

TRIP REPORT #P-168

Traveler: Dr. Perle Combary, INTRAH/PRIME Regional Program and Evaluation Officer

Country Visited: Mali

Date of Trip: July 6-17, 1996

Purpose of Trip: To represent the INTRAH/Lomé Office at a JHPIEGO-sponsored Reproductive Health Symposium

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From July 6-17, 1996, INTRAH/PRIME Regional Program and Evaluation Officer Dr. Perle Combary visited Bamako, Mali. The purpose of the visit was to represent the INTRAH/Lomé Office at a JHPIEGO-sponsored Reproductive Health Symposium. During the visit, Dr. Combary met with representatives from USAID/Mali, Division of Family and Community Health (DSFC) and the Health, Population and Rural Water Project (PSPHR) to follow-up on the INTRAH proposal to develop a national in-service training strategy.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Dr. Combary attended the JHPIEGO-sponsored Reproductive Health Symposium that was held at the Grand Hotel of Bamako from July 8-12, 1996. INTRAH's participation had been recommended by USAID/Mali during the monitoring visit conducted by Mr. Pape Gaye and Mrs. Beatrice Ekué on March 9-16, 1996. The goal of the symposium was to discuss the introduction of reproductive health components into the curricula of pre-service training institutions in Mali. About 50 representatives from the Directorate of Higher Education, the National Directorate of Social Action, the DSFC, PSPHR, the National Medical School, the health schools, USAID/Mali, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, EVF/EMP, JSI and IEC/Population Project attended the workshop.

During group work and plenary sessions, participants discussed the current status of pre-service training in schools, identified the reproductive health components, activity fields and competencies to be incorporated into the curricula, and drafted action plans for the introduction of those components. The action plans will be finalized by each school in preparation for the JHPIEGO-sponsored Regional Reproductive Health Conference to be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, September 23 - 27, 1996.

During the symposium, JHPIEGO, DSFC, WHO, PSPHR and INTRAH exhibited family planning and reproductive health posters and training/demonstration materials. The exhibits permitted participants to familiarize themselves with the reference materials available at those institutions.

2. During the visit, Dr. Combarry met with representatives of USAID/Mali, DSFC and PSPHR to provide clarifications on the scope of work proposed for development of the national in-service training strategy, the workplan, and the budget for INTRAH technical assistance. The training needs assessment to be held in September 1996 also was discussed, including the methodology and the arrangements required prior to the assessment.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Finding

JHPIEGO conducted a training needs assessment in the pre-service schools in Mali in March 1996. Main findings/conclusions from the assessment discussed during the symposium were that:

- training curricula are inadequate to respond to health service needs;
- training curricula need to be updated and harmonized;
- reproductive health contents in training curricula are weak;
- the organization, monitoring and evaluation of practical training are weak;
- the health personnel at the operational level are not sensitized on the objectives of the national health policy;
- the role of the Interinstitutional Training Group (GIF) is not well known;
- there is a lack of coordination among the pre-service training institutions;
- there is a lack of didactic materials and qualified trainers and preceptors; and
- the trainers are not updated and refreshed regularly.

The above problems seriously affect the quality of the training of health providers and their performance in the field.

Recommendation

While developing the national in-service training strategy, GIF should take the above problems into consideration. Particular attention should be given to: the links between pre-service and in-service training and services in the field; the coordination mechanisms at national, regional and district levels; and the supervision and follow-up systems.

2. Finding

PSPHR would like the strategy document to be available to Regional Program

Managers for the preparation of their CY97 operational plans starting in November 1996. In addressing this issue, the proposed methodology was discussed. It was agreed that the analysis of the assessment data will be done during the fourth week of September 1996, and that preliminary findings/conclusions/recommendations will be presented and discussed during a round table with the GIF members, representatives of USAID/Mali, and other interested institutions. The workshop that will immediately follow the assessment will focus on developing a draft in-service training strategy document and preparing for the Strategy Development Workshop. With this schedule, a final draft of the training strategy document should be available at the end of the Strategy Development Workshop for use by the regions in the development of their CY97 operational plans. Timely completion of the proposed activities will depend, however, on the timely completion of the financial arrangements.

Recommendation

PSPHR should make all required arrangements for the funding of the local costs related to the proposed activities and follow-up with USAID/Mali on the arrangements for the funding of INTRAH technical assistance.

3. **Finding**

PSPHR would like the Strategy Development Workshop to be held at Selingue instead of Bamako in order to ensure effective and intensive participation. PSPHR also proposed collecting the documentation and information available at Bamako prior to the assessment. Finally, PSPHR needs additional information on the assessment in order to select the members of the national assessment team and resource persons and inform representatives in the regions where visits will be made.

Recommendations

PSPHR should collect required cost elements and revise the local costs budget for the Strategy Development Workshop to be held in Selingue.

PSPHR should use the INTRAH training needs assessment checklist to select the information to be collected prior to the assessment.

INTRAH should provide to PSPHR information on profiles for the national assessment team members and resource persons. INTRAH should clarify where and how data will be collected and what data PSPHR will need to make the required arrangements in advance (selection of assessment team members and resource persons and information to the regions).

4. **Finding**

Dr. Combarry discussed the budget for INTRAH technical assistance with USAID/Mali. All cost elements were reviewed and negotiated. USAID/Mali requested that the budget be revised in order to update the per diem rates and consultant fees and harmonize the ground transportation amounts. USAID/Mali will prepare a contract by the end of July 1996 and submit it to INTRAH/Chapel Hill for review and signature. USAID/Mali would like the contract to be fully signed by mid-August 1996.

Recommendation

INTRAH should revise the proposed budget for INTRAH technical assistance and send it to USAID/Mali by July 18, 1996.