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HAITI SKILLS BANK PROJECT

Mid-Term Evaluation Report

submitted by

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VOLUNTEERS IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

21 July 1995

USAID
PPC/CDIE/DI
Attention: Acquisitions Room 206G, SA-18
Washington, DC 20523-1920

Gentlemen/Ladies:

Attached is the mid-term evaluation report (Contract Number 521-0000-C-00-5015-00).

We would appreciate any corrections/additions or comments on other points that I may have missed or misrepresented. This will be particularly useful in preparation for my next trip and for the ongoing programmatic activities both planned and underway.

We look forward to increased cooperation and continuing progress toward meeting objectives in the Skills Bank project.

Sincerely,

Gary Garriott
Director
Informatics

Enclosures

CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----------------------|---|----|
| I. | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 1 |
| II. | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 1 |
| III. | SCOPE OF WORK | 1 |
| IV. | STRENGTHS | 2 |
| V. | WEAKNESSES | 4 |
| VI. | MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS | 7 |
| VII. | TWO-MONTH WORK PLAN | 9 |
| <i>Appendix A</i> | | |
| | MINUTES OF KEY MEETINGS | 13 |
| <i>Appendix B</i> | | |
| | EVALUATION FORMS OF SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENTS THROUGH THE SKILLS BANK | 22 |
| <i>Appendix C</i> | | |
| | OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES PREPARED DURING EVALUATION VISIT | 25 |

HAITI SKILLS BANK

Project Mid-Term Evaluation

June 14-21, 1995

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Haiti Skills Bank project is making solid progress, even though current usage and registration levels are somewhat below those expected at the contract mid-point. External factors related to the national political process and to limited knowledge of the resource may have mitigated widespread usage to date. Usage, nevertheless, seems poised to "take off" provided that information and communication systems are operating efficiently and that recruitment strategies are effectively identified and implemented. Other limitations, principally lack of local adequate transportation, can be corrected through a project amendment.

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer would like to express his appreciation to the following individuals who assisted greatly in the execution of the evaluation activity: Gail M. Spence, Project Development Officer, USAID/Haiti, and HAFED/Port-au-Prince staff, principally Ms. Ketty Renard, Administrator; Ms. Florence Lecorps, HAFED Skills Bank Project Director; and Philip Renard, Computer Systems Technician. HAFED MIS Specialist Mario Camilien was especially helpful. Other USAID/Haiti staff were also involved in various meetings and made logistical arrangements. HAFED/USA President Pierre Leger and VITA/USA staff, principally Ms. Barbra Bucci, Brij Mathur, and Richard Muffley were all instrumental in providing informational and technical support for the visit.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide a determination of project strengths and weaknesses as the half-way point (four months) had been reached near the end of June 1995. Specifically, the evaluation was designed to review procedures, assess user

satisfaction/dissatisfaction, develop strategies to obtain a greater number of registrations and user inquiries, and consider technology transfer issues. The emphasis of this report is on implementation activities in Haiti. The chief methodology employed was participant interviews with relevant USAID staff, HAFED personnel and users and/or potential users of the Skills Bank. Minutes of important meetings are found in Appendix A.

IV. STRENGTHS

The Skills Bank project appears to be meeting the current demand for information on potential candidates for various positions and openings. Response from both HAFED/Haiti and VITA/USA to these inquiries was judged as timely and professional from USAID as well as public/private sector sources (see Appendix B). There is a sense that such requests are given priority treatment which is much appreciated. In the case of the Haitian Chamber of Commerce and the private firm INMETAL/National Bag and Trading Company providing evaluations in Appendix B, two placements representing executive secretarial/managerial skills have already been successfully made. Personal interviews with principals of these two groups made during the evaluation visit confirm that they are pleased with results and responsiveness of the Skills Bank to their queries.

At least as important, follow-up is triggered when an interested user requests initial information but then perhaps is not heard from again within a reasonable amount of time. The writer witnessed this phenomenon first-hand when he suggested a meeting with the Haitian CARE mission fitting this scenario (information on the Skills Bank had been requested, but no inquiries were subsequently forthcoming). Follow-up initiated by HAFED revealed that CARE was in the midst of writing job descriptions for as many as 10-12 professional positions which need to be urgently filled during the next six months. CARE, as of the evaluation, was simply not quite ready to advertize through the Skills Bank but expressed the firm intention of doing so. Upcoming projects finally "in the pipeline" seem to the norm for a number of international NGOs; Catholic Relief Services is another that appears poised to use the Skills Bank extensively to fill vacancies and new positions. Other groups coming forward during the visit both providing names to the Skills Bank and requesting information on potential candidates include the Ministry of Agriculture and Association of Haitian Industrials.

This visit represented the first personal interaction between HAFED/Haiti and VITA staff in Haiti which was extremely important in terms of improving mutual understanding on project objectives, means and limitations. HAFED/Haiti staff are exemplary in their demonstrable enthusiasm and dedication to the project, even if some personal sacrifice is involved (for example, using non-reimbursable private means of transportation). HAFED appears to be well-placed both in terms of cultivating high level contacts with governmental officials as well as providing informative tutorials on Skills Bank activities and access to sources both in and out of government. Much initiative is evident from HAFED staff in seeking out and creating innovative opportunities for getting the system known (for example, the project director was recently interviewed on local television). Extensive personal contacts in public and private sectors are used to advantage. Both HAFED and VITA staff are to be commended for exploring innovative means to increase registrations and user inquiries; progress reports treat these activities in greater depth. In addition, suggestions have come directly from USAID/Haiti itself (see Appendix A for examples). HAFED staff have been able to quite successfully adapt to the technical demands of a fairly sophisticated computerized database system with a minimum of training and have employed manual methods in some cases to supplement the computerized systems.

The project is aided by strong USAID interest at all levels, including the Mission Director and the Office of the Administrator. This is no doubt due in part because of the high visibility given to the return of the constitutional government and the desire to involve the Haitian and Haitian-American community, both local and expatriate, in the reconstruction process. The writer saw much evidence of the Haitian entrepreneurial work ethic during this critical phase in their history, in spite of an uncertain and sometimes chaotic political process (preparations for the legislative primary elections were underway during the visit). This ethic will most likely provide an increasing groundswell of interest and support for the Skills Bank once the election process has been completed. USAID is also cognizant of factors that can impede the forward progress of the project, among them a built-in lag time before project "take-off" given the requirement for early and continual promotion as well as the reluctance felt by some (as expressed both in Haiti and in the U.S.) to provide their names and addresses as a vehicle for being "tracked down." It will take some time for these factors to be overcome, given the added distraction of the election process.

The project also enjoys a very high level of interest and commitment of the upper management of both VITA and HAFED/USA which has evidenced itself in making

additional staff available for project-related assignments and a willingness to provide continuity on a priority basis among other competing demands for time. As chief contractor, VITA is cognizant of its role in transferring technical expertise and informational resources as part of its responsibilities so that the Skills Bank can eventually be institutionalized in a form yet to be determined.

V. WEAKNESSES

While present needs in terms of responsiveness are being met, this is possible mostly due to user inquiry demand currently at a point less than the expected future "take-off" level (dozens per month). More concentrated promotional and educational activities need to be implemented which is presently limited in part by the unavailability of adequate local transportation. This requirement along with others (see below) will be addressed in a proposed project amendment.

In addition, a relatively complex computerized database system has been implemented to handle registrations (see figure on following page). Since these can be and are being processed at VITA and HAFED/Haiti, methods must be provided so that the organizations in both countries are constantly dealing with identical data sets updated on a regular basis. The normal development of such a system involves experimental trials and changes and reconciliation between slightly different sets of needs as well as the usual problem-solving issues. This process has taken longer than originally expected, but is now approaching a stable implementation. In-depth, intensive training of HAFED personnel in both computer systems operations and data entry techniques was not originally contemplated and will be proposed in the project amendment. The writer recorded opinions from many sources that the relative "lull" in activity is due primarily to the election process and once this period is over, activity will increase, perhaps dramatically. Operation of efficient, automated computerized systems and a smooth two-way flow of information (HAFED <-> VITA) are the only ways that significantly increased demand can be accommodated, since adding additional staff is not an option. Additional computer programming for automating user inquiries and reports will also be addressed in the proposed amendment.

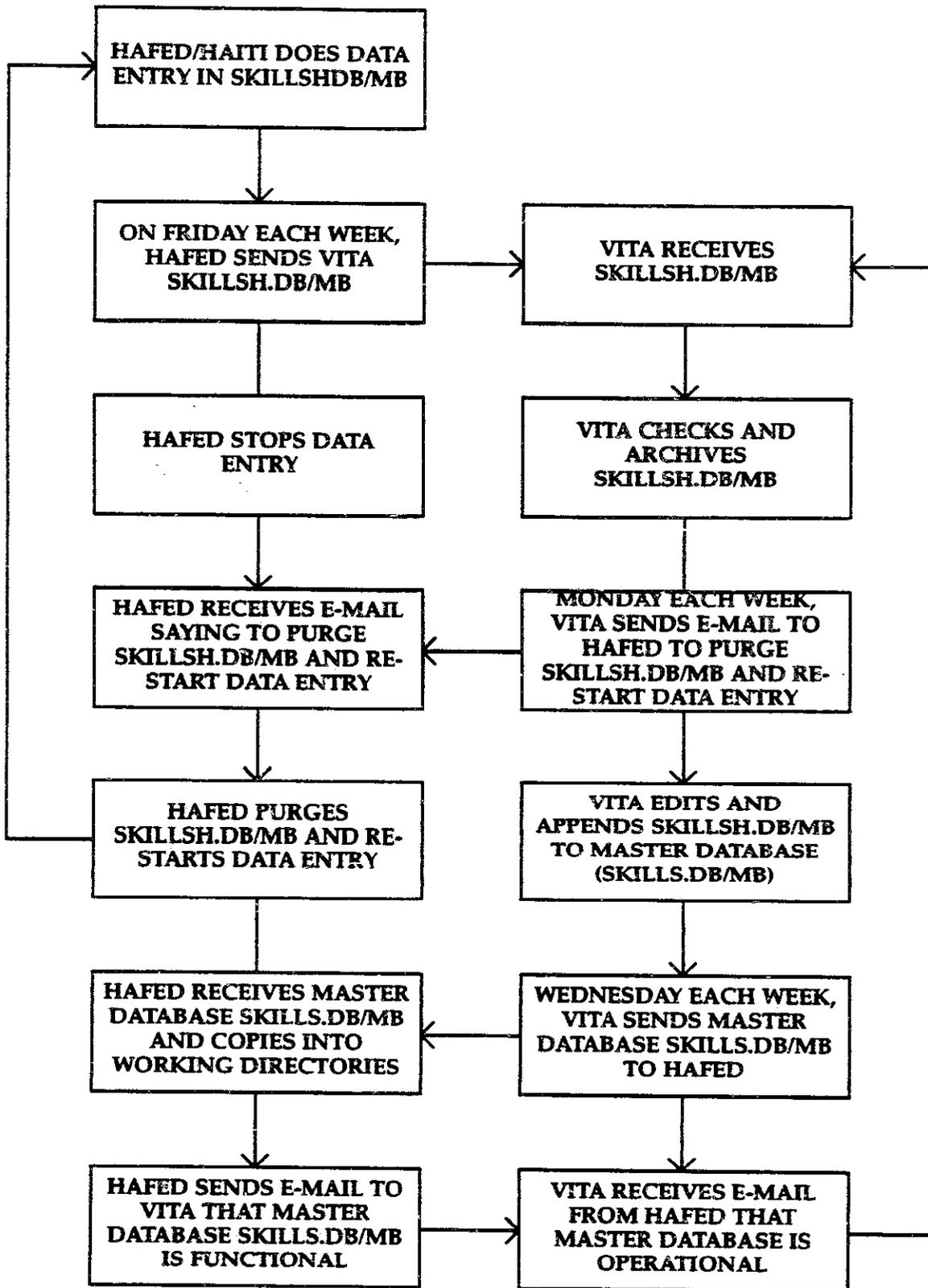
While local access to the Skills Bank at the HAFED office via telephone and fax appears to be adequate at present, immediate measures to increase that access should be implemented. The most practical suggestion is to provide an answering machine for after-

HAITI SKILLS BANK
INTERNATIONAL FLOW OF WORK

[E-MAIL SYSTEM]

HAFED/HAITI

VITA/USA



hours calls on evenings and weekends. In addition, provision of a "black box" that correctly and automatically routes calls to the fax machine, modem, telephone and answering machine should be acquired as the present system for handling these different destinations from a single telephone line is manual, awkward and inefficient.

The objective of getting registrations coming in at such a rate that the 1500 names required under the contract will be completed during the eight month contract has been a preoccupation, particularly to VITA. The evaluation visit revealed that while this still remains an important objective, more emphasis must be placed on getting the system used, even while names are being added. Use does not necessarily equate to placement (see Appendix A). The local transportation issue (in Haiti) relates to this, as does regular advertisements to the expatriate Haitian-American and international NGO communities in the U.S. that the Skills Bank resource exists and is accessible. There had been talk that the current project implementation should encompass needs surveys and promotions beyond Port-au-Prince to other parts of Haiti, but this was not generally supported and is not considered a priority at this time. HAFED/Haiti is encouraged to include names and information of Haitian-Americans living in the U.S. even when potential employers originally indicate interest only in Haitians living in Haiti. It has been assumed that local employers will not want to pay U.S.-level salaries to Haitians living abroad, but there could well be people interested in coming to Haiti to work on short- and medium-term assignments for reasons other than remuneration, such as a desire to assist with the reconstruction effort.

It is not too early to plan for how the Skills Bank will be institutionalized beyond the present contract; however, there is a sort of "wait and see" approach on the part of USAID as to whether the Skills Bank will indeed become a significant activity and so this issue has not yet been seriously addressed. The Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad is quite interested in having more direct access to the Skills Bank (perhaps by mirroring the database on their own computers in the short-term and housing the entire system in the long-term), and any possible misunderstanding in their expectations vis-a-vis USAID intentions should be addressed without delay. If a decision to work more closely with this Ministry is made (apart from the current information-only relationship, i.e., the Ministry receives copies of the progress reports prepared by VITA), then this should be known immediately as computerized presentation of the Skills Bank should be done in French as well as English. In any case, none of the parties involved (USAID, HAFED and VITA) should underestimate the level of effort involved in successfully transferring Skills Bank technology and operations

to a permanent "home" other than VITA/HAFED. Such an effort could justify proposing an extension to the current contract.

VITA has attempted to acquire an authorization to operate a ground station communicating with a low earth orbiting satellite at the HAFED office in order to enhance electronic connectivity with VITA (and the Internet). The chief avenue pursued was through a private consultant who had previously reported positive reactions through direct explorations with CONATEL. During the evaluation visit, an attempt was made to clarify the situation in a meeting with the Technical Director of CONATEL. This was not successful and USAID personnel are now following up on the authorization request.

VITA has experienced and reported delays in payment on its invoices. Consultation with financial personnel at USAID/Haiti revealed that the project is eligible for advance payment rather than the current reimbursement schedule or through transfer to VITA's existing letter of credit, should the project be extended beyond its current termination date. In either case, however, amendments to the current contract are required.

VI. MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Attempts should be made to try to reduce the flow of paper to and from HAFED/Haiti. Faxing will not be entirely eliminated because of the need to get CVs communicated, but much more can be done electronically with most paper basically staying where it is first collected (VITA or HAFED/Haiti). This will be facilitated through the work-flow implementation illustrated in the figure on page 5 which is in turn dependent on a stable database system compatible in both presentation and function.
- B. Consistency in data entry at HAFED and at VITA needs to be improved, eg, codes used to describe skills at HAFED/Haiti do not use the VITA system. HAFED has not thus far received specific training from VITA and has devised its own approach. Such training should occur including documentation for insuring data entry integrity and compatibility customized for the registration form.
- C. USAID will entertain a proposal for amending the budget and such an amendment should be prepared. The items mentioned in a previous HAFED request to VITA

(principally local transportation, electrical power problems, and communications) are all legitimate, though the levels should be discussed and negotiated. Logs on generator usage as well as usage of private vehicles for transportation should be maintained so that a justifying data set exists. Current fax logs (as of the time of the evaluation) have been acquired. An intensive period of staff training in system use involving procedures for cleaning and avoiding viruses (extremely important) and backing up processes as well as recovering from hard disk crashes should be included. Training should also treat data entry procedures and use of standard VITA thesaurus codes (B. above).

- D. Additional amendment items should include miscellaneous hardware like spare diskettes for making working copies and back-ups, a mouse pad, and especially a "black box" that would distribute fax, telephone and e-mail calls automatically. The process currently in use is inefficient and will result in delays and busy signals (HAFED has a single telephone line) when usage significantly increases as expected. Funds for advertizing can also be included, as USAID has suggested that additional ads be taken out in U.S. newspapers as well as Haitian papers.
- E. A requestor database with appropriate and automated reports should be accomplished with appropriate user documentation. Portability of the entire system should be enhanced so that, for example, transferability of the entire system to whichever group is eventually determined by USAID to house the Skills Bank can be accomplished in a straightforward manner. Production of a mirror system in French should be costed out.
- F. Monthly targets need to be established for all HAFED/VITA personnel developing registrations and user inquiries employing various techniques and resources. Verbal consultation with potential registrants over the telephone (as employed by HAFED/Haiti) and actually filling out the registration form on their behalf is an option. "Thank you" letters to registrants should be sent out following verbal or written registrations, specifying that names and information can be provided to any party requesting it, including the government, unless the registrant informs VITA/HAFED to the contrary.

- G. More consistent usage of the source coding scheme should be implemented, both for the registration process and user inquiries, so that analysis of the most and least successful recruitment strategies can be effectively made.
- H. The ground station license process, which now has the involvement of USAID/Haiti personnel, should be monitored closely. Ideally, if a license can be acquired, the station and associated solar system should be installed when any additional field work is undertaken by VITA staff.
- I. Progress reports should be prepared with short summaries in French, particularly for the benefit of the Ministry of Haitians Living Abroad.
- J. All system documentation, both technical and operational, should be collected in a "procedures book" for easy reference. Specific documentation prepared during the evaluation visit is included in Appendix C.

VII. TWO-MONTH WORK PLAN

Following are major activities to be implemented/tracked during July and August 1995.

July:

- A. Preparation of monthly recruitment targets for duration of project matrixed for individual VITA/HAFED staff and specific activities/strategies.
- B. Preparation of project amendment - VITA/HAFED.
- C. Regularization of database system and work flow - VITA/HAFED.

August:

- A. Presentation of amendment.
- B. Field training/hardware enhancements.

C. Additional programming completed (user inquiries and reports).

D. Earth station license acquired and hardware installed.

A more detailed breakdown of individual duties by the major parties responsible for various aspects of the project follows. This was composed directly from information developed through the evaluation. Given the requirement that offices in two countries must both be capable of providing information as well as recruiting registrants and users as well as being continually updated in terms of the others' activities, there is fair degree of complexity involved which will be successfully implemented over time.

Gary Garriott, Project Director

- investigate contract negotiations (amendments and/or extensions, etc) that will strengthen the project;
- evaluate the budget monthly and allocate funds and remaining time per team member as appropriate;
- evaluate the case coordination component of the project by following up not only with organizations having successfully recruited and hired persons through the Skills Bank ("placements"), but those at the inquiry stage as well;
- refine communications systems (fax, e-mail, etc.) as needed (for example, address "paper flying" problem discussed in Part VI above);
- continue to attempt to obtain licensing for a satellite ground station;
- investigate possibility of installing a phone bank manned by VITA volunteers to pursue registrants;
- oversee database system development;
- analyze cost/benefit of awarding certificates and/or distributing posters; and

- report regularly -- including monthly submissions to Project Coordinator and evaluation reports.

Pierre Leger, Subcontract (HAFED) Director

- develop contract amendments and/or extensions, etc. (with Project Director) that will strengthen the project;
- develop targets for requests and track progress;
- update HAFED outreach plan (newspaper advertising, etc.); and
- report regularly -- including compilation of HAFED staff reports and submission of that complete document to Project Coordinator.

Brij Mathur, HSB Operations Manager - USA

- input and review for procedures manual under development;
- track 300 name per month (for August, September, and October) registration target;
- oversee coordination of cases, data set quality control, etc. between USA and Haiti;
- confirm successful transfer of files from Haiti to USA;
- send updated database set to Haiti per established schedule;
- oversee data entry in the USA;
- implement updated outreach plans as needed; and
- report regularly -- including weekly status and monthly reports to Project Coordinator.

Florence Lecorps, HSB Operations Manager - Haiti

- input and review for procedures manual under development;
- send data files to USA per established schedule;
- confirm successful transfer of master database files from USA to Haiti;
- oversee data entry in Haiti;
- continue site visits and orientation sessions; and
- reporting -- including weekly status reports to Project Coordinator and monthly reports to HAFED President.

Mario Camélien, Information Specialist

- finalize database programming.

Barbra Bucci, Project Coordinator

- analyze and update outreach plan (with intern) monthly;
- develop and distribute reporting standards to team members -- including addressing source code, summary page, and case coordination reporting;
- compile weekly and monthly reports and distribute appropriately;
- compile, edit, layout, and distribute procedures manual; and
- address standardization of (French and English) forms (including disclaimers), cover letters, etc.

APPENDIX A

MINUTES OF KEY MEETINGS

The meeting was attended by USAID project development officer Gail Spence, USAID contract officer Clement Bucher, USAID project specialist Lisa Laude, HAFED MIS specialist Mario Camilien, HAFED project manager Florence Lecorps, and myself. I stated that my broad agenda for mid-term evaluation was the following:

The meeting turned into a broad and useful brainstorming session. It is clear that USAID is extremely interested in and supportive of this project, even though it has not been yet placed into a "sector." The following suggestions and observations were made:

1. Project objectives are partly political in the sense of engaging the Haitian-American community and to the extent possible encourage this group to provide experience/expertise to Haiti under the new constitutional government, including returning to the country if feasible. Haitians living in Haiti should also be mobilized through the project as a commonly-accessible set of resources. The project has high visibility at the highest levels of USAID as well as at the White House.
2. Other objectives include approaching the goal of 1500 registrants as well as showing increased usage of the skills bank during the period of the project.
3. Criteria for determining project success are based on meeting above objectives.
4. The project was not meant to be a "placement service" and that judging success or failure solely in terms of placements of people is too restrictive. Other measures of success include numbers of requests from potential employers/users of services, numbers of second requests and/or referrals from "first" requestors, numbers of candidates interviewed, numbers of interviews.
5. There are no legal problems in making resumes available to whomever requests them, i.e., confidentiality of information submitted is not an issue for USAID. The project should make sure registrants are aware that the information they submit may and is made available to all requesting it.
6. Screening registrants is important in the sense that the skills bank is supposed to attract highly-skilled individuals with years of experience in a particular area of

expertise and also in terms of follow-up to requestors to see if they have been given an appropriate mix of skilled-people. An additional means of helping to select individuals

7. The evaluation should look at ease of access to the skills bank in Haiti.
8. USAID has not yet decided how it wants the skills bank to be maintained or transferred beyond the contract period, i.e., to an agency of the government, within USAID, or continuing with same contractor arrangement. Even though we are mid-way through the project, it is still too early to determine whether the project will succeed or fail. Important factors mitigating usage of the system at present include the imminent legislative elections which are causing many people to take a "wait and see" approach with regard to both public and private sector investment.
9. To increase both registrations and usage, questionnaires and request forms should be placed in the major hotels in Port-au-Prince where consultants for aid agencies congregate to write proposals.
10. To increase interest in both adding names and using the skills bank, the HAFED office should on a weekly basis gather a list of jobs being advertized in local newspapers and make those available to VITA for posting on various Internet services. The HAFED office should also respond pro-actively to these ads (which they are already doing). Adding information on the skills bank to RFPs being developed from the mission is already generating many new inquiries. USAID will make posters promoting the service and distribute them within the mission.

6/15/95 - HAFED OFFICE

Today is the Corpus Cristi religious holiday, but Florence and Philip are available for discussions and work.

- A. *Discussion with Florence* - Purpose of discussion was to get a sense of flow of paper in and out of the HAFED office. HAFED is performing several processes simultaneously. Florence collects resumes and completed registration forms from local advertizing and from other outreach activities, such as orientation sessions.

Initial contact is made either through the HAFED post office box number or by telephone. After the initial contact, people are then invited to come to the HAFED office to fill out the registration materials. Initial personal visits to the HAFED office are discouraged to avoid mass queuing of people looking for employment. When a local employer is requesting resumes she will either deliver them personally or fax computer print-outs first, followed by the full resume. If there is no one available in the local database and the need is urgent, she will either request resume forms through Brij at VITA or in some cases from Pierre in HAFED/USA. Depending on whether or not registrants have actually filled out registration forms with their resumes, she may fill out the forms for them.

She also makes visits to requestors and presentations to groups interested in learning more about the skills bank and its progress, including a once-a-week meeting at USAID.

There appears to be a great flow of paper, mostly by fax and courier from HAFED/USA <-> HAFED/Haiti, and HAFED/Haiti <-> VITA. Once the data exchange process is more firmly in place, paper should be archived only where it is first collected and computer data sent back and forth which will also cut down on communications costs. Florence has faxed requests for personnel both to HAFED/USA and to VITA. VITA use of the source field in completed registrations sent from VITA could be better utilized because up until now she has sometimes not known whether information on that form has been entered in the VITA database or whether she should be entering it in hers. As a result, there might be some duplication in databases (this problem should be eliminated once the data flow is regularized, as the HAFED/Haiti database will be continually refreshed and kept up to date through the e-mail system).

She is logging all efforts manually at the moment which include total requests from employers, requests organized by a matrix of sectors (Haitian government, private sector, etc.) versus skills demanded, lists of candidates sent to requesters, and skills-based compilations of registrants. She would like an additional database to handle requests which should provide computerized reports similar to those she is now preparing manually. The present system should be able to provide reports on current registrants.

- B. *Technical* - The afternoon was spent with Mario and Philip. The major activity was to remove viruses from the system; Mario had already detected the "Mongolian" virus, but the latest McAfee software he brought with him had found the "Noname" virus in a hard drive boot sector. Unfortunately, the software also returned a message that "no remover was available" for the virus. The Microsoft anti-virus software that came with the system did not detect the virus at all. Mario will make additional software (F-PROT) available at AID tomorrow before he leaves to try. We also developed a simple menu program to automate a number of the steps required to mate the e-mail system to the database programs. Attempts were made to reconcile the database structure of the VITA system with the HAFED system, but this process and testing will continue back at VITA with the results hopefully e-mailed back early next week.

6/16/95 - HAFED OFFICE

- A. *Discussions with Florence*: she reiterated the theme from Wednesday's brainstorming session that user needs surveys in person are important in order to promote usage of the skills bank. Some questionnaires have been sent by mail, but these almost never evoke responses by themselves. On the other hand, it is not possible to visit everyone in Port-au-Prince; there must be at least 100 NGOs alone. A balanced approach would seem to be to target the larger NGOs, government agencies and private sector companies (some of whom are already advertizing in local papers) with follow-up personal visits and the rest with telephone calls. This is already happening to some extent, although greater efforts would be possible with a more systematic solution to the transportation problem.

Transportation is a serious problem in Port-au-Prince. Public buses and private taxis are not numerous and there seems to be considerable fear that plentiful criminal elements pose unreasonable threats such that "flagging down taxis" is not done. HAFED personnel use their own vehicles for project business when they can or when usage is urgent (as in replying to a recent request from the Prime Minister's office) and are sometimes reimbursed for gasoline usage if vehicle use is for an entire day or better part of a day. There is less incentive to use personal vehicles for trips to single destinations on a non-urgent basis, but one possible approach would be to reimburse on a "per mile" or "per kilometer" basis. If this were done, 50-75% of the

transportation problem would be solved. Barring permanent assignment of a USAID vehicle to the project, a complementary approach to reimbursement would be to request a USAID vehicle for an entire day once a week or once every two weeks and to schedule multiple meetings during that day. Given the amount of work to be accomplished in Port-au-Prince alone and short time remaining, excursions including orientation sessions to other cities would seem to be represent a quantum increase in level of effort requiring contract amendments in terms of scope of work and budget. USAID appears to have been responsive to needs and on at least one occasion have sent a vehicle and driver to pick up mail going to the Post Office, by U.S. standards a seemingly uncomplicated operation but which in Port-au-Prince would have required several hours for HAFED staff. Traffic congestion in the few arterial routes within the city is common.

Availability of electrical power is problematic; most of Friday the HAFED office operated on generator power. There is no warning when power will be turned off or when it will be turned on again, even though outages at the present time are not particularly frequent. Given that several computer systems (in addition to that for the skills bank project), at least three air conditioning systems and other devices such as printers and a copier are involved, it is not feasible that a solar energy system could carry that entire load (the generator is rated at 20 KW). It is also not reasonable that the skills bank project carry the entire burden of energy for the entire office; one estimate was that 75% of energy consumption is related to the skills bank project in a broad sense. On the other hand, provision of solar energy for the skills bank computer system (including printer) is feasible and if financed from an account available through VITA using solar energy for low earth orbit communications could liberate the project from greater responsibility for the energy budget.

With regard to additional trips by U.S./HAFED staff, it was recommended that Mr. Leger plan on an additional trip during the period June 29-July 10 which is the period immediately after the legislative elections are held when high-level ministry contacts might need to be re-initiated given election results. This is also the period when Ms. Lecorps, the local HAFED project manager, will be out of the country. Other large scale events such as the recent private/public sector economic symposium at which one or more in-depth presentations can be made would also be valuable opportunities for orientation sessions and activities. Otherwise, Ms. Lecorps

seems very confident of her abilities to conduct sessions for small groups and individuals.

- B. *Technical* - Time was spent with Philip familiarizing him with certain aspects of the e-mail system and using the batch menu structure for compressing and uncompressing files. A discussion was held on improving the storage of diskettes and related materials in a special place. Not all diskettes which he should have in his possession can be located and there are no extra diskettes for making working copies of program disks. Philip would benefit from extra training in computer literacy and system operation including virus protection procedures. The regular Friday back-up tape was made as well as an extra tape which I am carrying back to begin the process of establishing a mirror system at VITA in the event of an unrecoverable system failure which might require shipping the additional machine.

Attempts to use the F-PROT anti-virus software when tests indicated that the diskette bearing this program was itself infected with the "Noname" virus and attempts to remove it were not immediately successful.

- C. *Miscellaneous* - The morning was spent at USAID with Florence making copies of the original questionnaires for Mario to carry back with him to check for data coding integrity and to be sure that current entries are consistent with paper records (about 20 records could have been lost recently during a computer process).

06/17/95 - VILLA CREOLE HOTEL

USAID Project Development Officer Gail Spence came to discuss various aspects of the project in greater detail.

She suggested that skills bank was deliberately designed to find highly-skilled individuals (eg, at least Bachelor's degrees and five years experience) and that it was appropriate to not consider registrants that did not have this kind of background. At the same time, other individuals (such as recent university graduates or students) should not be discarded because there could be some limited call for these people too. If the latter are included in the skills bank, they should not be counted towards the 1500. While 1500 names is an objective, it does not appear to be based on a scientific appraisal of actual numbers of

identifiable highly-skilled Haitians and others with extensive Haiti and/or language experience nor the standard 2-5% response rates to questionnaires of all kinds. It was also pointed out that the Haitian-American community in the U.S. consists of a significant number of people who are Haitian by birth but in fact have lived their entire lives in the U.S. without much international exposure or experience, including in Haiti itself.

There is great concern that access to the skills bank be made as easy as possible, given that the HAFED office is not centrally located and that there is a desire keep the general employment-seeking populace from queuing and possibly fighting outside the gates. Having an answering machine would provide greater exposure during evening and weekend hours. The project should investigate calling potential registrants on the phone and having the information delivered verbally while VITA/HAFED fills out the form in their stead (which in fact is going on to a limited extent now). Additional sources of registrants were suggested, including the entire HAFED database, the Bryler companies, local Haitian professional associations, individuals identified through Boston-area groups and universities (specifically, Boston University and Northeastern University), Black Professionals in International Affairs (Washington DC), and AFRICARE (Washington DC). Regular advertizing should be considered in Miami and New York Haitian newspapers.

It was suggested that the local HAFED office should always provide names of Haitian-Americans living in the U.S. in addition to local Haitians even when the requestor indicates preference for local hires, given the political objectives of the project (broadly, repatriation).

It was reiterated that the donor community in Haiti is small and talks to each other. VITA/HAFED should do everything in its power to make this a successful effort because a mediocre result will be immediately known to all and would hamper any future efforts to work with these donors. Success is highly correlated with use of the skills bank, echoing observations of the initial briefing.

There is recognition that generating demand for the skills bank takes time and that existing circumstances surrounding the elections are probably mitigating that demand at present. VITA/HAFED generally gets good marks for responding quickly to requests that have come in.

With regard to budget amendments, USAID will consider such and is waiting for a proposal from VITA. In terms of transportation, it is not likely that USAID would assign a vehicle to the project, since it is not as yet a sector-specific activity but is rather a cross-cutting project. More likely is that USAID would approve rental of a vehicle once or twice a week for the needs surveys and follow-up activities within Port-au-Prince. Sources of such vehicles are either the regular rental agencies (Hertz, Avis, etc.) or private individuals who rent out vehicles on a daily or weekly basis. The former run \$100-150 per day while the latter is 30% less. Visits to other cities are not seen as a priority activity, since most organizations have their headquarters within Port-au-Prince. Other aspects of such a proposal, including provision of computer-based training for the local HAFED staff, will also be considered.

APPENDIX B

EVALUATION FORMS OF SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENTS THROUGH SKILLS BANK

HAITI SKILLS BANK
USERS EVALUATION FORM

You recently received names of qualified people in the area of Management & Industrial. Please evaluate the service you received from the Haiti Skills Bank by completing the following form:

1. Were the resumes provided in a timely manner?
 Yes, No

2. Did the people meet the requirements outlined by you in your request?
 Yes, No

3. Did you actually hire anyone from the resumes provided?
 Yes, No

4. Will you contact the Haiti Skills Bank for your future recruitment needs?
 Yes, No

If you have answered 'no' to any of the questions above, explain and comment on how improvement can be made:

Name: David Ligandi
Org. Industrie Metallurgique de Haiti / National Bag & Trenching Co
Address: Autoprote de Delmas entre 30 & 32

Phone: 46 0500 / 46 0015 / 46 0086
Fax: 46 0615
E-Mail: Polif 13

HAITI SKILLS BANK
USERS EVALUATION FORM

You recently received names of qualified people in the area of _____ . Please evaluate the service you received from the Haiti Skills Bank by completing the following form:

1. Were the resumes provided in a timely manner?
 Yes, No

2. Did the people meet the requirements outlined by you in your request?
 Yes, No

3. ~~Yes~~ Yes, No hire anyone from the resumes provided?

4. Will you contact the Haiti Skills Bank for your future recruitment needs?
 Yes, No

If you have answered "no" to any of the questions above, please explain and comment on how improvement can be made:

Name: Michaële BERROUET FIGNOLE
Org. CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE ET D'INDUSTRIE D'HAITI
Rue _____
Phone: 22-2475 / 23-0786 / 22-2661
Fax: _____
E-Mail _____ 22-0281

APPENDIX C

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES PREPARED DURING EVALUATION VISIT

HAFED/HAITI SKILLS BANK MENU STRUCTURE

The purpose of the menu structure is to make operations easier to use for HAFED staff. The menu is a series of batch files that are executed in succession by typing the capital letters at the left of each described function. For example, the operation "UP" executes the batch file UP.BAT for which the operator simply types "up" in upper or lower case. The menu itself is a text file (MENU.TXT) which is placed on the screen by MENU.BAT. Simply type "menu" in upper or lower case to see the menu. To see what is going on inside the UP.BAT batch file, simply type "type up.bat" and functions inside the batch file will be revealed.

Following is a description of each function:

- *UP* - uncompresses the master database SKILLS.DB and SKILLS.MB files received from VITA and places them into their proper operating directories.
- *H* - runs the SKILLSH module for entering and searching local records.
- *M* - runs the MAIL program (part of the SEAdog suite) where incoming messages are read and outgoing messages are composed. When attaching files to an outgoing message (after using the ZIP function, for example, to send VITA the SKILLSH.DB and SKILLSH.MB) remember to give the entire path where the attached file(s) is to be found and its complete name, in this above example c:\out\skillsh.zip.
- *S* - runs the master database SKILLS.DB and SKILLS.MB received from VITA (used after UP above).
- *T* - runs the MAILER portion of the SEAdog suite which is the program that connects with the VITAnet computer during the daily e-mail connection. This should be run about 15 minutes before each connection (12:15pm) as renumbering messages and creation of a daily log of operations (found in DAY.LOG) is accomplished.
- *ZIP* - compresses the two files SKILLSH.DB and SKILLSH.MB representing local entries into SKILLSH.ZIP to be sent to VITA. Following ZIP, the operator would run M (above) to attach this file to an outgoing message to VITA by giving complete name and path (c:\out\skillsh.zip).

VITANET E-MAIL USAGE HAFED <-> HAITI

The SEAdog system installed on the HAFED computer can provide electronic messaging to and from personnel at VITA as well as millions of addresses on the Internet. Internet messaging could be very useful, for example, in case coordination activities with Haitian-Americans and others in the United States who have e-mail addresses. You can always tell an Internet-style address by the existence of an "@" sign somewhere in the address.

To send attached files, however, Internet addresses cannot be used because the Internet does not allow files attached to messages to pass through without some complicated procedures. So it is easiest to send attached files related to the Skills bank activities to a special mailbox we have set up for this purpose that does not go through the Internet. **DO NOT SEND ATTACHED FILES TO INTERNET ADDRESSES.**

Sending Attached Files

To send attached files to VITA, **ONLY** use the following procedure after you have entered the MAIL program (it doesn't matter if you use capital letters, small letters or a combination). You can enter MAIL by typing M from the main menu:

To: 109/165
To Whom: Brij Mathur
Attach files? Y (yes)
File(s) name: c:\out\skillsh.zip

Sending Messages

To all other people, use their Internet addresses to send messages which are provided below. You can also send messages only to Brij at his Internet address when there are no attached files. As an example, here is how you would send an Internet e-mail address to me:

To: 109/165
To Whom: garyg@vita.org

Here are some of the common Internet e-mail addresses you will probably be using:

bbucci@vita.org Barbra Bucci
bmathur@vita.org Brij Mathur
rmuffley@vita.org Richard Muffley
garyg@vita.org Gary Garriott
hnorman@vita.org Henry Norman
bryler@vita.org Pierre Leger
info@vita.org Mario Camilien

INSTRUCTIONS ON USE OF DBIT.EXE

DBIT.EXE is a program which will take a file and convert that file into smaller files. This technique might be useful in the future when SKILLSH.DB and SKILLSH.MB become so large that email transmission of these files becomes difficult because the telephone system won't be able to handle these large files without hanging up and trying over and over. It would work better to transmit smaller files to VITA. Then VITA uses one of the files sent along with the smaller files (a .COM file) to reconstruct the original file from the smaller pieces.

Similarly, VITA could transmit the SKILLS.DB and SKILLS.MB files as smaller files which would then be reconstructed by HAFED into the larger original file.

Here's how it would work.

HAFED -> VITA

The current system allows the HAFED operator to create a file called SKILLSH.ZIP which contains within it the latest SKILLSH.DB and SKILLSH.MB files. If this file gets very big and the email system cannot handle the transfer because of the telephone line (it disconnects over and over again), the operator would use the DBIT.EXE program to make smaller files.

First, let's assume that the SKILLSH.ZIP file is 102,096 bytes in size. Before appending SKILLSH.ZIP to a message being sent by the SEAdog system, the operator would run DBIT.EXE in the following manner:

DBIT SKILLSH.ZIP BLOCKSIZE=20000 OUTNAME=SKILLSH

This means that DBIT will take SKILLSH.ZIP and create six new smaller files of 20,000 bytes each and one with what is left over) called:

SKILLSH.000 20,000
SKILLSH.001 20,000
SKILLSH.002 20,000
SKILLSH.003 20,000
SKILLSH.004 20,000
SKILLSH.005 2,096

It will also create another file called

SKILLSH.COM 385

All seven files should be sent to VITA as an appended files to an email message. In order to avoid entering each and every file to an appended message, the operator could enter these files into a temporary directory all by themselves (for example, C:\TEMP) and then append C:\TEMP*. * to a SEAdog message. This will transmit all files to VITA.

At the VITA end, VITA will receive all these files, place them in a unique directory and run

SKILLSH.COM

which will put all the files back together and create SKILLSH.ZIP again.

The HAFED operator should remember to empty the C:\TEMP directory after this operation so that the next time the operation occurs, there will be no confusion in using older files that have already been sent to VITA. If this operation occurs with frequency, then a batch file can be devised to automate the operation.

VITA -> HAFED

VITA will notify HAFED in a message that attached files are being sent which need to be put back together to form the original large file, in this case SKILLS.ZIP. SKILLS.ZIP

includes the latest SKILLS.DB and SKILLS.MB. So following the same example, the HAFED operator would find seven files in C:\MAIL\FILES in the with the following names and sizes:

SKILLS.000 20,000
SKILLS.001 20,000
SKILLS.002 20,000
SKILLS.003 20,000
SKILLS.004 20,000
SKILLS.005 2,096
SKILLS.COM 385

The HAFED operator then takes these seven files and copies them into a working directory (say, C:\IN) all by themselves and runs

SKILLS.COM

which will then recreate SKILLS.ZIP from all these pieces. The C:\MAIL\FILES directory should be emptied after this operation so that any future files sent in this manner from VITA will not be confused with older files already received previously. If necessary, a batch file can also be devised to automate this operation.

NOTE: When DBIT.EXE is run, a message asking whether to register the program comes back. Just answer "No" (by Pressing N) and the program will continue to execute.