needed?
3. What is the recruitment and selection process for the personnel to be contracted?

4. What training will be provided for personnel during the year?
5. What improvements will be made in administrative systems during the year?
6. What internal information systems will be use during the year?
7. What agreements will be established with other institutions during the year?
8. What will be the organizational structure of the NGO?
9. What are the objectives to cover recurrent costs of the NGO?
10. What are the administrative budgetary objectives of the NGO?

As with the strategic plan format, SENS provided the NGOs with instructions on how to respond to the questions, including example charts for questions 9 and 10. The annual operating plan must also contain a logical framework, an activity chronology, and a detailed budget.

As with the strategic plan, the operating plan development forced NGOs to make some very specific decisions and statements. At the beginning, in many cases, the NGO would need to develop individual documents as a partial response to the questions. For example, if an NGO did not have a stated policy and procedure for recruiting and selecting personnel, or to provide training for personnel, it would have to develop one. Much of the SENS project has focused on assisting the NGOs in preparing such policies and procedures, as will be discussed below.

3. Logical Framework (logframe)

One element presented by the SENS project which was new to virtually all the NGOs in the planning process was the logframe, well known to USAID and utilized in one form or another in many development organizations, and required by many as a condition for funding. The logframe provides a means to think through a project (or program or annual workplan) which most NGOs lacked.

A key to evaluating the success of the logframe training provided by SENS is not among the subgrant NGOs, who in any case were required to carry it out, but among the collaborator NGOs who attended training sessions and applied the training only if they felt that it was worth while. Of the five collaborator NGOs, three of them (ASALDI, ASPAGUA, and COMCORDE) specifically mentioned the logframe training as having had a positive impact on their institutions. ASALDI now produces a logframe for every project, and they were glad they knew it when they presented a project for Canadian financing and found that a logframe was required. No one has complained about the logframe, with the possible exception of AUDUBON, where the present acting Executive Director had not attended the training sessions.

4. Analysis: Planning

The SENS project planning component was very successful. The project wisely provided a series of carefully explained frameworks for the NGOs to work with instead of simply expecting them to structure planning on their own, which would have been much less successful and more time consuming, and it probably would have turned the NGOs against the entire planning process. Plans were critiqued by SENS, not so much for the technical quality of their decisions but to make sure the NGOs dealt with critical issues, such as staffing, training, and reporting, and the NGOs were able to learn from their mistakes and correct them. It is also important that the planning process was not just a one-time activity but one which the NGOs were expected to do yearly.

As with the logframe, the success of training and practice with planning can be seen from its use by the collaborator NGOs, who were not required to carry it out. Even ILOPANGO, which had a notably lower participation than other NGOs interviewed for this evaluation, produced strategic and annual work plans, although they were not of as high a quality as those of the NGOs with greater participation in the training process.

C. Administrative Procedures

1. Making Policies and Procedures Explicit

One of the SENS project's goals was to improve administrative policies and procedures among the participating NGOs. Most of the NGOs lacked stated policies and procedures important to good administration, such as those involving personnel, purchasing, control of property, job descriptions, work rules, individual functions, accounting, travel, per diem, organization, and others. Policies were vague, and procedures were determined ad hoc and changed to fit conditions.

When the project began just two of the eight NGOs had personnel policies, two had property policies, and five had job descriptions. None had purchasing policies and procedures, nor any other type of administrative policies. SENS training was directed to correct these deficiencies.

By 1994, the situation had changed dramatically. Six of the eight had personnel policies, five of eight had purchasing policies, all eight had property control policies, all had detailed job descriptions, and four of the eight had developed other administrative procedures and policies as well. By 1994, among the collaborator NGOs, ASALDI added personnel and purchasing policies, ASPAGUA had added personnel policies, and COMCORDE had developed detailed job descriptions.

Table 1: Policies and Procedures at the NGOs

NGO	1992					1995				
	P	C	PC	JT	O	P	C	PC	JT	O
AMAR	-	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	X	-
ASACMA	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	-
MONTECRISTO	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-
CEDRO	X	-	-	-	-	X	X	X	X	-
CEPRODE	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	X
FUTECMA	-	-	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	X
SALVANATURA	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	X

P:Personnel. C:Purchasing. PC:Property control. JT:Job description. O:Others.

The focus of the SENS project on developing detailed administrative procedures for such small organizations has been questioned by some, especially when many had few projects or funds to manage. Most, however, recognize the importance of these procedures in impressing potential donors as to the seriousness of the organization and thus its worthiness to receive funds.

The SENS project is to be commended for focusing on these elements, regardless of how tedious their formulation may be, for another reason. Disputes of how to run the organization can arise at any time, and in the absence of explicit, agreed upon policies and procedures approved by the Board of Directors and implemented by the NGO, such disputes can prove fatal to an organization. El Salvador in general and the environmental sector in particular have been witness to numerous situations where a disagreement on how the NGO is to operate results in key people leaving to found a new organization, which produces two weak NGOs where one strong one might have been. Explicit administrative policies and procedures do not guarantee stability, but they do remove one threat to it.

2. Accounting

The SENS project work in developing sound accounting practices and procedures merits special commentary. SENS wisely determined that all subgrant NGOs should have computerized accounting, and it decided to work with one accounting software package, Quickbooks by Intuit, and to implement this with all of the NGOs.

The selection of Quickbooks was an excellent one, considering the quality of the package for small enterprise accounting, but it was not without its problems. In the beginning, a major problem was language, since Quickbooks and its accompanying manuals are all in English. This

problem was resolved through extensive training by SENS project staff, so that NGO accountants could learn the meaning of a few necessary vocabulary items, and of course the actual input of items by the NGOs was in Spanish.

A second problem occurred when SENS decided to switch from Quickbooks for MS-DOS to an improved version of the program for Windows. As with the use of English, there was a certain amount of grumbling from the NGOs, but the switch was made and operational at present in the seven NGOs with active subgrants.

The results have been dramatic and far outweigh any problems encountered. All of the NGOs are able to produce up to date financial statements, both overall and project-specific, at any time. They can expand the accounting system to include new projects; they can make projections, produce bank statements, and generally provide all the information needed by the Board of Directors and Executive Director to sensibly manage the NGO.

A key factor in the success of SENS with Quickbooks has been instant technical assistance by telephone. Several NGOs volunteered statements to the effect that all they needed to do was call the SENS accounting coordinator to resolve particular problems, often with both the NGO accountant and the SENS coordinator looking at the same Quickbooks screen. As anyone who has had problems with software knows, there is no better solution than instant assistance by phone with the software problem on the screen in front of you.

D. Staff Training

One focus of the SENS project was training on NGO administration and organizational matters, including planning, proposal writing, administration, and management. As Table 2 shows, strategic planning was the focus of two training events, logical frameworks and operational plans were the focus of four events, administration and management were dealt with in six events, purchasing and accounting in four events, and project development (including preparation of proposals) in four events, and in most cases, all subgrant NGOs and many of the collaborator NGOs were involved.

Another focus was technical. One of PADF's specialties is reforestation using "roottrainer" technology, where seedlings are produced in small, enclosed plastic containers using a small amount of specially prepared growing medium, and 46 hours of training was provided on this technology. Other technical training events for the NGOs as a group included a one-day event on developing management plans for protected areas and a one-day event on appropriate use of agricultural inputs in tree nurseries and plantations.

Training was provided in two ways: (1) training was conducted directly by the SENS project, and (2) training events were provided by other institutions with participation by SENS project NGOs. In the latter case, SENS NGOs either were permitted to identify specific training events

in which they wished to participate on an individual basis, or a single training slot was found by SENS and allotted to the NGO which project staff felt was best qualified to participate.

Table 3 shows that intensive technical training was often individual. CEPRODE received two training events, one on natural disaster prevention and mitigation and one on watershed rehabilitation. AMAR attended two events in its specialty: marine turtle management in Mexico and coastal zone management in Ecuador.

Analysis of training on membership and fundraising and on gender issues is treated below in the sections dealing with these aspects of the SENS project.

Table 2: Summary of Administration/Organization Training to 12/94

Name of event	Date	Hours	# participants	# of women	# of men	# board members	# of staff	# of NGOs
Strategic planning	1-93	4	30	11	19	19	11	17
Operations plans	3-93	8	28	14	14	15	13	8
Logical framework	4-93	8	27	12	15	21	6	8
Americas Initiative	4-93	4	50	19	31	37	13	20
Purchasing: computers	7-93	3	14	8	6	9	5	8
Purchasing: photocopiers	7-93	3	14	8	6	9	5	8
Purchasing: printers	7-93	3	14	8	6	9	5	8
Nominal groups	8-93	4	6	3	3	0	6	1
Accounting and subgrant management	9-93	8	17	10	7	6	11	11
Developing proposals for reforestation projects	9-93	16	23	5	18	3	20	11
Identifying and formulating participative forest projects	1- to 2-94	200	7	3	4	0	7	7
Project administration	2-94	8	4	3	1	1	3	4
Special grant projects	2-94	4	12	4	8	1	11	7
Internal administration	7-94	8	17	8	9	2	15	15
Planning and logical frameworks	7-94	16	28	13	15	9	19	15
Executive administration	8-94	8	31	14	17	6	25	14
Follow-up: logical framework	8-94	8	24	12	12	4	20	11
Strategic planning & logical frameworks	11-94	18	30	11	19	7	18	16
Management techniques	11-94	16	23	13	10	3	18	15
Techniques of modern administration	11-94	16	22	14	8	3	18	15

E. Board Training

Training NGO boards of directors is no simple task, and it cannot be done just once or even in a group. NGOs have different histories, peculiarities, and memberships, and each is at a different stage of development, and the SENS project was well aware of this fact from the materials used in board training. It is also not possible to give board training as such to board members only: the executive directors must be included as well, since they represent the most important interface between boards and administration.

Table 3: Summary of Training Events for Individual NGOs

Name of event	Partici- pant NGO	Date	Hours	Partici- pants	# of women	# of men
Executive program for NGOs	CEPRODE	8-93	104	1	1	0
Prevention/mitigation of natural disasters	CEPRODE	9-93	24	1	1	0
Watershed rehabilitation	CEPRODE	10-93	96	1	0	1
Regional planning for members of UICN	?	11-93	16	1	0	1
Finances for executives	?	4-94	24	1	0	1
Protected area management	?	5-94	160	1	0	1
Marine turtle management	AMAR	5 to 7-94	480	1	0	1
Coastal zone management	AMAR	4-94	96	1	0	1
Administration of time	FUTECMA	5-94	24	1	1	0
Management modernization	FUTECMA	7-94	24	1	1	0
Institutional strengthen- ing in Mesoamerica	?	7-94	56	1	0	1
Executive program for NGOs	?	6-94	80	1	1	0

It is also difficult to determine just what training should be limited to staff and what should also be open to board members, since the relative newness of the SENS NGOs for the most part means that board members often carry out tasks normally associated with staff. To the SENS project's credit, board members were included in nearly all of the 91 training events, as the above table demonstrates.

The question of development stages is extremely important for board training and one which the board members are not likely to be aware of. NGOs often begin as the initiative of one charismatic individual joined by a group of followers, although others may grow out of the common interest of a small group of friends. In the early stages, the NGO founders operate informally as members carry out functions of both board and staff, but there comes a point at which the NGO must become more formally organized to continue to grow.

The SENS project recognized that a key development stage is reached when the NGO develops paid staff and separates the work of the board from that of the staff, and it insisted that this separation be part of the "rules of the game" for subgrant NGOs. A charismatic founder, or the group of friends, had to decide whether they wished to be staff members or board members, and the simple experience of making this change was a first step in board training.

A second step was to identify other aspects of each NGOs developmental stage, and three workshops or seminars in 1994 provided NGO boards with ample material to assist them in understanding their own particular situation. A five-stage development scheme was presented which, while not totally applicable to every situation, contained important elements which every NGO and its board could relate to. These training sessions also presented material on how boards should relate to NGO staff and how to form and work in committees.

SENS has also carried out training session for some NGOs on an individual basis, such as with CEDRO, and the SENS project should focus on this type of training during the project extension, for several reasons. First, SENS can insist on the highest possible attendance by board members and relevant staff, since the training event is directed at that NGO alone. Second, the board and staff members will feel more relaxed and willing to speak frankly "in-house" than they do with members of other NGOs present and possibly judging their actions. Third, the NGO-specific training can focus on the particular development stage of the NGO and on a consideration of the problems found at this stage.

Board training should also contain elements designed to extend this training to NGO members who are not currently on the board. SENS should help the NGO develop its own training program for this purpose.

F. Fundraising and Membership

The importance of membership and fundraising for NGOs is obvious. A large and committed membership provides an NGO with both funds from dues and with material and moral support for its activities, and fundraising provides additional income for an NGO which is not tied to project implementation guidelines and which can be used to cover unforeseen expenses, to fund project development, and to act as a cushion against financial setbacks.

SENS project has had less success in this area than it did in improving NGO organization, administration, and project management. This was due, at least in part, to personnel problems. The first individual contract by PADF was not rehired after completing a year, due to poor performance. The position was then vacant for several months, until the present membership and fundraising coordinator was hired. Thus, the SENS project lost valuable time in implementing sound and productive membership and fundraising policies and procedures.

1. Pre-SENS Situation

It should be noted that most of the NGOs had no membership or fundraising policies or procedures. The exceptions were those NGOs with close ties to the business community, specifically SALVANATURA and FUTECSMA among the subgrant NGOs and ILOPANGO among the collaborator NGOs, which were able to raise considerable funds both from their membership and from fundraising events before the SENS project began.

Membership in other NGOs generally followed a pattern of an initial group of interested individuals, many of whom did not continue to participate in any way, followed by a trickling in of a few new members each year. Membership lists included all who had joined at any time, regardless of whether they still wished to participate. Dues were low in order to not limit membership, and they were collected in a haphazard way.

Fundraising was considered only when the NGO needed funds for a specific activity or piece of equipment, and once the needed funds were raised or the item acquired, fundraising was forgotten. NGOs had no membership or fundraising committees, nor personnel assigned to the task full-time or even half-time. As a result, the SENS project needed to start from scratch with most of the NGOs in both membership and fundraising.

Table 4 (provided by the SENS project) summarizes dues and fundraising activities of the SENS subgrant NGOs. Fundraising for AMAR includes the sale of bumper stickers, key rings, and other items. ASACMA's dues column includes "donations" which would be better included in fundraising. CEDRO and CEPRODE did not separate dues from other fundraising in 1994, the first year for which their are data. Two-thirds of CEPRODE's fundraising in 1995 came from training provided to other organizations. All amounts expressed in Colones (US\$ 1 = 8.7 Colones).

Table 4: Funds Raised Through Membership Dues and Special Events

NGO	1992		1993		1994		6/95	
	Members	Sp Events	Members	Sp Events	Members	Sp Events	Members	Sp Events
AMAR	--	--	--	--	2,360	56,074	1,300	21,900
ASACMA	500	200	800	500	3,000	1,000	19,439	1,130
CEDRO	--	--	--	--	148,557		21,675	10,031
CEPRODE	--	--	--	--	11,969		2,314	24,400
FUTECSMA	80,550	64,840	100,200	89,348	168,517	25,206	52,250	--
MONTECRISTO	20,160	31,120	6,475	12,695	34,915	9,745	23,132	16,032
SALVANATURA	1.1 mil	9,055	1.05 mil	16,996	737,877	709,100	228,318	10,735

2. SENS Strategy and Results

While there was an eight-hour membership training event for 11 NGOs in September, 1993, the development process did not really begin until July, 1994, with a second training event in which 15 NGOs were presented with a membership and fundraising manual with instructions on how to develop these areas. As with other SENS materials, the manual is based on a series of questions the NGO should respond to. Each question was followed by instructions for responding, plus a fictitious example. The questions are as follows:

1. How many members will the NGO have in the next few years?
2. Where will the membership be located geographically in the next 12 months?
3. What are the membership requirements of the NGO?
4. How is the committee responsible for membership and fundraising organized in the NGO?
5. What activities will the NGO carry out in the next 12 months to increase membership?
6. What support will NGO personnel provide to carry out the above activities?
7. What is the policy for collecting dues from the membership?
8. What activities will be carried out to keep members active and interested in the NGO?
9. What special events will the NGO carry out to increase membership and raise funds in the next 12 months?
10. What is the implementation timeline of the activities and events planned for the next 12 months?

Most of the NGOs had likely never even considered these questions before they were presented by the SENS project, much less discussed them. Nonetheless, all seven subgrant NGOs dutifully produced strategy documents on membership and fundraising.

An examination of three of these documents illustrates some of the problems involved. CEPRODE produced its membership and fundraising strategy document in October, 1994. By June, 1995, it hoped to increase its "founder" member (\$23/year) category by three, its active member (\$11/year) category by 20, and its contributing member (\$57+/year) category by three. The actual results were: no new founder or contributing members and just seven new active members.

In addition, it planned to acquire an additional \$5700 through two events: two concerts and a car or house raffle. Neither of these was carried out. The attitude of the Executive Director is that developing these fundraising activities is not worth the time, effort, and money they require, and she would prefer to survive on fees and overhead from project implementation.

CEDRO's membership and fundraising strategy document (March, 1995) is somewhat curious. On page three, the document states that the NGO cannot support itself through membership and has not considered membership as a potential source of funds, but it then states that there are 60 people in the United States and Canada who provide a considerable amount of funds yearly. However, nowhere in the document is there an "international contributor" category. Perhaps CEDRO is worried that it will not be able to raise funds and increase membership locally at all if people know how much is arriving from the North.

Nonetheless, SENS has data showing that CEDRO raised around C.150,000 (about US\$ 17,250) in funds in the last year, which ranks it third among the seven SENS NGOs with active subgrants (after SALVANATURA and FUTECSMA) in fundraising. In fact, the Executive Director Francisco Acosta and his wife, Barbara Dole, took their annual fundraising trip to the U.S. and Canada while this evaluation was in progress.

This points up a problem with the manual produced by the SENS project. There should be a question or questions which ask how much the NGO took in from membership last year and how much from fundraising special events, and how much it projects receiving for the coming year. If the Board of Directors determines that fundraising goals of C.50,000, the NGO should have a graphic showing progress towards that goal.

In the case of MONTECRISTO, the membership and fundraising strategy document produced by MONTECRISTO in October, 1994, either contains errors or is not realistic. There are just three membership categories listed, in spite of the fact that MONTECRISTO also collects a minimal membership fee from school groups.

Membership category	# of members	Yearly dues	Amount expected (Colones)
"Fundador"	24	20,000	480,000
"Contribuyente"	22	12,000	264,000
"Corporativo"	37	300	11,100
Totals:	83		755,100

MONTECRISTO, while it has been relatively successful at raising funds over the years, has not come close to the amount expected through dues collection. Fundraising and dues collection are on-going activities, although the results have been erratic. According to Table 4, based on by data supplied directly by MONTECRISTO, it did not come close to raising this amount of funds from members.

Leaving aside for the moment that the membership dues strategy appears extremely unrealistic and incomplete, and that some figures for funds raised were misreported, MONTECRISTO is typical of the SENS NGOs (excepting those connected to the business community, FUTECSA and SALVANATURA, and CEDRO) in raising funds. If the 6/95 figures are correct, it should be able to raise at least C.40,000 (about US\$4600) in 1995 and perhaps more, and the other NGOs will do about the same. This is generally not enough to pay the rent or one professional's salary. The NGOs must do better in the future.

3. Elements of a Suggested Future Strategy

The SENS NGOs need a strategy based on presentation, communications, marketing, and public relations. They need to present the NGO as an attractive entity to both possible members and potential donors. They need to communicate both the environmental message as well as their own role in improving the situation in El Salvador. They need to market the NGO as an attractive product with potential donors and sponsors, and they need good public relations with donors, members, other NGOs, the press, and international NGOs.

An important first step involves public presentations. The NGOs have had the opportunity to give presentations to their peers at monthly breakfasts hosted by the SENS project, and the presentations have been of almost uniformly poor quality. They need to take good pictures of their projects or environmental problems they are addressing for slide presentations. They need to arrange the slides in an attractive manner and then write out and memorize the accompanying text. Then they need to practice giving the presentation and the necessary voice modulation, pauses, and other elements which make the presentation snappy and attractive. The same is true if an overhead projector is used: use large type, put few items on each sheet, use graphics where possible, move quickly and smoothly from item to item. Again, the presentation needs to be presented for criticism, reworked, critiqued again, and redone until it is professional quality.

Second, professional quality materials of the right kind need to be developed. Each NGO should have at least one eight-minute video like that produced by ILOPANGO which shows both the beauty of El Salvador as well as its problems: deforestation, soil erosion, and so on. Every NGO managing a protected area should have a video of that area.

As regards both the videos and the presentations, both should include a pitch for support, funds, visitors, membership, or sponsorship. The person giving the presentation should know exactly what to say and when, depending on the group the presentation or video is directed to.

The NGOs need to focus on larger donors (or corporate sponsors), and they need to design creative ways of attracting corporate interest. One way is to allow the donor to present itself by name as the donor. The video might include a message from an oil company, protected area benches might include a "donated by" sign from a shoe company, the entrance to a tree nursery might include the logo of a fast-food chain, and so on.

The NGOs should first target those companies which hint at interest in the environment. During the last four weeks, the local newspapers have been full of advertisements from banks, restaurants, and others trying to attract customers using a "green" message. The NGOs could provide them with vehicles to express their interest--and use their expressions in their own advertising.

But the NGOs should systematically look for sponsors as well. They should look up the addresses of the 100 largest companies and send each a letter which seeks a donation or corporate sponsorship. It must provide something in return, such as being listed as a sponsor in the annual report. The NGOs should also phone each company, ask for the marketing director, and explore the possibility of the kind of advertising mentioned above if the donation is larger.

The NGOs must learn to use the press as well. The SENS project provided an eight-hour training event in June of 1994 for 16 NGOs, but the evaluation of the event by the NGOs was mixed, and in any case it was insufficient. A review of articles of an environmental nature collected by the SENS project over the last three years revealed that the NGO with the most frequent mention in the written press was MES, a collaborator NGO, obviously due to the high environmental profile and personal relationship with the press developed by MES founder, Alberto Hellenbuyk. Most other SENS NGOs are conspicuously absent from the pages of the press.

The NGOs need to invite individual journalists to a well-done show with the above mentioned video and slides. They need to consciously make friends with journalists and prepare them material and photographs for stories. The person in charge of press relations needs to have an opinion about everything that happens that is remotely related to the environment, not just the NGOs specialty, so that the journalist(s) will call for an opinion when there are forest fires, oil spills, and so on, and will mention the NGO by name.

The NGOs need to join the larger world of environmental NGOs, not just for project funds but also for the wide variety of assistance and knowledge they might acquire. The SENS project provided a good four-hour training event on how to access American foundations interested in environment, but the NGOs have not followed up on it. They should join as many as possible, which rarely costs more than US\$ 10 (and might be free, if they plead poverty), and they should ask to receive as much information as possible. The NGOs should ask the international NGOs to visit El Salvador, and they should provide information on their activities. Finally, they should ask the international NGOs for advice: what do you think of our materials? the video? the activities being carried out? who else do you think we should contact? how can we help ourselves and the environment in El Salvador?

Communications and public relations are not only for those outside the NGO: they need to be used inside the NGO as well. Fundraising campaigns can be fun and exciting. The NGO needs to set a goal and then develop a chart (like a thermometer) where progress in raising funds is measured each month. Another chart might measure or show graphically how different activities have been completed. The NGO needs to involve the membership and the participation, such as "member of the month" with a photo and a few lines about having brought in new members or participated in fundraising or whatever. Capable NGO members could borrow copies of the video for presentations to individuals, other NGOs, city governments in rural areas, cooperatives, unions, businessmen's groups, and schools, and each presentation could end with a pitch for funds, even if it is just one Colon.

The above paragraphs are intended to give an idea about what the SENS project should do with the NGOs during the next 16 months. The list of activities is not exhaustive, but it does provide a panorama of what is needed.

The SENS project does not at present have the personnel resources to assist the NGOs in carrying out these activities. The job would require a very highly motivated individual, locally hired, probably from either the journalism or marketing fields, preferably both, and have excellent public relations skills to be able to work with the NGOs. Experience in advertising would be a plus, since corporate sponsorship is effectively advertising. He or she should be able to critique and improve materials and to train one or two people from each NGO in giving presentations.

The SENS project should focus most heavily on those NGOs which most need assistance. If group training events are given, FUTECMA, SALVANATURA, CEDRO, and the collaborator NGOs can attend, but the individualized technical assistance should be limited to CEPRODE, AMAR, ASACMA, MONTECRISTO, and two new NGOs, ASPAGUA and MES.

These activities will require extra funding, and the Special Activity Grants should be directed toward assisting the NGOs with their videos, slides, mailings, and other expenses. The continued subgrants should expressly include the salary of the person in charge of fundraising, communications, public relations, and membership at the NGO.

G. Grantsmanship: FIAES, FONAES, Others

Nearly all NGOs, whether environmental or otherwise, are implementing agencies: their role in great part is to implement projects in local communities, funneling the grant funds made available by donor agencies interested in improving life for local people. A critical measure of the success of the SENS project is thus how well the project NGOs are functioning in securing funding grants.

1. International Environmental NGOs

While there are numerous funding sources available in El Salvador, there are four or five principal sources at present: international environmental NGOs, FIAES/FONAES, FIS, and the SENS project itself. As regards the various international environmental NGOs, ASACMA carried out two projects in 1994 with funding from Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). AMAR received funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Department. MONTECRISTO has an institutional strengthening grant from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). CEDRO has a project funded by New Forest and another with World Wildlife Fund (WWF), and it has also received funds from international church groups.

The NGOs participated in one training event (September, 1994) on how to contact the larger, best-funded international environmental NGOs, but no proposals have been sent in yet. Such a strategy should be emphasized during the extension.

2. FIAES and FONAES

The Environmental Fund for El Salvador (Fondo Ambiental para El Salvador - FONAES) was originally designed as an umbrella organization or clearing house for individual funds set up by donor nations, and theoretically, it should at present contain a Canadian fund and an U.S. fund, this latter known as the Americas Initiative fund (Fondo Iniciativa de las Américas para El Salvador - FIAES). In practice, FIAES has developed separately from FONAES, and the latter has come to represent only the Canadian fund, so for purposes of this evaluation, FIAES is the U.S. fund, and FONAES is the Canadian fund.

Both funds were established through loan-forgiveness by the respective governments, although FIAES funds represent just interest forgiveness on loans from the U.S. government, while the FONAES funds represent forgiveness of both loan principal and interest. However, given the size of U.S. investment in El Salvador compared to that of Canada, FIAES began with US\$ 41 million to disperse over 20 years, while FONAES has a total of C\$ eight million (about US\$ 5.6 million) to disperse over three years.

Each is administered somewhat differently. The FIAES advisory council has one representative (AID Director), two GOES representatives (one from the environmental secretariat, SEMA, and one named directly by the President of El Salvador), and four elected representatives from the NGO sector, which at this time includes one of the SENS project NGOs, CEPRODE. The FONAES council has one Canadian (named by Canadian Consul General in Guatemala), one from GOES (named by President of El Salvador), and one from the NGO sector.

Project selection by FIAES requires that an NGO applicant show relevant experience, have legal standing, or present a financial guarantee. There are two project sizes: (1) \$15,000 to \$100,000 and (2) over \$100,000, and projects should be directed to either (1) protecting what biodiversity remains in El Salvador or (2) reforestation with an emphasis on watersheds.

FONAES projects must not exceed C\$100,000. There is no strict direction as to what makes a project "environmental" as there is in FIAES. For example, FONAES is seriously considering a project submitted by ASAPROSAR, a SENS project collaborator NGO, to construct rain-water cisterns for potable water, which FIAES would not have funded.

Both FIAES and FONAES are directed for use by NGOs primarily, although FONAES will also consider projects submitted by town councils. Both funds provide excellent opportunities for the SENS NGOs to acquire funds for project implementation, and six of the seven current SENS NGOs have either planned or submitted projects to FIAES for financing, and three of the seven have projects either have either planned or submitted projects to FONAES.

3. FIS

The Social Investment Fund (Fondo de Inversión Social - FIS) is another funding source which SENS project NGOs have either already accessed (MONTECRISTO, CEDRO, CEPRODE, FUTECSA, COMCORDE, ASAPROSAR) or plan to access (AMAR, CEDRO, CEPRODE). With help from the SENS project, four proposals were submitted to FIS for the 1993 growing seasons, and two were funded. In 1994, 16 of 24 SENS project NGOs had funding by FIS. All of the projects mentioned were reforestation projects.

For 1995, 23 reforestation projects were approved, but on the basis of an evaluation of more than 100 FIS reforestation projects showing very poor survival rates, FIS decided not to fund reforestation projects in 1995, even though most of the SENS project NGOs had positive results from the project.

This represented a serious blow to the NGOs, since they had invested considerable time, effort, and funds in the preparation of the projects. There was no time to resubmit the projects to FIAES, and in any case many of the NGOs already had FIAES-funded projects, and FIAES has a policy of just one project per NGO at a time.

4. SENS Special Activity Grants

The SENS project also contains funds to fund small projects, called Special Activity Grants. While the Project Paper called for up to 20 such grants, just five projects have been carried using these funds, four reforestation nursery projects using roottrainer technology and one environmental education project by AMAR. As a result, some \$70,000 in unspent funds is still available for project financing.

There are two basic reasons why the Special Activity Grants were not used more heavily. In the first place, SENS wanted NGOs to concentrate on the funding sources which were not in-house, and which were sources they would need once the SENS project had ended. Thus, the project assisted the NGOs to prepare good, fundable projects for FIS and FIAES in particular. The second reason was that the SENS project wanted to reserve Special Grants for truly innovative projects involving methods and policies, not just routine (though necessary) reforestation and soil

conservation. Another reason might be that the Special Grants were available during the life of the project only to subgrant NGOs. For the extension, SENS should use these subgrants for public relations and fundraising activities, as stated above.

H. Participation of Women

This project has been a model for the participation of women, beginning with the NGO selection criteria, the first of which required that the board of directors be "open to members of the NGO...with representation by both genders." The inclusion of this selection criterion was a wake-up call for many NGOs, which moved rapidly to include women members on their boards, including collaborator NGOs: ASALDI specifically mentioned that participation in the SENS project had led to an increased number of women on its board.

Concerning the board, the SENS project target was a board with one-third women members, and most boards have achieved this balance, a notable exception being SALVANATURA with just two women on its 22-member board. Of the eight subgrant NGOs, including AUDUBON, four have women board presidents, and three of the eight Executive Directors are women as well.

Regarding training, the SENS project has supported participation in 91 training events with a total of 1187 participants, 549 women and 638 men. Women have attended international events, such as the agroforestry for women training in Costa Rica. SENS project NGOs are also working on the gender committee of the UICN and the National Committee for Gender and Sustainable Development (Comité Nacional de Género y Desarrollo Sostenible), this latter not started by SENS but where five of the seven participating NGOs are SENS project NGOs.

SENS also organized an important event, called Rural Women and Natural Resources with the participation of 70 women from 25 projects, many from non-SENS NGOs. Among the findings were that, while women participated in NGO activities, it was almost exclusively as implementors and almost never as decision-makers, and that the event participants had never really realized this fact until it came out in the event. As a result, the participants returned to their NGOs determined to effect changes in this situation.

Table 5: Summary of 1993-94 Gender Training Activities

Event name	Date of event	# hours	# participants	# of women	# of men	# B of Direc.	# of staff	# of NGOs
Women in agroforestry	6-93	32	1	1	0	0	1	1
Integrating gender in USAID projects	5-94	14	9	9	0	1	8	8
Radio orientation, women & health	6-94	96	2	2	0	0	2	1
Gender issues	6/8-94	21	4	4	0	1	3	4
Communication, gender & sustainable development	7-94	120	2	1	1	0	2	2

I. End of Project Status (EOPS)

The project logframe presents the following indicators to determine whether the project's purpose has been achieved.

1. Indicator 1: Environmental Leadership

Indicator 1 states: "6 to 8 NGOs demonstrate private sector environmental leadership and potential for long range institutional sustainability." Measuring environmental leadership is not easy. One measure is how the NGOs are perceived by their peers, and there is some evidence of leadership in this sense, since SENS NGOs representatives were twice elected by their peer NGOs to serve on the council governing FIAES.

Another measure is press reporting. Several SENS NGOs have appeared occasionally in news articles dealing with the environment, but of the three SENS project NGOs which have seem to have appeared most often, two of them were not subgrant NGOs but collaborators, MES and ILOPANGO, MES because its founder had a good personal relationship with the press and ILOPANGO because its businessman board president was able to arrange press coverage. The SENS NGOs need to improve their public relations and communications skills, as mentioned above, and when they do, this will be reflected in the press.

As regards institutional sustainability, all seven of the SENS project NGOs have demonstrated the potential for long range institutional capability but to varying degrees. It is difficult to make useful statements about the overall development of NGOs, since they do not necessarily take the same paths in their development, but it may be possible to classify them using limited criteria, such as financial self-sustainability, rank them, and then comment on each in the context of that ranking.

Accordingly, the following five-stage classification of the SENS project NGOs is presented, including both environmental and general development NGOs, as well as subgrant NGOs and collaborators (in parentheses).

The five stages are:

- I. Financially capable of self-sustainability right now. Need some help in transition from project dependence.
- II. Close to financial self-sustainability. Strong in either donor-funded project management or fundraising, but not both.

Table 6: NGO Development Stages

DEVELOPMENT STAGE	ENVIRONMENTAL NGOS	DEVELOPMENT NGOS
Stage I	SALVANATURA FUTECMA (ILOPANGO)	(ASALDI?) (ASAPROSAR?) (PROCADES?)
Stage II	CEDRO CEPRODE	(COMCORDE)
Stage III	AMAR MONTECRISTO ASACMA	
Stage IV	(MES) (ASPAGUA)	
Stage V	(AUDUBON) PROHUMES)	

- III. Developing well; capable but not yet secure in either project management or fundraising-membership. Need assistance in both areas, but should achieve financial self-sustainability if improvements are made.
- IV. Undeveloped; have not received subgrant or other assistance, but very promising. One year's subgrant assistance will move them up to III or even II. All of the Stage II and III environmental NGOs were in this position when the project began.
- V. Situation unclear. Invisible, misguided, or both.

It is worth discussing the role of the SENS project in producing the results in the above chart. Regarding Stage I, the SENS project probably had little to do with their financial self-sustainability. In the absence of the project, the environmental NGOs in Stage I would be the same: the project has not really affected their financial self-sustainability, mostly because they receive strong support from the Salvadoran moneyed class, especially SALVANATURA and ILOPANGO.

The effect of the project has been to strengthen the Stage I NGOs technically and to bring them into contact with their natural allies with a common cause if not a common social class. The

SENS project has had problems dealing with the Stage I NGOs, perhaps because of their perception as being already competent and with little to learn from the project. SALVANATURA entered the project late in spite of its ample ability and paid staff to enter along with the 'hungrier' NGOs. It has ignored technical training which it could have used well, such as roottrainers for tree nurseries.

ILOPANGO, a collaborator NGO which began really too late to have qualified for a subgrant, was such a peripheral participant in SENS project activities that neither the board president nor the Executive Director even knew what a logical framework was, much less how to use it, while other collaborator NGOs such as ASALDI and COMCORDE, which had to drive 2½ hours from San Miguel for training, learned it and have begun to use it. ILOPANGO might have benefitted from stronger participation in the SENS project, and to be fair, the project would have benefitted from a stronger ILOPANGO presence, since ILOPANGO independently produced an excellent video on the problems of Lake Ilopango.

There are two NGOs in Stage II, and the strength of one is the weakness of the other, and vice versa. CEPRODE is pointed out as the NGO with the best project administration as regards donor funds. Its excellent administration allows it to benefit fully from the fee or overhead funds it earns from each project. If one could guarantee that enough donors would always want to fund sufficient projects to provide for reasonable operating expenses, CEPRODE would not need to think about other kinds of fundraising, but this is not the case. Donors are becoming less generous with overhead (or fees for operating expenses), and they increasingly want to see all of their funds go into project implementation. CEPRODE must consider raising funds from alternative sources to cover some of its operating expenses or, ironically (given CEPRODE's name), as a cushion in case of a disaster.

CEDRO is just the opposite. As mentioned above, CEDRO has been able to raise funds with increasing success in the United States, although it has not yet achieved the funds commanded by SALVANATURA or ILOPANGO, and there is every reason to believe that CEDRO will continue to be successful in this area. But CEDRO has been less successful at raising funds locally, on the one hand, and it is not as careful at project administration as CEPRODE. CEDRO needs continued presence in the SENS project to shore up its weaknesses in project administration and in other areas, in order to be able to take full advantage of the funds it has been able to raise.

While this section focuses primarily on financial self-sustainability, it should be emphasized that both CEDRO and CEPRODE have benefitted greatly from the SENS project. They are better organized, they have broadened their horizons regarding finding projects and implementing them, their boards and the relation board-staff have improved, and they have grown as credible advocates for environmental issues in El Salvador. They are leaders of the NGOs which are not in Stage I, the NGOs which can be characterized as representing the ordinary people of El Salvador in a broad sense and not the elite.

The three NGOs in Stage III are in many ways similar to those in Stage II, just less successful at the moment. AMAR, from one viewpoint, should be the most successful, since it was the first

to join the SENS project and, as this is written, has completed 24 months in the project. And AMAR is successful, but the Executive Director for much of AMAR's participation in the project, Francisco Rivas, was ineffective, and AMAR did not take full advantage of what the project offered. SENS project personnel believe that with the change to Rubén Quintanilla, AMAR has advanced rapidly in the preceding six months.

ASACMA and MONTECRISTO have not had as lengthy a participation in the SENS project as the others. MONTECRISTO began April 15, 1994 (date agreement signed), and thus has completed 15 months at the time of writing. ASACMA's agreement dates from November 15, 1994, and has thus completed just eight months. It is believed that the shortened participation of these two NGOs is what contributes most to their being less financially strong than the NGOs in Stage II.

Regarding Stage IV, two NGOs which have participated in the SENS project as collaborators but which are essentially environmental NGOs are in Stage IV, which is essentially where all five of the environmental NGOs in Stages II and III were when the SENS project began. They have few projects and little money, and they are in dire need of institutional strengthening.

The SENS project has already improved these NGOs. In the case of MES, which was under consideration for a subgrant two years ago, one effect of the project has been to establish a strong board of directors, which at present is not basically run by one person as it was in the past but by a broad-based and much younger group, and six of its 12 members are women. It would now be in a much better position to take advantage of a subgrant than before. ASPAGUA, while still oriented strongly as an organization of professionals interested in resolving water problems, has broadened its base to include non-professionals. Both organizations are extremely poor. MES has its own offices, but the NGOs secretary also lives on the premises. ASPAGUA has only recently acquired a locale, sharing a house with another sometime SENS collaborator NGO, APRENDE.

Stage V includes NGOs where either little is known about their activities, or where they are in fact doing very little, or where their organizational structure is questionable, as is the case with AUDUBON.

The conclusion to be drawn from the above analysis is that the SENS project has strengthened the subgrant NGOs considerably, and that several of them are close to achieving real institutional and financial sustainability. However, in order to complete the task during the extension, they will require a continuance of subgrants. These should be somewhat smaller than the previous year's subgrants, and they should be arranged to taper off over the 16-month period. They will also require the refocus of the subgrant NGOs toward communications, public relations, and presentation in order to be able to raise additional funds and acquire new members.

2. Indicator 2: Perceived as Credible Advocates

Indicator 2 states: "NGOs perceived by the environmental community as credible advocates of one or more environmental issues by their impact on community consciousness and natural resources policy." Most of the SENS NGOs have not specialized on particular environmental issues, with the possible exception of AMAR with its focus on sea turtles and mangrove estuaries, where it is definitely recognized as a credible advocate. If there is one common theme among virtually all the NGOs, it is the need for reforestation, and all of the SENS NGOs are engaged in it.

Protected area management is a common theme with four or five of the NGOs. SALVANATURA is clearly identified by the public with the protection and management of El Imposible, AMAR with the sea turtle beach at Barra de Santiago, and to a lesser extent, FUTECSA with the Deininger park, where the agreement has yet to be finalized. ASACMA's identification with the San Marcelino protected area is well known by the local residents with whom ASACMA works in environmental education and improved cook stoves, but is not so well known by the general public.

What is less certain is the impact of the NGOs on the consciousness of the greater community of El Salvador and on natural resources policy. The NGOs need to learn better presentation skills and how to use the media before they will get the attention of the public and have an impact on community consciousness.

The SENS project and the NGOs should be to actively seek involvement in policy, and its point of departure should be the AID-financed PROMESA project. Through PROMESA, the NGOs should be able to access work carried out by the AID-financed regional project, RENARM, including the four-document participatory policy analysis package (known as the Green Book), which provide (1) a classification of Environmental and Natural Resources (E/NR) policies and their effects; (2) a methodology for creating and updating national E/NR policy inventories; (3) a description of how to structure a participatory policy dialogue process using the first two instruments, and (4) a workbook to familiarize readers with the policy analysis process and application of volumes I-III. The Green Book was to have become available in Spanish in October, 1994.

The process is the concept of policy as the result of competing interests rather than as analysis for decision makers. Providing environmental NGOs with a tool which enables them to assess the impact of E/NR policy on their collective and individual interests enables them to decide what those interests are, and whether and how to advocate them. In essence it helps to level the playing field, and thus provides a broader spectrum of informed opinion for decision makers. There is a strong demand for these products by environmental NGOs elsewhere in Central America.

Another area of advocacy involves environmental law. Elsewhere in Central America, also as part of RENARM, local legal NGOs (CEDARENA in Costa Rica, IDEADS in Guatemala) have

carried out analysis of the legal frameworks for protected areas. Other activities included the collection and analysis of laws, regulations, and policies related to forest fire control in Costa Rica and agricultural modernization in Honduras. The SENS NGOs need to establish relationships with local legal NGOs in el Salvador and work together in similar efforts.

3. Indicator 3: Linkages with Government and International Organizations

Indicator 3 states: "NGOs will have established linkages with the National Environmental Secretariat (SEMA), local NGOs, FIAES, appropriate government institutions, international environmental NGOs, and international support organizations." The SENS NGOs have in fact established such linkages.

Five of the seven NGOs have received financing from SEMA while the other two (FUTECMA and SALVANATURA) are registered with SEMA. Four of the NGOs are affiliated with the UICN, the international organization, while three are members of UNES, a Salvadoran federation (see below). Several of the NGOs have ties with WWF, and several have accessed international donors, such as the Netherlands, Japan, and Canada.

Many of the NGOs have established relationships with other parts of the government. CEPRODE has established close relationships with town governments and with the communities in which it works. FUTECMA has worked closely with the communities bordering the Deininger park in buffer zone activities, such as environmental education and multi-use tree production. AMAR has a close relationship with the town at Barra de Santiago, while SALVANATURA works closely with San Francisco Menéndez, which borders the El Imposible park. The NGOs which have agreements to manage protected areas, or which are negotiating such agreements, work closely with the national park service of the MAG or with the Salvadoran Tourism Institute, ISTU.

The NGOs could still improve in this area, particularly as regards relations with international NGOs. WWF is just one of many such NGOs, and closer relationships with this sector can only help the SENS NGOs.

4. Indicator 4: Linkages and Networking with Other Environmental NGOs

The SENS NGOs have enjoyed a close relationship with each other during their time in the project, and this has led them to work with each other and respect each other's work. It has even led them to consider forming a federation of environmental NGOs which to provide them with additional clout as spokespersons for environmental concerns, and the SENS project has assisted them in discussing the design of such a federation.

A federation may seem like a natural and logical development, but there are pitfalls, the most important of which is financing. It is difficult to see how the SENS NGOs will be able to finance another organization when, with a couple of exceptions, they cannot yet finance their own non-project activities. If the federation has no offices, staff, or telephone, and if it were simply

passed around among the NGOs on a yearly basis, it might work, but it would represent extra work for the NGO during the year in which it houses the federation, and it might cause jealousy among the members.

A good argument against a federation is that one already exists, UNES, and it has found itself in the position of implementing projects and thus competing with its members. Some NGOs see this as necessary for its survival and hope that UNES might one day be sufficiently solid to share projects with them. Others see UNES as simply another competitor for projects which is doing so unfairly.

Still, the overall effect of the SENS project has been positive in bringing the environmental NGOs together, at least the 16 subgrant and collaborator NGOs it works with. In addition to joint training events, the SENS project has held monthly breakfast meetings throughout the project for presentations either be one of the local NGOs or by other institutions, such as SEMA, FIAES, and the PROMESA project. It should continue to do this during the extension, especially to showcase the improved presentations by the NGOs developed as part of the extension.

J. Degree of Accomplishment of Project Purpose: Analysis

This section provides summary responses to section D.1. of the Statement of Work: "Degree of Accomplishment of Project Purpose and End-of-Project Status," which asks the evaluator to describe and analyze eight aspects of the project. The sub-sections of this section correspond to those eight aspects.

1. Analysis of Subgrant, Training and Technical Assistance Process

While the first aspect in D.1. asks for description and analysis of "the process used to provide training and technical assistance to the participating NGOs by PADF," it is felt that consideration in this regard should be expanded to include financial assistance, specifically subgrants provided to SENS project NGOs. Accordingly, this section will begin with a consideration of the subgrant process, including the subgrant selection criteria, before moving to a consideration of the process involved for training and technical assistance.

a. Subgrant process

The heart of the SENS Project is the subgrants. The subgrants provide funds to NGOs to purchase equipment and pay for basic office staff. The reasoning behind the subgrants was that institutional strengthening required start-up funds to purchase office equipment (computers, printers, fax machines) needed by the NGOs in setting up functioning administrative systems, and to pay salaries for a minimum office staff to manage the NGOs until they were able to build their institutional capacity to assume these salary and other recurrent costs themselves.

Two criticisms can be leveled at PADF regarding the subgrant process. First, PADF decided to provide equal subgrants to all subgrant NGOs, regardless of their financial strength. As stated

above, two SENS Project NGOs, SALVANATURA and FUTECCMA, did not need the subgrants, as they had the financial resources to pay for both equipment and recurrent costs from their fundraising efforts. The subgrants merely allowed them to move funds from administration into other areas, and they essentially played no important role in developing the NGOs' long range institutional sustainability. The only justification for the subgrants to these two institutions is that it brought them into contact with other environmental NGOs and helped make them part of the 'community' of environmental NGOs. This might better have been done through their participation in training and other events with the collaborator NGOs.

A second criticism is that PADF did not establish a strategy sooner to wean the NGOs from the subgrants. While it might have been obvious to the NGOs that SENS subgrants would not last forever and that USAID project do end eventually, it is difficult to keep this in mind when the same amount of subgrant funds routinely arrive every month. In addition, PADF may have erred in informing the NGOs that there would very likely be a project extension, which allowed the NGOs to relax and not worry about how they would eventually make up recurrent costs themselves.

This should be a lesson to USAID project planners of similar projects: operating grants for NGOs (or similar institutions) should routinely include a strategy for discontinuing that assistance. This strategy should include gradually reducing funds over time, as it is not sufficient to simply verbalize the end of supporting funds. This strategy has worked well before in USAID/El Salvador: a project implemented by the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), which provided support for recurrent costs for labor union federations, reduced this support over a year with positive results.

It can even be argued that subgrants can be potentially harmful to an NGO if they are not reduced as quickly as possible. Subgrants can establish an artificially high level of recurrent costs in an NGO and make the NGO feel as if it cannot survive without meeting these costs. Based on this reviewer's experience in a Guatemalan NGO similar to many of the Salvadoran SENS subgrant NGOs, the bare minimum of recurrent costs includes office rent, utilities, telephone/fax, a few office supplies, a secretary, and an administrator. If the computerized accounting system is in place (PADF's Quick Books is excellent), accounting can be accomplished through a part-time individual costing around \$50 per month.

PADF might have done better to analyze each NGO's situation, identify the minimum operating and recurrent cost situation of each, and then focus on helping each plan how to meet these costs. Other positions might initially be staffed by part-time or volunteer members of the NGO. If the NGO has a project funded which will pay for additional staff, that staff should understand that it will be paid only as long as project funds last. This strategy would have almost automatically placed an early emphasis on fundraising in the SENS project. If an NGO felt it to be essential to have a full-time staff biologist, for example, it would have been compelled to raise funds to pay for the biologist.

b. Subgrant criteria

Section III. A. above describes the subgrant selection criteria which NGOs were required to meet in order to be eligible. PADF had a vision of how a well-operated or well-operating NGO should be structured and operated. This included criteria concerning the following areas: Board of Directors, their relationship to membership, their relationship to staff, accounting, fund-raising, proposal preparation, and so on. This vision is not strictly environmental but can be applied to any type of NGO anywhere.

Two criteria are open to question, specifically those involving the Board of Directors and the one requiring a national focus. Concerning the Board of Directors, PADF assumes that an NGO must have enough members from which Board members are selected, that it will have representation by both genders, and be subject to periodic change. Implicit in this assumption is that the membership will contain numerous individuals capable of assuming NGO leadership as Board members. This forces the NGO to seek membership that fulfills this criterion. Membership made up of school children in Salvadoran schools living some distance from San Salvador does not fit the bill, and even the school teachers, who might use NGO materials in their classes and be 'members' of the NGO, would not be "available for NGO action and activities" outside their communities.

Also implicit in PADF's approach is that the Board-eligible membership be numerous enough to permit periodic and systematic change, thus excluding NGOs with small membership, regardless of how well prepared or how "available for NGO action and activities they were. There are functional NGOs in El Salvador and Guatemala made up of just four individuals, where all members are automatically members of the Board of Directors.

There is also the question about having separate Board presidents and Executive Directors, which was not one of the subgrant criteria but which was insisted upon by PADF during the project. The idea was not a bad one: the RENARM project's institutional strengthening component led several Board president-Executive Directors to happily turn over the extra burden to others so that they could concentrate on implementation.

But there might be cases where such an individual did not wish to do so. If an NGO had a sufficiently strong Board president acting as executive director who really wanted to continue in both posts, this insistence would probably lead to his or her relinquishing the Board president's post to an easily managed puppet, which is probably the case in at least one of the SENS subgrant NGOs.

The thrust of the above is that NGOs need not necessarily be organized in the same way to be able to achieve their ends. On the positive side of this same question, the fact that PADF presented its view of the ideal NGO and how it should be organized has undoubtedly provided food for thought among the project NGOs.

The second criterion open to question was requiring the SENS NGOs to have a national focus. One of the problems with this criterion is that it forced many NGOs with scarce resources to spread them out too thinly in order to meet the criterion. It was not sufficient to state that the NGO would acquire a national scope eventually, if given the chance. In fact, it might have been better to insist on the NGOs stating that they were interested and supported natural resources defense on a national level while acting in a more focused way on a region or on a particular site. This may have narrowed the base of NGOs for selection a subgrantees too much or on the basis of the wrong criterion.

In actual fact, this is what the SENS NGOs are doing in many cases. Most of SALVANATURA's resources go to El Imposible, most a AMAR's resources are focused on Barra de Santiago, FUTECSMA's resources are focused on Deininger, and so on. As the SENS NGOs become more competent and their present projects are more easily managed, most are willing and eager to take on new challenges. AMAR would like to work in other turtle and/or mangrove regions, for example.

But it would appear that it was mistake to require the 'national focus' as part of the selection criteria. It forced the NGOs to scramble to develop a varied portfolio when their energy could have been better focused on a single area or region.

c. Training and technical assistance

PADF had a well-developed and articulated strategy for this project which can be divided into three parts. The first involved providing uniform training and technical assistance to the NGOs oriented toward the PADF organizational model; the second involved a measure of flexibility and individualism in choosing additional training, primarily on technical or environmental themes; the third involved a project-wide use of root-trainers, a reforestation technique.

This process first assumed that all NGOs could profit by molding themselves as closely as possible to the PADF organizational model, and PADF therefore approached core training in a uniform manner. All NGOs were expected to participate in all the training, regardless of how they were currently operating. While this approach was probably necessary given the constraints of 'best use of training resources,' it did not take into account pre-project differences among the NGOs, especially concerning disposable and available resources.

This process had considerable positive effects in that the PADF core training contains elements which all the NGOs could benefit from to some degree, and many of the NGOs needed and took advantage of virtually all of the SENS training, including strategic planning, operations planning, logframes, purchasing, accounting, proposal writing, project administration, internal administration, executive administration, and management techniques (see Table 2).

As mentioned above, the process also provided for some individualized training, principally but not exclusively devoted to environmental themes. As Table 3 shows, the individualized training included coastal zone and marine turtle management for AMAR and prevention/mitigation of

natural disasters and watershed rehabilitation for CEPRODE, but it also included specialized administration and management training for FUTECSA.

The process for this individualized training involved learning about training opportunities by either PADF or the NGO, followed by discussion between PADF and the NGO concerning the need and appropriateness of the training. The NGOs had considerable freedom to make their own choices, which were then supported financially by the SENS project.

PADF pushed one area of technical training for all of the SENS NGOs: root-trainers for reforestation, emphasized due to the urgent need for reforestation in El Salvador. Root-trainers allow for the use of much less germination and tree nursery soil, which makes prepared seedlings much lighter to carry and thus reduces the effort involved in transporting seedlings by foot to distant sites. The technology also produces a stronger root and thus a higher survival rate, according to experimentation done in other countries with conditions similar to El Salvador.

Even granting the positive technical value of root-trainers, their introduction and emphasis as part of the training and technical assistance process leads one to question why this bit of technology was brought in by PADF and not some other. If PADF was determined to improve the technical level of reforestation, it might have sought a complete technological package instead of this one item. In favor of its introduction is the fact that reforestation is not only one of El Salvador's principal problems, but also because all of the SENS NGOs involved themselves in reforestation projects funded through FIAES or FIS.

The training process also included collaborator NGOs for those sessions which were not directly related to the subgrants. Collaborator NGOs did not, for example, receive training on the purchase of computers, printers, and photocopiers, since they did not receive funds for their purchase from the project. However, collaborator NGOs were included in strategic planning, the Americas Initiative, internal administration, logframes, executive administration and management, and modern administration techniques. In addition, the technical assistance process with the collaborator NGOs involved informing them of funding opportunities, non-project training opportunities, and events which might benefit them in some way.

2. Appropriateness of the Training and Technical Assistance

The training and technical assistance carried out was generally good and appropriate. It was good that all SENS NGOs learned to use the logframe, for example, to help them to think through their projects, since logframes are required by some funding agencies, such as FONAES and other Canadian agencies, as well as FIAES. Training and technical assistance in strategic and operations planning was appropriate in that it forced NGO Boards and staff to explicitly state their plans and perhaps more importantly, to agree among themselves concerning these plans. In the absence of this training, planning was carried out by just one or a few individuals without giving Board members and key staff the opportunity to understand the directions being taken by the NGO.

Board training, which in part involved learning about the overall growth and development process of NGOs, was appropriate in that it allowed each NGO to examine its own history and present situation and to anticipate future stages of development, including the problems which they might encounter. Also appropriate was training for NGOs in developing and making explicit administrative procedures, since this is an important step in NGO development which makes the NGO function less on a personal and more on an institutional basis.

For many (but not all) of the SENS subgrant NGOs, given their primitive understanding and previous experience, standardizing accounting procedures was an excellent move, as was training in purchasing. In some ways, however, the training and technical assistance in this area may not have been appropriate. The business-based NGOs (SALVANATURA and FUTECSMA) really did not need the new accounting methods, as they would have been able to rely on equally effective business-based accounting methods. In addition, while it was appropriate to provide training and technical assistance in the areas of fundraising, membership, and public relations, these areas were ineffective, as noted below.

The individual training events selected by the NGOs were in general appropriate. Particularly appropriate were the marine turtle and coastal zone management training events, which considerably raised AMAR's technical level in these areas. While the process of introducing root-trainers can be questioned, there seems little doubt that the training and technical assistance was appropriate, given the focus on reforestation in El Salvador and among the SENS NGOs.

As regards the collaborators, the training they received was appropriate in that it was training designed to benefit any NGO at virtually any stage of development. The logframe training assisted collaborator NGOs in receiving grants from funding institutions such as FIAES and FONAES which required logframes for project funding. Training in administration helped the collaborator NGOs in the same ways as it did the subgrant NGOs, such as in making administrative policies and procedures explicit.

3. Effectiveness of the Technical Assistance and Training

Much of the technical assistance and training were very effective. The planning and logframe training produced fairly good plans which the NGOs use in their daily work, complete with logframes. Concerning the latter, the NGOs have made considerable progress, although they also feel they need some follow-up training and/or technical assistance in their use. Board training has also been effective to this point, although further training for the Boards of individual NGOs will be necessary for take full advantage of the SENS project package. Effective Board training in the future will require the presence of the entire Board of an NGO instead of just a few members of all the NGOs.

Administrative procedures training has also been effective, and the various training events on project formulation and administration and general management techniques have particularly improved those NGOs with little previous business management culture. The effectiveness applies equally to the collaborator NGOs as it does to the subgrant NGOs.

The areas of fundraising, membership, and public relations were ineffective, due to some extent on PADF's personnel problems. Problems in providing training and assistance on membership may relate to the question of defining what the membership should be and what its role is in the NGO. For some NGOs, such as SALVANATURA, the membership might be seen as the NGO's prime financial support, while an NGO such as MONTECRISTO, oriented toward environmental education, teachers, and school children, may see its membership as having little to do with the financial support of the institution. The membership documents produced by the NGOs to date demonstrate that the training and technical assistance has not been effective.

The same can be said of NGO funding and fund-raising. The fact that CEPRODE is so resistant to the idea of fund-raising and so determined to survive on project overheads would appear to be due to ineffective training in this area. At least part of the problem in both increasing membership and raising funds is the poor presentation skills of the NGOs, in spite of PADF's efforts and the monthly breakfast opportunities for trying out presentations.

4. Degree of Achievement of Five Project Outputs

The five project outputs against which this project was to be evaluated are the following:

- 1) Operating Environmental NGO Planning Systems
- 2) Trained NGO Boards and Staff
- 3) Functioning Administrative Systems
- 4) Implemented Fundraising Strategies
- 5) Functioning Project NGO Funding

The first project output has been achieved. The NGOs have planning systems and have produced both strategic and operating plans of acceptable quality, and they are capable of continuing to do so.

The second project output has been partially achieved. NGO Board members have received training concerning the role of the Board in the context of NGO development stages and also how the Board should relate to and work with NGO staff. However, the Boards still need more intensive, individualized attention. Training of this type began in 1994 but has not been completed to a sufficient degree with all of the NGOs. As concerns staff training, the project output has been achieved. It should be noted that among the collaborator NGOs, the Board of MES appears to have benefitted most from the SENS project, as MES has been transformed from an operation revolving around one strong individual to an NGO with a dynamic and functioning Board.

The third output has been achieved. The NGOs have functioning administrative systems, including explicit policies and procedures and excellent accounting and financial management systems. This is perhaps the best area of the project. The collaborator NGOs have also benefitted, although not in the area of accounting, which has provided the most dramatic benefit to the subgrant NGOs. The extension could include this training, which would require the

purchase of computers and printers in some cases but which would not require additional personnel at PADF.

The fourth project output has not been achieved to any appreciable degree with most of the SENS NGOs. The three NGOs with fundraising strategies in place now are those which had them before the project began: SALVANATURA, FUTECSMA, and CEDRO. SALVANATURA is the most successful with local fundraising, followed by FUTECSMA, while CEDRO raises most of its funds in the United States and Canada. Of the other NGOs, MONTECRISTO has the highest gross receipts from fundraising, but its costs for fundraising nearly equal its income.

The fifth project output has been achieved. All of the SENS NGOs have functioning project funding. The SENS NGOs have been funded locally by FIAES, FONAES, and FIS, and there is every indication that they will continue to receive funds for projects from these sources. They have received some funding from international NGOs, but their grantsmanship in this area could be improved.

The SENS project appears to have focused on project grant funding as a more secure source of funding at the expense of fundraising. Some of the SENS NGOs, CEPRODE in particular, prefer to concentrate their efforts in this area with the feeling that if they do it well, they will not need to raise funds from other sources. This orientation is not necessarily bad, as project funding is crucial for the NGOs, but they should not ignore the benefits of raising funds from other sources.

5. Effectiveness of Participating NGOs As Lobbyists and Environmental Spokespersons

The SENS Project NGOs have achieved a moderate level of effectiveness as spokespersons and lobbyists on environmental issues. They have appeared in a few news articles, but the project itself seems to have had little to do with most of the press coverage, since two of the three NGOs mentioned most often are ILOPANGO, which participated only marginally as a SENS Project collaborator, and MES, which achieved its coverage because of its founder and former president. Improved use of press communications could improve this area.

The participating NGOs have occasionally proved to be capable lobbyists in particular cases. For example, a government agency, CENDEPESCA, which is obligated to protect marine and coastal resources, gave a license to a private firm to cut mangroves to an extent which would have harmed the Barra de Santiago protected area. AMAR, in conjunction with the local community, confronted CENDEPESCA authorities and managed to get the license cancelled. It is expected that other NGOs managing protected areas will be similarly effective in such circumstances.

There is little doubt that the SENS NGOs, as well as other environmental NGOs, could increase their effectiveness through joint actions, perhaps through a 'coordinating committee' mechanism or something similar through which they could communicate with the public of El Salvador through the press.

6. Level of Institutional and Financial Self-sustainability Achieved by Each NGO Subgrantee

The NGO subgrantees have achieved varying levels of institutional and financial self-sustainability. The two strongest NGOs in this regard are SALVANATURA and FUTECCMA. These two NGOs may well have been strengthened in various ways as SENS Project subgrantees, but there is every indication that they would have been financially self-sustainable even if there had been no project.

This raises the question as to whether these two NGOs should have been included in the project. Unfortunately, because the SENS Project subgrant criteria required both a national focus and that the NGO be exclusively environmental, there were only nine candidates (including SALVANATURA and FUTECCMA) for eight subgrantee slots. If the real purpose of the project was to increase the number of credible advocates for the environment, it might have been preferable to select either a local or regional environmental NGO or a promising 'generalist' NGO with environmental interests to strengthen through the subgrant process.

The other five subgrantees (not including AUDUBON) have been notably strengthened institutionally by the SENS project, but they have not achieved a comfortable level of financial self-sustainability. CEDRO and CEPRODE are close to financial self-sustainability, CEDRO through its ability to raise funds in the United States and Canada and CEPRODE through its careful administration of project funding. AMAR, MONTECRISTO, and ASACMA are developing well and are capable but not yet secure in either project management or fundraising. Both continue to need assistance in these areas but could achieve financial self-sustainability if improvements are made.

7. Degree to Which Gender Issues Were Appropriately Considered in Design and Implementation of Project Activities

The appropriate consideration of gender in this project was participation by women in the NGOs, both as Board members and staff, and gender issues were considered from the outset. The subgrant criteria included the requirement that women be represented on the Boards, so NGOs began thinking about gender even before the subgrants began, and by the project's end, four of the Board presidents were women, and women represented at least one-third of Board members in all but one NGO.

Turning to staff, all of the NGOs have substantial numbers of women on staff, and three of the original eight subgrantee NGO Executive Directors are women. In addition, women made up 46.3% of all trainees in training events, and women have attended international events, such as the agroforestry for women training in Costa Rica.

PADF also scheduled training events directed toward gender issues, such as the following:

Integrating gender in USAID projects

Radio orientation, women and health
Gender issues
Communication, gender, and sustainable development

8. Degree to Which SENS Contributes to Achievement of Mission Strategic Objective #5

The USAID/El Salvador Mission's Strategic Objective No. 5 (SO 5) is "improved environmental and natural resource management." The first of the three SO 5 indicators refers to non-coffee forest cover. This project has contributed significantly to the SO 5 with regard to this indicator in that all of the SENS NGOs have implemented reforestation projects.

The second indicator refers to environment and natural resource management strategy and workshops. This project has contributed to SO 5 here through the fact that each of the SENS NGOs has developed a natural resource management strategy as part of the planning process emphasized in the project. These strategies collectively represent a real contribution to the national environmental strategy effort.

The third SO 5 indicator is the degree of implementation of national natural resource management strategy recommendations, found in the government's statement of 1994 (Estrategia Nacional del Medio Ambiente [ENMA], SEMA, September, 1994).

The Strategy divides its discussion into sections on deforestation, soil erosion, watershed deterioration, marine/coastal resources deterioration, loss of biodiversity, contamination, and intersectoral questions, each section containing a sub-section on strategy recommendations. One strategy recommendation is the following:

Promote and orient the participation of environmental NGOs, the private sector and the community at large in actions directed toward the protection and sustainable use of marine and coastal resources.

Although this recommendation refers only to marine/coastal resources, it was probably an oversight that it was not contained in other sections as well. In any event, the SENS project contributes to the strict interpretation of this recommendation through AMAR's participation in the project and to a possible broader interpretation through the participation of the other SENS NGOs.

Other recommendations to which the SENS project contributes are the following:

- Sensitize people and influential and decision-making sectors of the importance of conserving forest resources.
- Develop a series of policies to promote the knowledge and sustainable use of biological resources and biodiversity.

- **Create the conditions and incentives for effective conservation carried out by local communities.**
- **Reinforce the technical and scientific capacity for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.**
- **Carry out actions to protect all the natural areas identified as genetic biodiversity banks.**
- **Promote adequate systems of land use planning.**
- **Create mechanisms to facilitate the intervention and active participation of all interested parties, especially communities and the local population, in the adoption of decisions on the use and organization of lands and natural resources.**
- **Promote education on sustainable development in the communities.**

IV. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

A. Improve Presentation/Communications by NGOs

Conclusion: With some exceptions (SALVANATURA, ILOPANGO, and to a less extent FUTECSMA and CEDRO), the SENS NGOs still lack the capability to present themselves to the public, which adversely affects them in several ways. They have difficulty attracting new members and non-project donations, especially from corporate sponsors. They have problems accessing the press and are thus less than capable spokespersons for environmental causes and policy. They have had only limited success in contacting and taking advantage of the international environmental NGOs.

Recommendation: During the 16-month extension, the SENS project should hire locally an expert to assist them in improving their presentation skills, including the production of quality materials, the development and implementation of corporate fundraising and press strategies, contacting the international environmental NGOs, and working with NGO membership in this improved presentation of the NGO message.

B. Extend Existing Subgrants

Conclusion: The SENS was informed that the project would be extended, and communicated this information to the NGOs. The subgrant NGOs have thus not prepared for the end of this project, because they were led to believe that they would continue to receive subgrants, although perhaps at a lower level. They would be severely affected by a sudden termination of the subgrants. In addition, with some exceptions, they have not been able to raise enough funds to cover more than a fraction of the subgrant funds.

Recommendation: All subgrants should be continued for at least four months until the end of 1995.

C. Scale Subgrants to Real Needs of the NGO

Conclusion: SALVANATURA and FUTECMA are close to achieving financial self-sustainability, if they have not already done so. If advised with enough lead time, they should not need subgrants after 1995. CEDRO, CEPRODE, AMAR, ASACMA, and MONTECRISTO need time to develop their fundraising capabilities.

Recommendation: The SALVANATURA and FUTECMA subgrants should be terminated at the end of 1995. The other NGOs should have their subgrants extended through the end of the extension.

D. Two New NGO Subgrants for MES and ASPAGUA

Conclusion: MES and ASPAGUA are presently collaborator NGOs which have improved through participation in the SENS training sessions, and both could play an important role if they were strengthened. MES has a high profile through its founder and has been mentioned in the press more often than the SENS subgrant NGOs. ASPAGUA focuses on water resources, perhaps El Salvador's greatest environmental problem. Both would benefit greatly from just 16 months in the SENS project as subgrant NGOs.

Recommendation: MES and ASPAGUA should receive subgrants in the SENS project extension. These subgrants should be slightly higher than those received by the others, since they would include the purchase of computers, printers, photocopiers, software, and office equipment.

E. Reduce Amount of Subgrants Monthly or Quarterly

Conclusion: It is difficult to prepare for the end of the subgrant without having it demonstrated. Providing the NGOs with the same amount each month and then abruptly cutting off the funds does not help the NGOs prepare, financially and mentally, for the end of the subgrants. On the other hand, reducing the amount of funds each month has been shown in other AID-financed projects, such as AIFLD, to stimulate subgrantees to work at acquiring funds from other sources.

Recommendation: The SENS project should determine how to reduce the amount the NGOs actually receive each month or each quarter, so that they become accustomed to not relying on the subgrants for their existence.

F. Training Areas during Extension: Technical

Conclusion: SENS project technical training has been generally good. Two areas were not treated during the project, organic agriculture and protected area management, and NGOs have requested training in these areas.

Recommendation: The project should provide training events in organic agriculture and protected area management, and they should try to access assistance in the latter area from PROMESA.

G. Training Areas during Extension: Project Development

Conclusion: The NGOs feel weak in the area of project development and writing, an opinion shared by SENS project staff, and the NGOs could benefit best from direct, individualized technical assistance perhaps one morning per month or as needed.

Recommendation: The project should provide individualized technical assistance to NGOs as needed in project development, logframes, and writing.

H. Training Areas during Extension: Boards of Directors

Conclusion: While SENS NGO boards of directors have come a long way since the project began, they continue to require attention. The subtle (and not so subtle) differences among the NGOs regarding their respective development stages means that individualized training events for one NGOs entire board of directors will have far greater impact than several events with just one or two board members from each NGO attending. The project has already carried out some of this type of training.

Recommendation: The project should work systematically and individually with the boards of directors of the NGOs to help them to understand their present status or stage, to develop procedures each NGO is comfortable with, and to assist them in preparing their own programs to educate their membership for future service on the board.

I. Environmental NGO Federation

Conclusion: Joint actions and statements by the SENS and other environmental NGOs can carry considerable weight, such as through paid advertisements in the press signed by all of the NGOs. Creating a formal federation to do so, however, may represent an onerous burden at this time for the NGOs, especially if the federation is conceived as having an office, coordinator, secretary, and so on.

Recommendation: Instead of a formal federation, the project should propose a more informal "coordinating committee" of environmental NGOs requiring funds only for stationary, which meets monthly or as needed for discussions on possible joint actions. The meetings might be held at the SENS project or rotate among the NGOs. If the coordinating committee functions well, it might well evolve some day into a federation, but this should not be pushed at this time.

J. NGOs as Policy Advocates

Conclusion: The SENS NGOs have not yet acquired a high profile as advocates concerning environmental policy. This is in part because they have not developed a mature and well-reasoned policy stance and in part because they have not learned how to use the press.

Recommendation: The SENS project should acquire the "Green Book" documents developed by the RENARM project and use them with the NGOs, perhaps in coordination with PROMESA. The project should also assist the NGOs in developing closer relationships with the press.

K. Relations with International Environmental NGOs

Conclusion: In spite of a good training event by SENS and the existence of a few relationships between SENS NGOs and international environmental NGOs, the local NGOs have not yet taken advantage of the potential in such relationships.

Recommendation: The SENS project should repeat the international NGO event and/or work with each NGO individually to establish contacts with a wide variety of international environmental NGOs with which they can exchange materials and explore the possible of more formal relationships, some possibly involving funds for the local NGO.

L. Involve NGO Membership in Fundraising

Conclusion: Most individual NGO members have little time to spare from the daily work routines and cannot be expected to devote considerable time to fundraising. In addition, they will feel little stimulus to do so if there is no recognition of their efforts.

Recommendation: The NGOs need to set realistic goals and then develop thermometer charts where progress in raising funds is measured each month. Another chart might show graphically how different activities have been completed. The NGOs need to involve the membership and the participation, such as "member of the month" with a photo and a few lines about having brought in new members or participated in fundraising. NGO members could borrow the video for presentations to individuals, other NGOs, town councils in rural areas, cooperatives, unions,

businessmen's groups, and schools, and each presentation should end with a pitch for funds, even if it is just one Colon.

M. Be Explicit about Sources of Funds

Conclusion: The SENS project did not emphasize the importance of stating explicitly where funds come from, and the NGOs have mixed dues, individual donations, small fees from providing training, and other sources, although project overhead funds have been separated. This has produced a situation in which the NGOs have raised funds but are not aware exactly where the funds come from.

Recommendation: The SENS project should assist the NGOs in developing systems for separating funds raised from different sources, especially dues, donations, sponsors, and minor (i.e. not project implementation) sources. This will be particularly important in light of the recommended push to raise funds from the private sector.

N. Special Activity Grants for Improved Presentation

Conclusion: The NGOs, with few exceptions, have produced very poor presentations of what the environmental problems are, how the NGO is attacking the problem, the resources they currently have, and the resources they require to better do the job. Presentation involves the development of audiovisuals, such as videos, slide shows, and overhead projector transparencies, plus well-executed delivery of the presentation.

Recommendation: The project extension should use the Special Activity Grants exclusively to assist the NGOs in developing quality presentations. All presentations should include a pitch for support of the NGO.

O. Seek Out Corporate Donors and Sponsorship

Conclusion: The two most financially viable subgrant NGOs, SALVANATURA and FUTECSMA, and the most viable collaborator NGO, ILOPANGO, owe their success to their close ties to the business community from which they have received considerable funds, both in direct donations or through fundraising activities. It is next to impossible that these three NGOs have exhausted the possibilities of the business sector, but the other SENS NGOs have not taken advantage of this sector. The fact that an increasing number of companies advertise using environmental themes would seem to indicate that considerable funds could be raised from the corporate sector.

Recommendation: The NGOs need to systematically target business or corporate donors and sponsors. They need to develop ways in which corporate names and logos can be used on signs, on sponsoring materials such as videos, on visible materials in protected areas or tree nurseries. They then need to phone and visit marketing directors in every company and explore the possibility of this kind of advertising.

P. Lessons Learned

1. Reducing Operating Grants: the Weaning Process

The SENS NGOs, while they were informed that the project would eventually end and that operating grants would eventually end, did not begin planning soon enough for this eventuality. If the project were to end at its original completion date, the NGOs would have real difficulty in adjusting to the lack of operational subsidies in the form of subgrants.

The lesson for USAID project planners is: operating grants for NGOs (or similar institutions) should routinely include a strategy for discontinuing that assistance. This strategy should include gradually reducing funds over time, as it is not sufficient to simply verbalize the end of supporting funds.

2. Flexibility in NGO Selection Criteria

The NGO subgrant criteria are constructive, and this project would ideally like to work with NGOs which met these criteria. But it is often difficult for project designers to know exactly how many NGOs exist that will meet ideal criteria. In the case of this project, there seemed to exist an perfect fit: once MES dropped out, there were exactly eight NGO candidates which met the criteria for the eight slots the project had planned for.

However, since the project was intended to strengthen NGOs which had a vital need for this strengthening, there should have been one additional criterion: the NGO must really need the support the SENS project represents. This would have reduced the number by two, as neither FUTECSMA nor SALVANATURA really needed the project to survive and prosper.

If this had been done, and just six NGOs ended up fitting the stricter criteria, USAID might well have relaxed other of the criteria to include additional NGOs. NGOs with other than environmental programs might have been accepted, or NGOs with a more local instead of national focus. In any case, these NGOs would probably have benefitted more than FUTECSMA and SALVANATURA, which could easily have participated as collaborator NGOs, attending training and participating in other events.

The lesson for USAID project planners is the following: when determining criteria for the inclusion of some local entities and the exclusion of others, care must be taken to understand the implications of each of the criteria selected.

3. Collaborators NGOs in the SENS Project

The collaborator NGOs benefitted significantly from this project, although they were not originally expected to participate in it. Although they did not receive subgrants, the training and technical assistance and participation in project events helped them in various ways, from better Board composition and participation by women to project development and logframes. The collaborator NGOs received these substantial benefits even without subgrants for equipment purchases and operating expenses.

Other projects, notably the regional RENARM project, have also shown that NGOs can be significantly strengthened without receiving subgrants. RENARM achieved the strengthening of three Belize NGOs, two Guatemalan NGOs, two Honduran NGOs, and one Costa Rican NGO through the efforts of just one individual visiting them, analyzing their structure and organization, and helping them implement changes. In Honduras, a third NGO refused to participate in this institutional strengthening process, but later, once it had seen the improvement achieved through this process in the other two, independently sought similar institutional strengthening services.

The lesson for USAID project planners is that operations subgrants are not the only mechanism possible for institutional strengthening, and very likely are not the best one. Organizational analysis and structural redesign, administrative training, Board training, training in project design and logframes, and the computerized accounting modernization can contribute very positively to an NGO without an accompanying subgrant. In El Salvador, USAID might consider continuing with this non-subgrant institutional strengthening after the SENS project has finished through either the PROMESA project or through FIAES.

4. Membership and Fundraising as Separate Issues for NGOs

An NGO can raise funds through its membership, especially if the bulk of the membership is financially well-off. SALVANATURA, FUTECSA, and ILOPANGO both raise much of their funds in this way. But membership is only one type of fundraising or source of funds. The SENS NGOs also "raise funds" through project implementation, either from overhead or from the funding agency paying for personnel salaries during the project. In addition, funds can be raised through special events, contributions from sponsors, or one-time donations.

Some memberships, in fact most of those among the SENS project NGOs, are poor sources of fundraising. MONTECRISTO targets school children as "members," even though they may pay dues of less than a dollar a year, and much of that dollar goes to pay for a membership card.

The lesson for USAID project planners working to strengthen NGOs is that they need to consider all sources when looking at fundraising. If the NGO membership cannot provide adequate funds, fundraising must consider other sources and not attempt to solve its recurrent cost problems through increased membership.

ANNEXES

- 1. Evaluation Scope of Work**
- 2. Current Project Logframe**
- 3. Documents Consulted**
- 4. Individuals/Agencies Contacted**
- 5. Section H: Evaluation Abstract**
- 6. Section J: Summary of Evaluation Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

EVALUATION SCOPE OF WORK

Annex 1: Evaluation Scope of Work

ARTICLE I - STATEMENT OF WORKA. ACTIVITY TO BE EVALUATED

Title: Salvadoran Environmental NGO
Strengthening Project

Project Number: 519-0400

LOP Funding: \$2,000,000 (DA Grant Funds)
\$155,000 PADF Counterpart
\$1,033,000 NGOs Counterpart

LOP Dates: August 8, 1992 - Authorization Date
August 31, 1995 - Project Activity
Completion Date

Cooperative Agreement: No. 519-0400-A-00-2144-00
Implementing Institution: Pan American Development Foundation
(PADF)

B. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

This end of project evaluation has two purposes. The first purpose is to evaluate the performance of the SENS Project, including the benefits and effects that the project has had in strengthening a core group of Salvadoran Environmental Non-Government Organizations (NGOs). The evaluation will document the experience gained and lessons learned from the implementation of this project. It will assess whether the project has reached its purpose and carried out its objectives, whether it has reached its "End of Project Status." The evaluation will assess the participating NGOs' progress in developing their mission statements and objectives, the effectiveness of each of the eight subgrantees' administrations, and their technical staffs, and the ability of the participating institutions to raise diversified funding sources that contribute to the viability of each NGO.

The second purpose of this evaluation is to present to the USAID/El Salvador clear guidelines and possible project activities for a proposed sixteen month extension to the SENS Project. The evaluation will present what would be new activities to be included in the extension without fundamentally changing the purpose of the original project.

C. BACKGROUNDI. Project Goal and Purpose

The Goal of the SENS Project is to protect and promote sustainable use of El Salvador's natural resources. The Project Purpose is to strengthen Salvadoran Environmental NGOs to be self-

sustaining advocates for natural resources management. By the end of the project, Salvadoran environmental organizations will have operating planning systems, trained boards and staff, functioning administrative systems, active fundraising strategies, and demonstrable technical expertise in one or more areas of specialization.

The three year project is being implemented by the Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) under a Cooperative Agreement with the USAID Mission in El Salvador. Over the past thirty six months, PADF has been carrying institutional strengthening for eight Salvadoran Environmental NGOs. Up to twenty additional NGOs have participated in training workshops and seminars in administrative, as well as technical topics. The project has also assisted NGOs in developing funding proposals for other donor agencies.

The eight NGOs selected for institutional training are receiving annual operational support (approximately \$50,000 per NGO per year for two years), as well as intensive technical assistance. The Project also provides Small Activities Grants of \$3,000-\$15,000 to enable NGOs to undertake activities in environmental policy, education, or activities in soil, water and forestry management.

II End of Project Status

As stated in the Project Paper, the EOPs to be attained are the following:

1. Up to eight Environmental NGOs will have a track record demonstrating their private sector environmental leadership and the potential for their long range institutional sustainability.
2. The participating NGOs will be perceived by the environmental community as credible advocates of one or more environmental issues as presented by their impact on community consciousness raising and natural resources policy.
3. The Participating Environmental NGOs will have established linkages with the National Environmental Secretariat (SEMA), local NGOs, FOCAM (now called FIAES), appropriate government institutions, international environmental NGOs, and international support organizations.
4. The Environmental NGOs will have established a network of linkages among themselves and other national NGOs working in natural resources.

III. Project Components and Outputs

The SENS project is organized into two components and five outputs as discussed below.

1. Components

a. Technical Assistance and Training

The Technical Assistance and Training Component is responsible for all project outputs except evaluations, and is the principal contact point between the NGOs and the Project. Under this component all training materials are developed and all training events are scheduled and conducted.

b. Grants Management and Administration

The Grants Management and Administration Component monitors the finances of the Operational Strengthening Subgrants to the eight Environmental NGOs, and provides management oversight of the Small Grants Activity.

2. Project Outputs

Project Outputs against which this project should be evaluated are the following:

- Operating Environmental NGO Planning Systems
- Trained NGO Boards and Staff
- Functioning Administrative Systems
- Implemented Fundraising Strategies
- Functioning Project NGO Funding

D. STATEMENT OF WORK

This evaluation will examine the validity of the project strategy for accomplishing the project's purpose as well as the planned project outputs listed in Section III. The evaluation shall focus on whether the project is achieving its overall purpose. The evaluation shall also describe and analyze the linkages of this project, and its contribution, to the achievement of the Mission's Strategic Objective #5: Improved Environmental and Natural Resources Management. The evaluation will also assess and define the areas in which environmental NGOs will require additional strengthening, and provide clear guidelines for additional training and technical assistance to consolidate the NGO strengthening process. Activities defined for the sixteen month extension shall be responsive to the institutional development of FIAES and FIAES funded NGOs, and to the NGO support activities of the Environmental Protection Project (519-0385).

The Contractor will review all project documents and files, will meet with the eight subgrantee NGOs, and with a representative sample of other participating NGOs (in their offices and their field projects), interview all SENS project staff, SEMA key

personnel, the National Coordinator of the Environmental Protection Project, the Chief of Party of the technical assistance team of the Environmental Protection Project, the Executive Director of FIAES, the Director of the Environmental Unit in FIS, and others, taking into account the following questions and topics:

1. Degree of Accomplishment of Project Purpose and End-of-Project Status.

The Contractor will describe and analyze:

- a. The process used to provide training and technical assistance to the participating NGOs by PADP;
- b. the appropriateness of the training and technical assistance provided, given the differences in development stages of the participating NGOs;
- c. the effectiveness of the technical assistance and training provided;
- d. the degree of achievement of each of the five project outputs;
- e. the effectiveness of the participating NGOs as lobbyists and spokespersons for natural resources and environmental issues;
- f. the level of institutional and financial self-sustainability that each subgrantee NGO has achieved;
- g. the degree to which gender issues were appropriately considered in the design and implementation of project activities; and
- h. the degree to which this project contributes to the achievement of the Mission's Strategic Objective #5.

2. Assessment of the the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Participating NGOs.

The Contractor will describe and analyze in detail the institutional development phase of each of the eight subgrantee NGOs, and in general describe the development status of the other participating NGOs. The Contractor will analyze the probability of achieving financial self-sustainability for the participating NGOs given an extension of project support for 16 months. The Contractor will identify areas of additional training and assistance based on an analysis of the NGOs capabilities, in relation to further contributing to the achievement of the SO #5, and providing support to the other activities within that Strategic Objective (FIAES and PROMESA). The Contractor shall assess the need for additional operational support subgrants and define the type of activities these subgrants might finance (i.e. equipment, technical training, etc). The result of this portion of the evaluation is to provide USAID/El Salvador with clear guidelines for possible activities to be undertaken in the project extension period.

E. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

As mentioned in Paragraph C, Statement of Work, the Contractor will review all pertinent documentation, provided in advance by USAID/EL SALVADOR and PADF, carry out interviews with key individuals in the participating NGOs, SENS personnel, USAID/El Salvador, SEMA, the Environmental Protection Project, and others, and visit the offices and projects of the participating NGOs. Interviews, and field office visits will be arranged by USAID/EL Salvador when the Contractor arrives in country.

ARTICLE II - REPORTS

The Contractor will submit a draft of the evaluation report to USAID/El Salvador at the end of the third week, and a final report prior to leaving the country. The report will be prepared in English and in Spanish, and three (3) copies in each language will be presented to USAID/El Salvador. The Contractor will contract translating services in country, if needed.

The format of the report shall be as follows:

1. Table of Contents
2. Executive Summary: Name of the Mission, objectives of the project, purpose of the evaluation and methodology used, findings and conclusions, recommendations for the project extension, and lessons learned about the design and implementation of this project.
3. Body of the Report: Discuss the purpose and issues of the evaluation, the economic, political and social context of the project, the evaluation method used, findings concerning the issues and questions raised in Section D, Statement of Work, conclusions drawn from the findings, recommendations based on the evaluation findings and conclusions, stated as proposed activities for the 16 month extension. The report should be no more than 30-40 pages. Any additional discussion of issues should be included as appendices.
4. Appendices should include as a minimum a copy of the statement of work, the current project logical framework, a list of documents consulted, individuals and agencies contacted, and Sections H: Evaluation Abstract, and J: Summary of Evaluation Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations of the AID Evaluation Summary Form (which will be provided to the contractor).

ARTICLE III - TERM OF PERFORMANCE

- A. The effective date of this Delivery Order is June 21, 1995 and the estimated completion date is July 28, 1995.

CURRENT PROJECT LOGFRAME

Annex 2: Current Project Logframe

INSTITUTO NACIONAL ESTRENOANDO
EL SALVADOR... EN ENVIRONMENTAL NGOs
... P.A.D.F.

LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

GOAL Protect and Promote Sustainable Use of El Salvador's Natural Resources.	VERIFIABLE INDICATORS 1. Government demonstrates NR priority with NR policies and budget allocations: National Resource Strategy, Environmental Code, Forestry, Soils, and Irrigation Drainage Laws. 2. Stabilization of deforestation.	VERIFICATION METHOD 1. National budget, legislation, regulations. 2. Aerial inventories.	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS
PURPOSE Strengthen Salvadoran NGOs to be Self-maintaining Advocates for Natural Resource Management.	(End of Project Status) 1. 6 to 8 NGOs demonstrate private sector environmental leadership and potential for long range institutional sustainability. 2. The NGOs will be perceived by the environmental community as credible advocates of one or more environmental issues. 3. The NGOs will have linkages to SBMA/CONAMA, local NGOs, FOCAI, appropriate government institutions and international NGOs and supporting organizations. 4. The NGOs will have established a network of linkages among themselves and other NGOs working in natural resources.	1. Progress reports, mid-term evaluation. 2. Progress reports, mid-term evaluation. 3. Progress reports, written agreements. 4. Midterm evaluation and written agreements.	1. Government establishes the conservation of water, soil, and forests as a high priority. 2. Small project funds remain available through SBMA/CONAMA. 3. FOCAI begins operating within 12 months of the project start-up. 4. The selected NGOs are eligible for FOCAI funding. 5. Inter. donors maintain interest in El Salvador's NR degradation.
OUTPUTS 1. Planning Systems Operational.	1a) Each NGO will apply a participatory strategic planning model, developed by P.A.D.F., with a 3-5 yr. horizon. Plans will be updated annually as part of an annual planning cycle. b) Annual operating plans will address strategic plan and include objectives, budget, and implementation strategy. c) Community awareness campaigns established to educate the community of needs, and NGO's priorities and strategies.	1a) Resulting documents. b) Resulting documents. c) Progress reports, plan documents, printed mat. and news articles.	1. The Boards of selected NGOs embrace the criteria for a strengthened environmental NGO.
2. Board and Staff Trained.	2a) Each NGO will receive training in organizational structure, Board/staff duties and responsibilities, bylaws and meeting procedures. b) Board/staff will be trained in causes and conditions of environmental problems, policy implications and advocacy methods. c) Staff will be trained in appropriate technologies and issues according to NGO specialization. d) A Board committee will be trained in fund-raising and staff in grant proposal preparation.	2a-d Progress reports, training materials and evaluations.	2. Boards and staff are willing to adopt technical assistance recommendations and training.
3. Administrative Systems Functioning.	3a) Each NGO will have annual audits and reconciling systems meeting AID standards. b) Procedures will be established for procurement, personnel, travel, control of equipment and materials, and operation of the physical plant. c) A Mgt. Information System in each NGO will report progress and monitoring information. d) Procedures will be supported by appropriate manuals and job descriptions.	3a) Audit reports and acct. manuals. b) Written policies and procedures. c) Output of the information system. d) Documents: manuals and descriptions.	3. Government policy does not adversely affect NGO legalization or local donations.
4. Fundraising Strategies Operational.	4a) Each NGO will have a realistic strategy to raise sufficient funds by the end of the project through local fundraising to make significant contributions to recurrent costs. b) Each NGO will have prepared four proposals for local institutional funding: FOCAI, SBMA, and other local institutions. c) Each NGO will have developed a minimum of two proposals for international donors. d) A Board committee will play a major role	4a) Written strategy. b) Documents: proposals. c) Documents: proposals. d) Committee reports and	4. 140 citizens with leadership potential are able/willing to participate as Board members and 600 as active dues paying members.

<p>5. Project NGO Funding Mechanism Functioning.</p> <p>6. Evaluations.</p>	<p>5a) PADP will () Operational Subgrants to 4-8 BNGOs totalling \$440,000.</p> <p>b) BNGOs will receive 2 annual subgrants, second dependent on 1st. year performance.</p> <p>c) PADP will make 30 Special Activities Grants (purchase orders) to BNGOs averaging \$5,000. Grants fund studies and pilot NR activities in education and field activities in soil, water, and forestry.</p> <p>6a) An early base line data analysis of NGOs receiving operating grant, covering operations of past 24 months: membership, contributions, meetings/quotas, plans etc.</p> <p>b) Annual internal evaluations of project outputs providing feedback for Project modifications.</p> <p>c) An outside evaluation between months 18-24 centered on the Project purpose to determine the appropriateness of project expansion and/or new directions.</p>	<p>5a) Financial Records.</p> <p>b) Financial Records.</p> <p>c) Financial Records.</p> <p>6a) Document analysis.</p> <p>b) Document report</p> <p>c) Document midterm eval.</p>	
<p>INPUTS</p> <p>1. (Planning System)</p> <p>a) Design BNGO strategic planning methodology.</p> <p>b) Distribute BNGO selection criteria.</p> <p>c) Conduct Planning Workshops.</p> <p>d) Select operational grantees.</p> <p>e) Dev. 1yr. oper. budget/plans.</p> <p>f) Prepare manuals and materials</p> <p>g) Report strategic and 1yr plans.</p> <p>2. (Board/Staff training)</p> <p>a) Design training plans.</p> <p>b) Develop materials and identify trainers.</p> <p>c) Schedule local training.</p> <p>d) Deliver local training.</p> <p>e) Identify training opportunities.</p> <p>f) Schedule training trips.</p> <p>3. (Administrative Systems)</p> <p>a) Design terms of refer. for audits and accounting systems.</p> <p>b) Contract firms for audits and update accounting systems.</p> <p>c) Design and test policies and procedures.</p> <p>d) Design MOT. info. system.</p> <p>e) Prepare manuals and train staff.</p> <p>4. (Fundraising)</p> <p>a) Organize Board committees.</p> <p>b) Develop member quotas.</p> <p>c) Develop strategy for local campaigns.</p> <p>d) Carry out campaigns.</p> <p>e) Identify national and international donors.</p> <p>f) Prepare funding proposals.</p> <p>5. (BNGO Funding)</p> <p>a) Develop distribution of subgrant procedures.</p> <p>b) Distribute grants to selected NGOs.</p> <p>c) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>d) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>e) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>f) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>g) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>h) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>i) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>j) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>k) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>l) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>m) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>n) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>o) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>p) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>q) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>r) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>s) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>t) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>u) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>v) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>w) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>x) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>y) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p> <p>z) Prepare 1st year subgrant reports.</p>	<p>Approximate Distribution</p> <p>Person months TA: 20</p> <p>Person months TA: 17</p> <p>Person months TA: 18</p> <p>Person months TA: 18</p> <p>Person months TA: 18</p> <p>Person months TA: 18</p>	<p>1-6) Accounting Records.</p>	<p>1. Board members are willing to make significant time contributions for workshops and meetings.</p> <p>2. Board members are willing to aggressively solicit funds from members and the general public.</p>

6. (Evaluation)	D FUNDED		PADP FUNDED	
	PX	LC	PX	LC
a) Design base line study.				
b) Identify analysis and carry out study.				
c) Design annual output eval.				
d) Carry out annual eval.				
e) Design terms of reference for 18-24 month evaluation.				
f) Recruit consultants and carry out evaluation.				
g) Implement recommendations.				
	ADMIN			
	COST \$757,500	\$552,966	\$21,140	\$38,314
	Subgrants ...	\$540,000
	Small ...	\$99,434	...	\$60,316
	Activity			
	GRANTS			
	BVALUA. \$10,000
	AUDIT \$50,000
	Subtotal \$627,500	\$1,172,420	\$21,140	\$118,660
	TOTAL AID \$2,000,000		PADP \$140,000	

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

Annex 3

DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

SENS Project Documents

1. NGO Database, 1992-1995 (looseleaf)
2. Strategic, annual, and project planning guidelines (looseleaf)
3. Logical framework manual (bound)
4. SENS Project 1994 Workplan
5. NGO Accounting situation as of 31 December 1994
6. SENS Project Paper
7. Membership and fundraising manual
8. NGO Information questionnaire (quarterly)
9. "Planificación del Proyecto FOPRAS - Perspectiva hacia el Futuro," results of seminar, 6 April 1995
10. Fact Sheet, December 1994, and photographs
11. NGO project portfolio situation as of 31 December 1994

Documents: AMAR

"Las Tortugas, los niños y el mar." Educational material.

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INDIVIDUALS/AGENCIES CONTACTED

Annex 4

INDIVIDUALS/AGENCIES CONTACTED

USAID/El Salvador

Anne Lewandoski
Richard Worden
Peter Gore
Tully Cornick
Felix Cristales

Pan American Development Foundation

Jim Heinsen, SENS Project Director
Carolina de Dreikorn, Training
Manuel Vásquez, Subgrant Management
Rosalinda de Chávez, Membership/Fund-raising
Sonio de Carballo, Accounting Systems

PROMESA Project

Carlos Rivas, International Coordinator
Manuel Ponce, National Coordinator

FIAES

Alcides Molina, Program Director

FONAES - Canada

Gerardo Escalón, Program Director

AMAR

Rubén Quintanilla, Executive Director
Mauricio Vásquez, Field Director, Barra de Santiago

ASACMA

María Elena Vásquez, President, Board of Directors
Mario Vásquez, Executive Director
Selina Dueñas de Rodríguez, Biologist

ASALDI

Selma García, Projects Coordinator

ASPAGUA

Emilia de Quintanilla, Executive Director

Rosa Emelinda de Hernández, Treasurer, Board of Directors

Audubon Society

Inéz de Juárez, President, Board of Directors

Ovidio Hernández, Acting Executive Director

CEDRO

Francisco Acosta, Executive Director

Barbara Dole, Coordinator, Communications

Irma Yolanda de Dreyfus, Administrator

Agustín Flores, President, Board of Directors

Germán Torres, Field Coordinator

CEPRODE

Lidia Castillo, Executive Director

Luis Véliz, Coordinator, Nancuchiname

COMCORDE

Jesús Ernesto Díaz, Coordinator, Environmental Projects

Roxana Jovel, Acting Executive Director & Housing Coordinator

ILOPANGO

José Roberto Santamaría, General Manager

Ernesto Freund, President, Board of Directors

Montecristo

Daisy Dinarte, Executive Director
Beatriz Hernández, Membership Coordinator
Marina de Sosa, Environmental Education Director
Martín Santana, Secretary, Board of Directors
Rosa Orellana, Accountant/Secretary
Guillermo Serrato, Member, Board of Directors

FUTECMA

Samuel Hue, President, Board of Directors
Cristina Barrios, Executive Director

MES

José Roberto López, Acting Exec Director & Member, Board of Dir.
Ricardo Castañeda, Vice President, Board of Directors
Johanna Butter Díaz, Secretary, Board of Directors
Eugenia de Portillo, Member, Board of Directors
René David Escalante, Member, Board of Directors
Ismael Sandoval, Member of MES
Ana Julia Selve, Member, Board of MES

SALVANATURA

Francisco De Sola, Presidente, Board of Directors
Miguel Galdámez, Financial Director
Luis Mario Aparicio, Field Coordinator

U.S. Graduate Students involved with NGOs

Carlos Ramírez, CUNY & New York Botanical Garden (SALVANATURA)
Jeffrey Kwaterski, University of Wisconsin (environmental NGOs)
Aaron Chassy, Harvard School of Government (NGOs)

SECTION H: EVALUATION ABSTRACT

Annex 5

SECTION H: EVALUATION ABSTRACT

This project aims to work with Salvadoran environmental NGOs aspiring to be self-sustaining advocates for natural resource management. Seven NGOs receive subgrants, technical assistance, and training; 8 others receive only technical assistance and training. Pre-project status included: few paid administrative staff, poor management skills, unfocused membership, poor fundraising, and inadequate technical expertise. This end of project evaluation has two purposes, (1) to evaluate project performance and (2) to present USAID/El Salvador with guidelines for a proposed 16 month extension and new activities to be included without changing the purpose of the original Project. The evaluation involved document review and interviews with AID officers, implementing agency staff, and NGO staff and board members. The major findings and conclusions were:

- NGOs did not sign subgrants at the same time due to delays in preparing strategic and annual plans. As a result, by 8/95 3 NGOs had completed 24 months, others just 20, 17, 15, and 8 months, although they all received complete training cycles. The NGOs now have 2-3 years of experience in preparing plans.
- Training and orientation provided for boards of directors have improved board composition (most with 1/3 women), relations with paid staff, and board meetings.
- All NGOs have computerized accounting systems and are capable of producing monthly financial reports. All NGOs produce logframes for project proposals, and most now have policies & procedures on purchases, job descriptions, personnel, and property.
- Membership & fundraising efforts were less successful. NGOs have M&F strategy documents and have become improvements, but they are not yet sound and functional. The project extension should focus on public relations to attract members, donors, the press, other NGOs, and international NGOs.
- The NGOs implement projects in local communities, funneling the grant funds made available by donor agencies. Funding sources include the Americas Initiative Fund (FIAES) and a similar Canadian-financed fund (FONAES). Six of the 7 NGOs have implemented projects with FIAES, and 3 of 7 have implemented projects with FONAES. Another 18 reforestation projects were funded by the Social Investment Fund (FIS).
- Just 5 of the planned 30 project special activity grants reserved for innovative projects were given out. In the extension, they should be used for NGO public relations projects: videos, slide shows, and materials to raise awareness and raise funds.
- Three NGOs now have women board presidents, and three of the Executive Directors are women. In 91 training events, 549 were women and 638 men. Women have attended international events, such as the agroforestry for women in Costa Rica.

Recommendations

- Hire locally an expert to improve presentation skills, materials, corporate fundraising and press strategies, international environmental NGOs contacts, and working with NGO membership to present the improved NGO message.
- All subgrants should be continued for 4 months. Two new subgrants should be added. Subgrants should be reduced monthly to wean NGOs from subgrant dependence.

Lessons learned

- Operating grants for NGOs should routinely include an explicit plan for discontinuing that assistance, including gradually reducing funds over time.
- Operations grants are not the only mechanism possible for institutional strengthening, and very likely are not the best one. Organizational analysis and structural redesign, administrative training, Board training, training in project design and logframes, and the computerized accounting modernization can contribute very positively to an NGO without an accompanying subgrant.
- Fundraising is an important aspect for strengthening NGOs, and all sources need to be considered when looking at fundraising. If the NGO membership cannot provide adequate funds, fundraising must consider other sources and not attempt to solve its recurrent cost problems through increased membership.

**SECTION J: SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FINDINGS,
CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Annex 6

SECTION J: SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Purpose of Project

The rapid growth of population in El Salvador and the aggressive use of natural resources has resulted in a situation in which soil, water, forest, and wildlife habitat resources are consumed faster than they are able to regenerate. The control of excessive and inappropriate exploitation of renewable natural resources is urgent to avoid irreversible ecological damage.

Because of the failure to protect the natural resource base, environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have begun to promote environmental awareness and wise natural resource management. These NGOs are young, most having appeared in the last five to ten years. Few have paid administrative staff, and most depend on volunteers. They lack management and financial skills. Memberships vary from less than 50 to 200 per group, and many are simply small, informal groups of friends concerned about environmental degradation. As nearly all are still institutionally immature, they need management skills and technical expertise to become effective, self-sustaining advocates and leaders for the proper management of El Salvador's threatened natural resources.

The Salvadoran Environmental Non-Governmental Organizational Strengthening (SENS) Project (Project No. 519-0400) was designed to work with national level NGOs aspiring to expand their technical capabilities and structures to become more influential in Salvadoran natural resource management and policy. The Project Goal is to protect and promote sustainable use of El Salvador's natural resources. In striving to achieve this goal, the Project Purpose is to strengthen Salvadoran environmental NGOs to be self-sustaining advocates for natural resource management.

Purpose of Evaluation

This end of project evaluation has two purposes. The first purpose is to evaluate the performance of the SENS Project, including the benefits and effects that the Project has had in strengthening a core group of Salvadoran ENGOS. The evaluation assesses the participating NGOs progress in developing their mission statements and objectives, the effectiveness of the subgrantees' administrations and their technical staffs, and the ability of the participating institutions to raise diversified funding sources that contribute to the viability of each NGO. The second purpose of this evaluation is to present USAID/El Salvador with guidelines and possible project activities for a proposed 16 month project extension. The evaluation presents what new activities would be included in the extension without fundamentally changing the purpose of the original Project.

The evaluation involved rapid appraisal techniques through which information is collected from several sources (document review, USAID project officers, implementing agency staff, and

interviews with beneficiaries) and triangulated to establish the past and present situation. The documents reviewed and persons contacted are found in the Annexes to this document.

Findings and Conclusions

1. Expanded Project Participation

The project was originally designed to work only with the "subgrant NGOs," those receiving institutional strengthening funds along with training and technical assistance. However, when the selection process was completed and the NGOs identified for subgrants, the NGOs not selected asked to participate in the training process even without a subgrant. They were allowed to do so, and thus the project has two sets of project NGOs: "subgrant NGOs" and "collaborator NGOs." Most of the latter took advantage of this opportunity, and some collaborator NGOs now have higher representation by women on boards of directors, use logframes, and have improved project administration and planning skills.

2. Improved Strategic and Annual Planning

Most of the NGOs had little experience in planning before the project but were required to produce strategic and annual planning documents before receiving their subgrants. The experience was not easy: most NGOs had few or no full-time personnel. It was hard for board members to find time to develop plans, and this was the primary cause for the staggered start-up of NGO subgrants. The subgrants began as follows, including total months in the SENS project as of July 1, 1995:

	<u>NGOs</u>	<u>Subgrant date</u>	
1.	AMAR:	01 Jul 93.	Months completed: 24
2.	CEPRODE:	15 Jul 93.	Months completed: 23.5
3.	CEDRO:	01 Aug 93.	Months completed: 23
4.	FUTECMA:	30 Nov 93.	Months completed: 19
5.	SALVANATURA:	24 Feb 94.	Months completed: 16
6.	MONTECRISTO:	15 Apr 94.	Months completed: 14.5
7.	ASACMA:	15 Nov 94.	Months completed: 7.5

The NGOs now have 2-3 years of experience in preparing plans, and they now use them in orienting the daily operations of the NGO.

3. Improved NGO Administration

Training and orientation was provided for boards of directors concerning board composition, relations with paid staff, and how to run meetings. All NGOs now have separated board members from staff members, and boards have a higher percentage of women. The project also set up computerized accounting systems, and all NGOs are capable of producing monthly

financial reports. All NGOs now produce logframes for project proposals, which helps them receive donor grants to carry out environmental projects. Most of the NGOs also now have policies and procedures governing purchases, job descriptions, personnel, and NGO property.

4. Membership and Fundraising

With the exception of the two NGOs with close ties to the business community, the NGOs had few or no pre-project membership or fundraising policies or procedures. Membership followed a pattern of an initial group of interested individuals, many of whom dropped out, and a few new members entered each year. Membership lists were rarely kept up to date. Dues were low in order to not limit membership and were collected in a haphazard way. Fundraising was considered only when the NGO needed funds for a specific activity or piece of equipment, and once the needed funds were raised, fundraising was forgotten. NGOs had no membership or fundraising committees, nor personnel assigned to the task full-time or even half-time.

The project has had less success in this area due in part to personnel problems. The first individual was ineffectual and not rehired after completing a year, and the position was vacant for several months. Training was provided, and each NGO now has a membership and fundraising plan, but the plans are weak and often incomplete. The NGOs need a strategy based on presentation, communications, marketing, and public relations. They need to present the NGO as attractive to both possible members and potential donors and communicate both the environmental message as well as their own role in improving the situation. They need to market the NGO as an attractive product with potential donors and sponsors, and they need good public relations with donors, members, other NGOs, the press, and international NGOs.

5. Grantmanship

The project NGOs are implementing agencies: their role in great part is to implement projects in local communities, funneling the grant funds made available by donor agencies interested in improving the environment and life for local people. A critical measure of the success of the SENS project is thus how well the project NGOs are functioning in securing funding grants.

The NGOs have received some funds from international NGOs, but in spite of a training session on how to make these contacts, few have been made. The best source of funds has been the Initiative for the Americas Fund (FIAES), established through a loan-forgiveness program by the U.S. government; there is also a similar Canadian-financed fund, called FONAES. Both funds provide opportunities for the NGOs to acquire funds for project implementation. Six of the seven NGOs have submitted projects to FIAES for financing, and three of the seven have projects either have submitted projects to FONAES.

The Social Investment Fund (FIS) is another source which project NGOs have accessed. Two projects were funded for the 1993 growing seasons, and 16 project NGOs (including collaborators) had funding in 1994; all were reforestation projects. For 1995, 23 reforestation

projects were approved, but based on an evaluation of non-project reforestation projects showing very poor survival rates, FIS funded no reforestation projects at all in 1995.

The project also called for special activity grants. Just five of the planned 30 grants were given out because they were reserved for projects which were innovative in some way. In the extension, these funds should be reserved for presentation and public relations projects, including videos, slide shows, and other materials to raise awareness, present a positive image, and raise funds.

6. Participation by Women

This project has been a model for the participation of women, beginning with the NGO selection criteria, the first of which required that the board of directors be "open to members of the NGO...with representation by both genders." The SENS project target was a board with one-third women members, and most boards have achieved this balance. Of the seven subgrant NGOs, three have women board presidents, and three of the seven Executive Directors are women as well. Regarding training, the SENS project has supported participation in 91 training events with a total of 1187 participants, 549 women and 638 men. Women have attended international events, such as the agroforestry for women training sessions in Costa Rica.

7. Recommendations

- **Improved communications/presentation:** The project should hire an expert locally to assist NGOs in improving their presentation skills, including the production of quality materials, the development and implementation of corporate fundraising and press strategies, contacting the international environmental NGOs, and working with NGO membership in this improved presentation of the NGO message.
- **Existing subgrants:** All subgrants should be continued for at least four months until the end of 1995. The SALVANATURA and FUTECSMA subgrants should be terminated at the end of 1995. The other NGOs should have their subgrants extended through the end of the extension.
- **New subgrants:** MES and ASPAGUA, which were collaborator NGOs during the project, should receive subgrants in the project extension. These subgrants should be slightly higher to include the purchase of computers, printers, photocopiers, software, and office equipment.
- **Gradually reduced subgrants:** Reducing the amount of funds each month has been shown in other AID-financed projects to stimulate subgrantees to work at acquiring funds from other sources. The SENS project should determine how to reduce the amount the NGOs actually receive each month or each quarter, so that they become accustomed to locating other funding sources.

8. Lessons learned

- **Operating grants for NGOs should routinely include an explicit plan for discontinuing that assistance, including gradually reducing funds over time.**
- **Operations grants are not the only mechanism possible for institutional strengthening, and very likely are not the best one. Organizational analysis and structural redesign, administrative training, Board training, training in project design and logframes, and the computerized accounting modernization can contribute very positively to an NGO without an accompanying subgrant.**
- **Fundraising is an important aspect for strengthening NGOs, and all sources need to be considered when looking at fundraising. If the NGO membership cannot provide adequate funds, fundraising must consider other sources and not attempt to solve its recurrent cost problems through increased membership.**