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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Agency for International Development (AID) was charged by the U.S. Congress to implement the Central American Peace Scholarships (CAPS) project to achieve two primary goals. AID's Caribbean and Latin American Scholarships Program (CLASP) Project Paper, revised in 1987, expresses the dual goal as follows:

The goal of CLASP is to (a) contribute to the formation of more effective manpower resources, thereby assuring the leadership and technical skills needed for the progressive, balanced, and pluralistic development of selected Caribbean basin and South American countries, and (b) strengthen mutual understanding between the United States and its Latin and Caribbean neighbors.

This report provides the Guatemala Mission and other interested individuals with information regarding the extent to which this dual goal is being realized and suggests ways they can continue to improve the implementation of the CAPS project. The findings reported represent an analysis of data gathered from various sources: (a) exit questionnaire/interviews with 1,114 Trainees prior to their leaving the U. S.; (b) returnee questionnaire/interviews with 391 returned Trainees collected by an Aguirre International team in Guatemala during May 1988 (All 2457 Guatemala Peace Scholars who completed training in the U.S. between March 1985 and March 1988 served as the population from which a 16 percent random sample was drawn.); and (c) interviews with Guatemala's project managers and staff and with representatives of grassroots referral agencies.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Overall, Guatemala's CAPS project is a example of successful project implementation. The Mission has complied with CLASP policy mandates in selecting the intended target groups as well as in meeting important performance standards set for CLASP projects. Though there are some aspects of project implementation that need refining, the project is clearly promoting its primary goals in that Trainees report (a) that training has helped them reach their own and their country's objectives and (b) a positive image of the U.S.

The successful implementation of the CLASP project in general, and Guatemala's CAPS project to date can be attributed to:

- high profile of the CLASP program within AID/W;
- strong direction of the CLASP program by a high-level AID/W oversight committee;
- strong direction of the CAPS project by AID/W project managers;
- intense involvement by USAID/G's management team;
- Mission Program Officer's effective interpretation and implementation of CAPS vision;

- strong commitment of CAPS Guatemala's Training Officer as the CAPS project manager;
- strong commitment of the representatives of Guatemalan grass-roots referral agencies;
- efficient technical procedures;
- effective use of the Management Information System (CLASP Information System--CIS);
- innovative grassroots recruitment and preselection processes;
- successful selection of the target groups;
- adequate recruitment, preselection and selection procedures and documentation;
- effective use of the CLASP process evaluation contractor; and
- cost-effective programs.

ASSESSMENT MODEL

The Assessment Model adopted for Guatemala's CAPS project is the same as that used for other CLASP projects. The Kissinger Report, the General Accounting Office (GAO) Report to the Congress of the United States entitled, "U.S. and Soviet Bloc Training of Latin American and Caribbean Students: Considerations in Developing Future U.S. Programs," and the CLASP Project Paper are the source documents for goals, specific objectives, and performance standards. The Mission's Action Plan and CAPS Country Training Plan define strategies for achieving these goals and objectives.

The Report of the National Bipartisan Commission of Central America (Kissinger Report)

The Kissinger Report contains the policy goals to be assessed: (a) a foreign policy/democracy goal and (b) a training goal. The central message of the report was that Central America's crisis is real and acute; that the U.S. must act boldly to meet it; and that the stakes are large for the United States, for the hemisphere, and most poignantly, for the people of Central America. The Commission expressed the conviction that political, social, and economic development goals must be addressed simultaneously. Three of the report's most potent recommendations follow from that conviction:

- establishing a program of 10,000 government-sponsored scholarships to bring Central American students to the United States;
- targeting carefully to ensure participation from all social and economic classes; and

- providing adequate preparation, such as English-language training or necessary remedial academic work, in order to satisfy admission requirements for programs in the United States.

The GAO Report

By publicizing the nature of U.S. and Soviet Bloc programs to a wide audience, the GAO Report had a large impact on the policy and program direction followed by AID in developing its specific response to the Kissinger Commission recommendation that the U.S. initiate a scholarship activity to benefit 10,000 Central Americans. The GAO Report established the importance of these priorities:

- countering Soviet Bloc activity;
- recruiting socially and economically disadvantaged individuals as a target group;
- programming undergraduate training rather than graduate training; and
- designing follow-up (Follow-On) activities after training.

Finally, it highlighted the importance of the socio-cultural context by pointing out that the scholarship activity should be flexible; consistent with the nature of the local education institutions; and based on the identified needs of each country rather than on a more generalized, homogenous, and rigidly regional approach.

The CLASP Project Paper

The CLASP Project Paper specifies four target groups: the socially/economically disadvantaged (70 percent); women (40 percent); rural and urban youth; and actual and potential leaders. (Exact percentage targets for youth and leaders have never been indicated although the expectation of significant participation is implied.)

CLASP is intended to incorporate four programmatic elements now known as the "democracy" objectives:

- CLASP candidates are to be selected on the basis of membership in specific leadership groups that are of special local concern, rather than on the basis of expected impact on more general development goals or objectives;
- CLASP Peace Scholars are to have an opportunity to engage in the American way of life and its democratic processes (to experience America);
- CLASP Peace Scholars are to have an opportunity to share their culture and values with North Americans; and

- CLASP Peace Scholars are to receive training that will facilitate achieving the goals of the program: (a) the application of training upon their return home (through a Follow-on program), and (b) continued contact leading to the development of strong friendship ties over time between individual Latin Americans and North Americans.

RESULTS

SELECTION

The data indicate that the Guatemala's CAPS project has exceeded AID/Washington targets. The data also indicate that the project has reached the intended population and has shown equity in the types of services provided to the special subgroups. Figure 1 reflects results of the Mission's selection process. Nearly all Trainees were economically disadvantaged (97 percent) and perceived as leaders of their communities (97 percent). Almost all (88 percent) came from rural areas. Since the inception of the project, women have received 43 percent of all CAPS awards. The AID Mission also successfully targeted Indigenous minorities (45 percent).

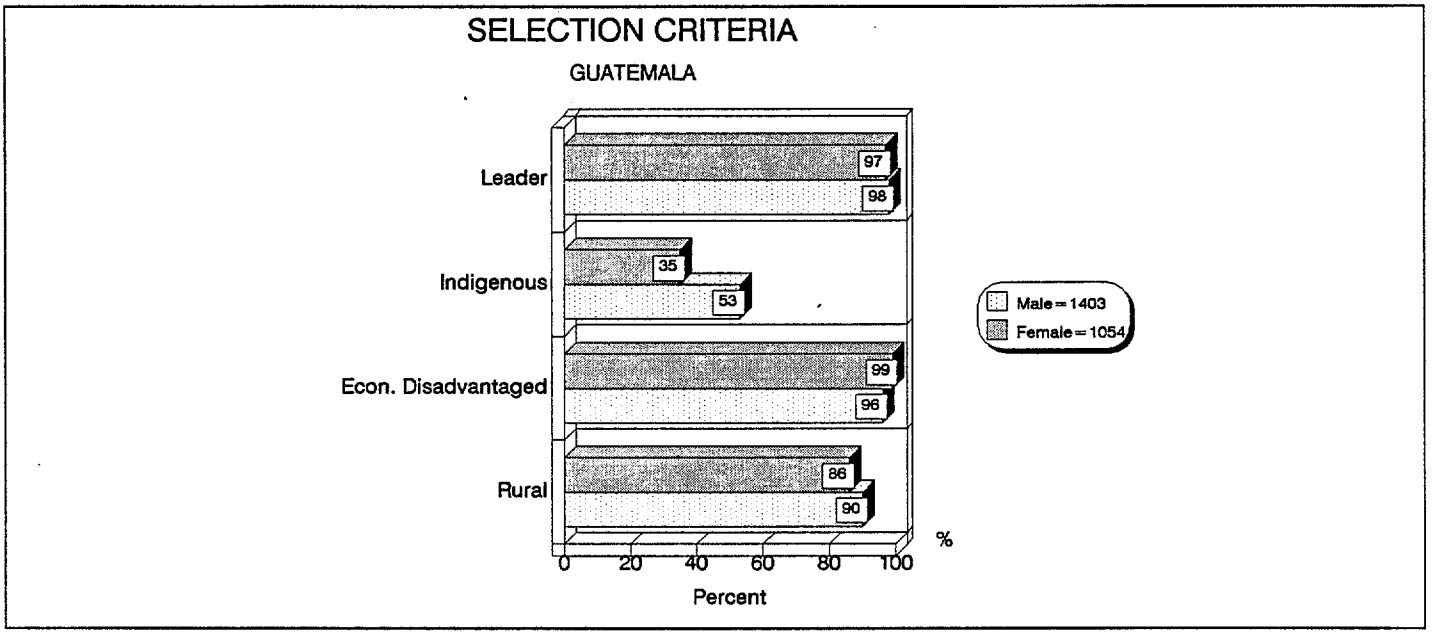


Figure 1

Sectors Being Served

Responding to one of the Kissinger Report's suggestions, Guatemala's CAPS project is serving primarily the private sector. The majority of Guatemalan Trainees (92 percent) are involved in the private sector (12 percent work for private non-profit institutions, and 80 percent work for private for-profit institutions) with the remaining 8 percent in the public (government) sector (see Figure 2).

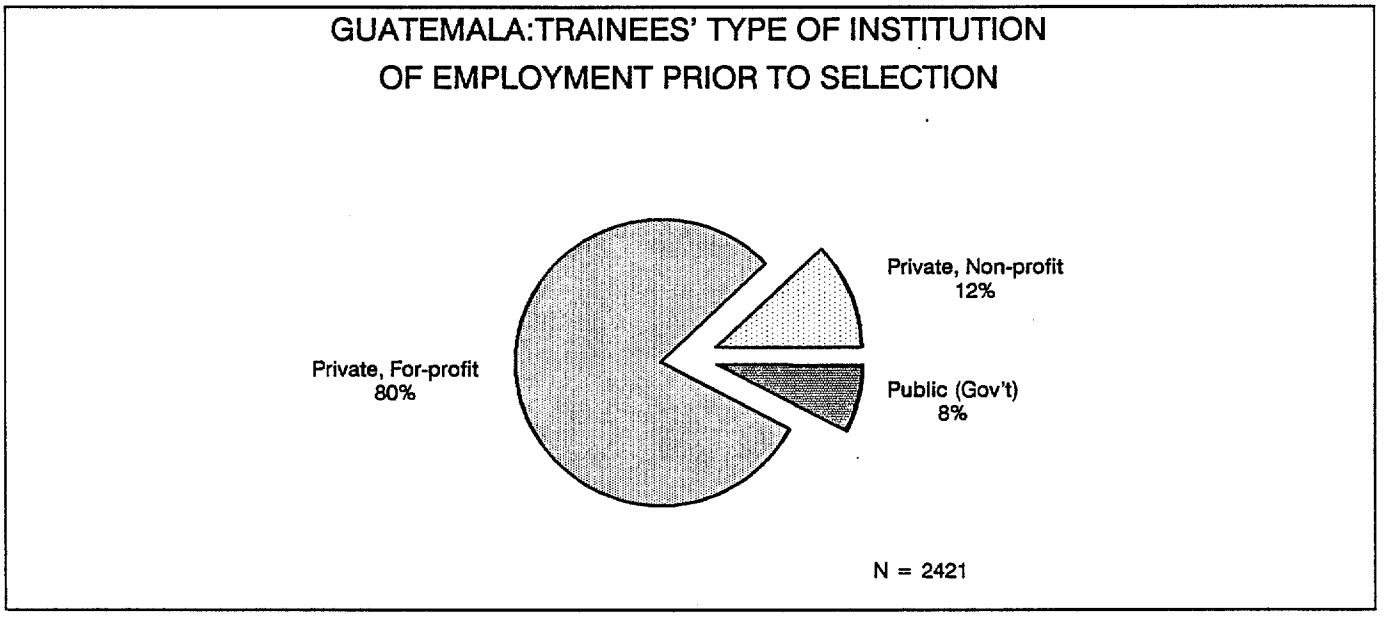


Figure 2

SERVICES BEING PROVIDED

Predeparture Preparation

All Trainees had received at least one day of predeparture orientation and one day of preorientation. Satisfaction with the amount of time between notification of selection and actual departure is much higher for FY 1988 (see Figure 3). Satisfaction with the amount of information provided before departure is slightly higher for FY 1988 (see Figure 3).

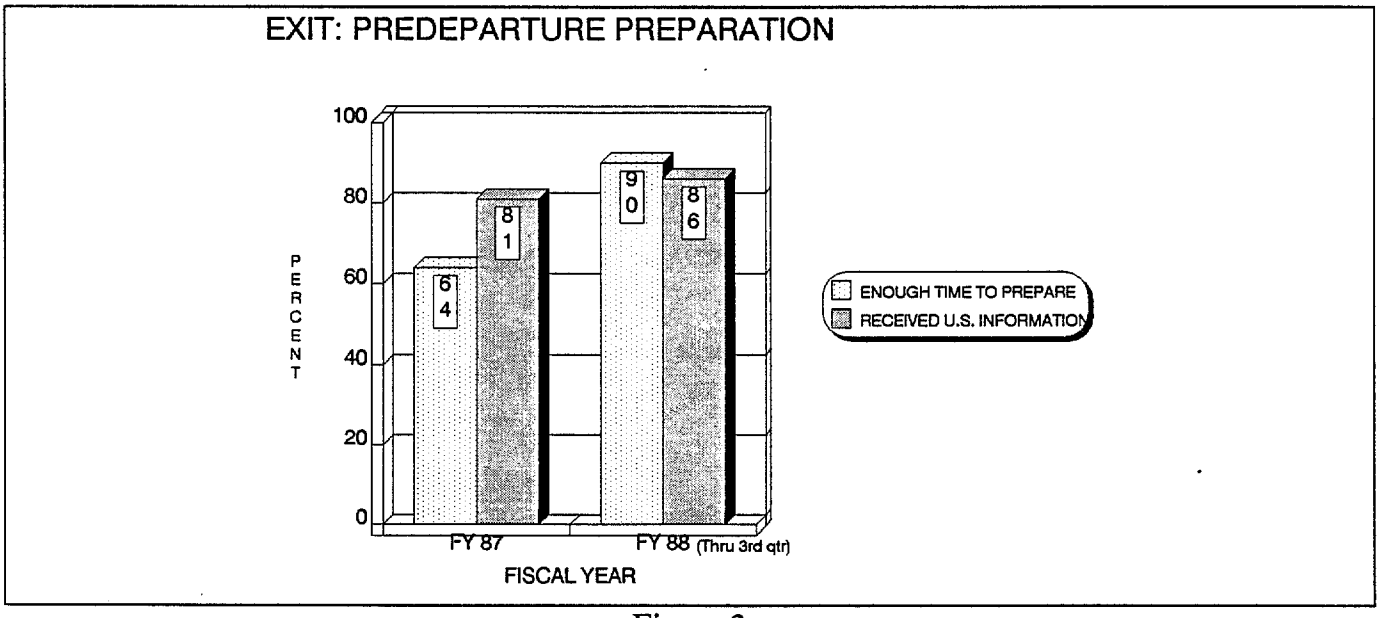


Figure 3

Training Programs

Guatemala's training programs through December 1987 have been primarily short-term (99 percent). There has been a steady upward trend in the number of training days for the short-term programs--from an average of 29 days in FY 1985 to an average of 48 days in FY 1988, as indicated in Figure 4. Fiscal year differences also were noted concerning satisfaction with the length of training. The proportion who indicated the length of training was "just right" rose from 46 percent in FY 1987 to 70 percent in FY 1988 (see Figure 5). There are fiscal year differences concerning satisfaction with training programs. While in FY 1987 81 percent of Trainees surveyed said that they had learned all they wanted to, in FY 1988 an even larger proportion (95 percent) answered in the affirmative.

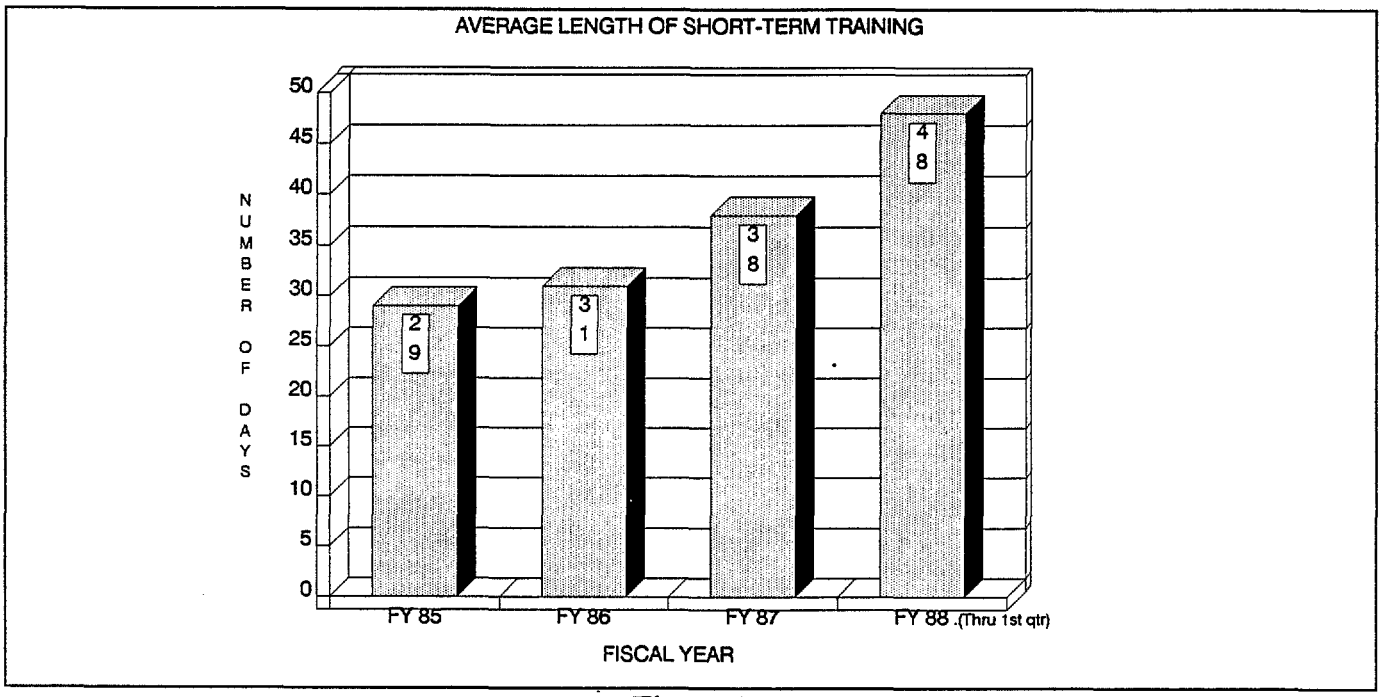


Figure 4

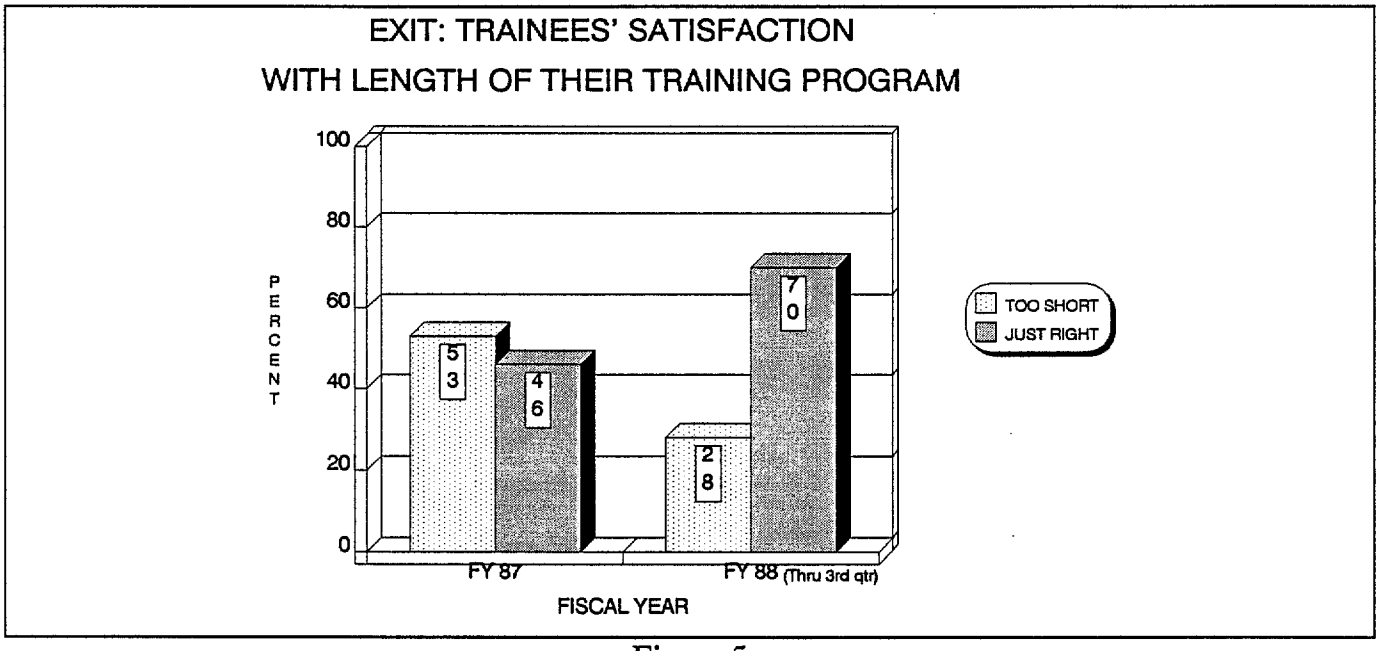


Figure 5

Among the 391 Trainees surveyed at least 3 months after return to Guatemala, there was a high overall level of satisfaction with the training received (mean = 4.5 on a 5-point scale); by comparison, the extent of having their expectations met in the training program was only slightly lower (mean = 3.8 on a 5-point scale). Regardless of training field, the majority of returnees felt their competence on the job had been improved by training.

Experience America

The project is clearly promoting its primary goals to the extent that Trainees report a positive image of the U.S. (see Figure 6). Although recent Trainees are more active in conveying information to U. S. citizens about Guatemala and discussing U.S. culture with them, the contact appears to be occurring less frequently in homes as the Mission has cut back on homestays and less often providing Trainees with the opportunity to "get to know North Americans well" (see Figure 7). Nevertheless, Trainee satisfaction with opportunities for "doing and seeing" what they wanted to in the U.S. is much higher now than in the previous fiscal year.

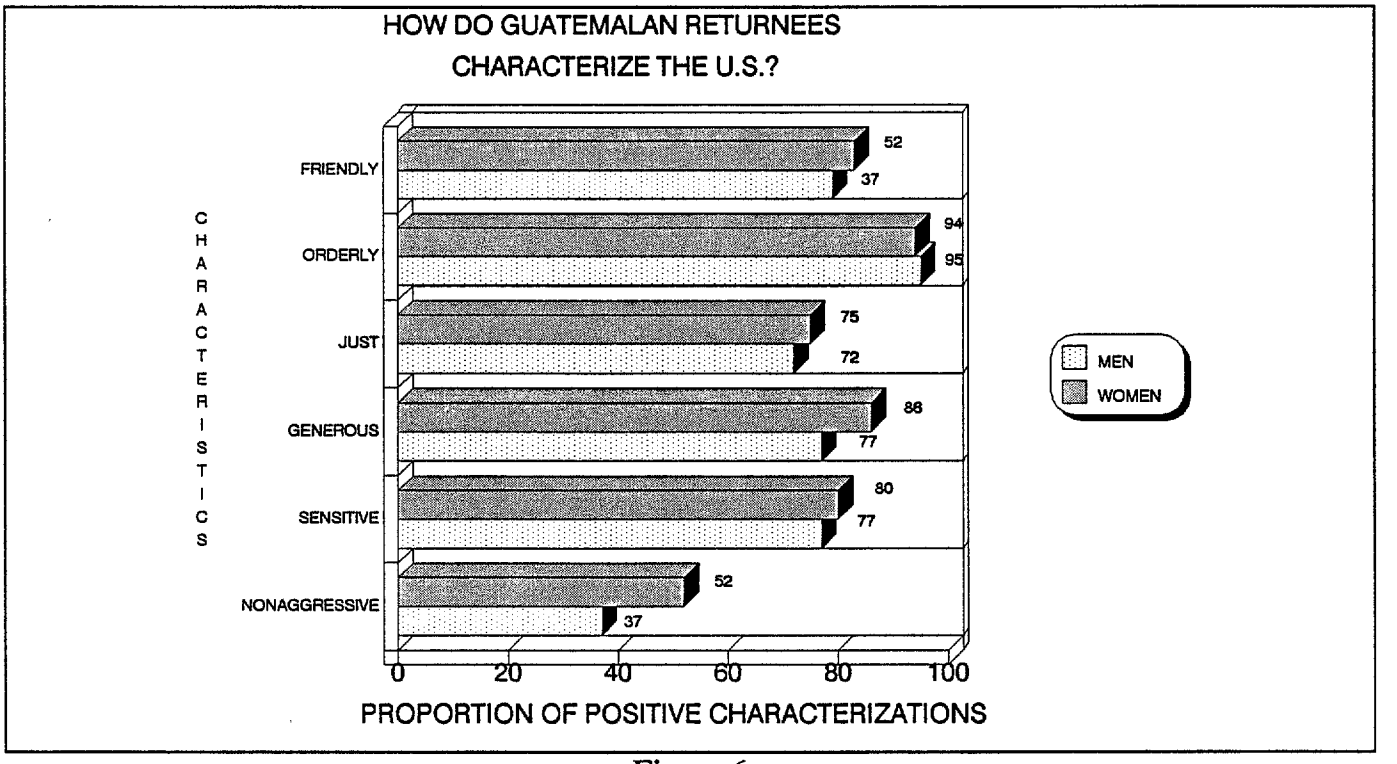


Figure 6

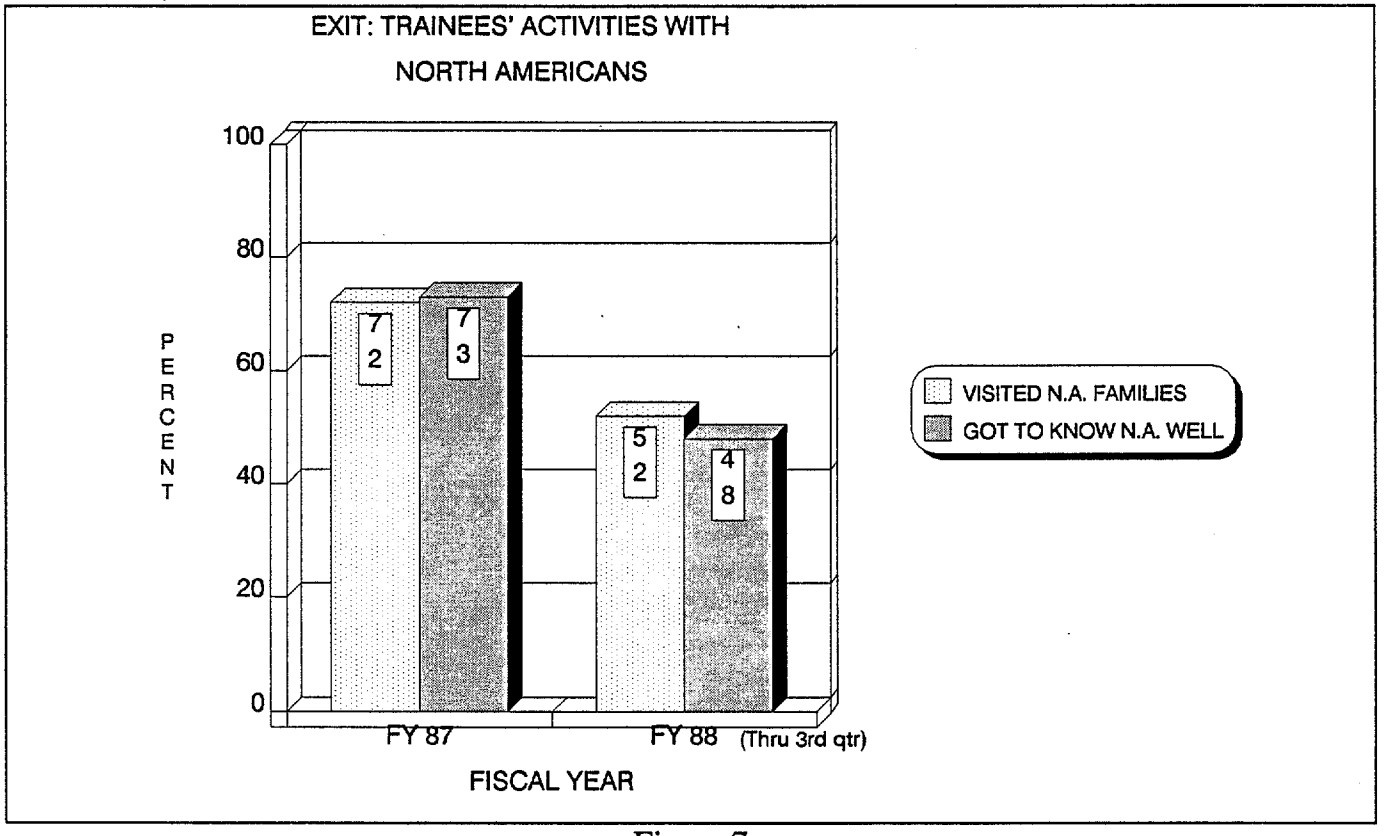


Figure 7

Follow-On

Guatemala's CAPS Follow-On program provides a model for other Follow-On programs. The alumni association has enrolled 1,800 Trainees. The Follow-On program includes an alumni association, a newsletter, training courses to reinforce leadership and technical skills, and an opportunity to apply skills through self-directed development projects which are funded through the alumni association from non-CAPS sources.

Based on responses from a random sample of returned Trainees, two-thirds have benefited from Follow-On efforts--most often provided in the form of literature and most often provided by the Mission.

The Trainees who had received Follow-On rated the usefulness of the information or services provided. They responded on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "of no use" and 5 indicating "very useful." For those receiving Follow-On from the Mission, the overall mean for usefulness was 3.2 Ratings given to Follow-On from the other sources noted below ranged from 2.85 to 3.17. Findings reported below are based on comparisons of group means. Only differences significant at the .05 level of probability are reported. The more recent returnees rated the usefulness of the Follow-On program higher than did early returnees (FY 1985) as indicated in Figure 8.

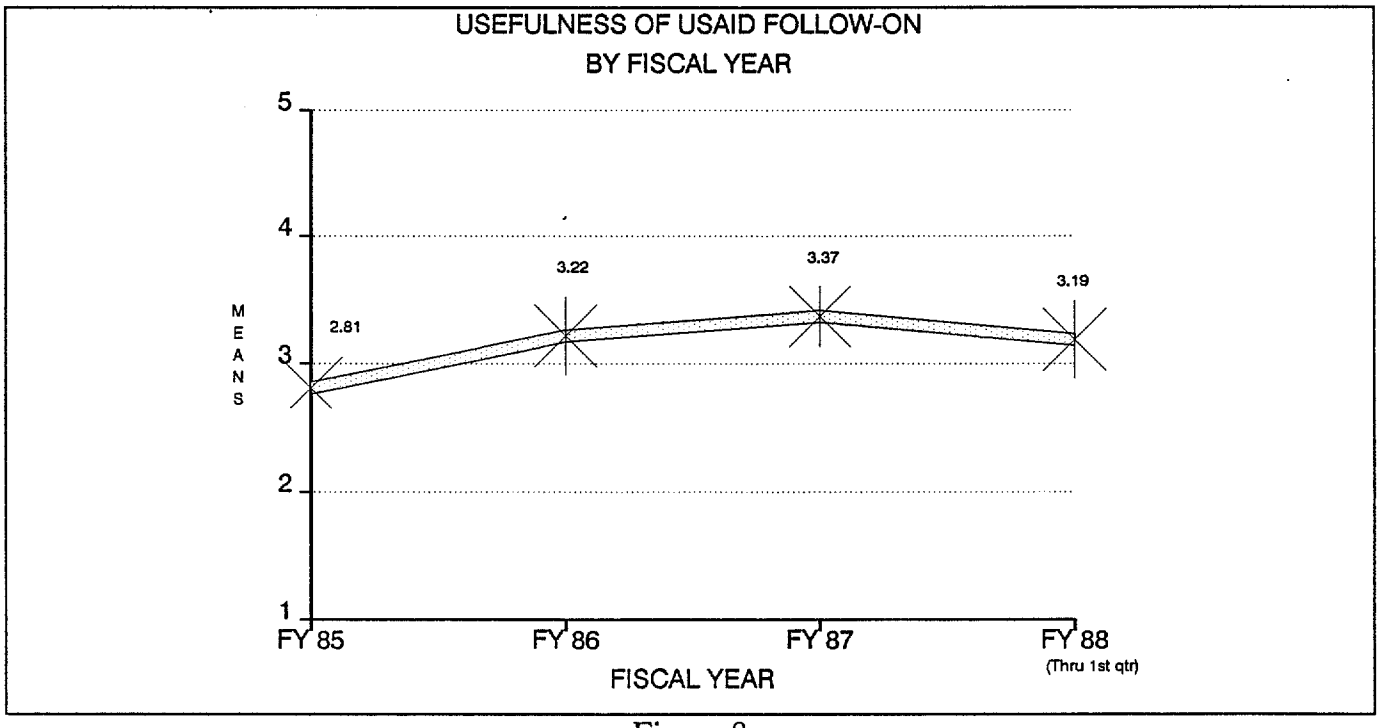


Figure 8

BENEFITS OF TRAINING

The evaluators considered two types of training benefits (1) benefits to Trainee careers and (2) benefits to development of ties with the U.S.

Benefits of Trainee Careers

Trainees rated the usefulness of training to the present job. The returnees responded on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating "not at all (useful)" and 5 indicating either "very useful," to a very great extent" or "very much," as appropriate. Mean responses ranged from 4.22 (for the overall usefulness of training to present job) to a low 1.90 (for the extent training helped increase salary). Responses were compared on the basis of sex, ethnic group (Indigenous or Ladino), fiscal year (for 4 years), and field of training. (Most respondents were trained in one of six fields--health, education, cooperatives, small business, community development or volunteer organizations) Findings reported below are based on comparisons of groups means. Only differences significant at the .05 level of probability are reported.

Results for the returnee sample indicated that (a) women found the training to be more useful in their present jobs than did men; (b) Indigenous persons were less likely than Ladinos to feel they had the resources for putting training into practice; (c) compared to Trainees in other fields, those trained in small business gave more credit to their training for increases in salaries; and (d) those trained in either education or community development/volunteer organizations gave more credit to their training for advances in their careers (see Figures 9, 10, 11 and 12).

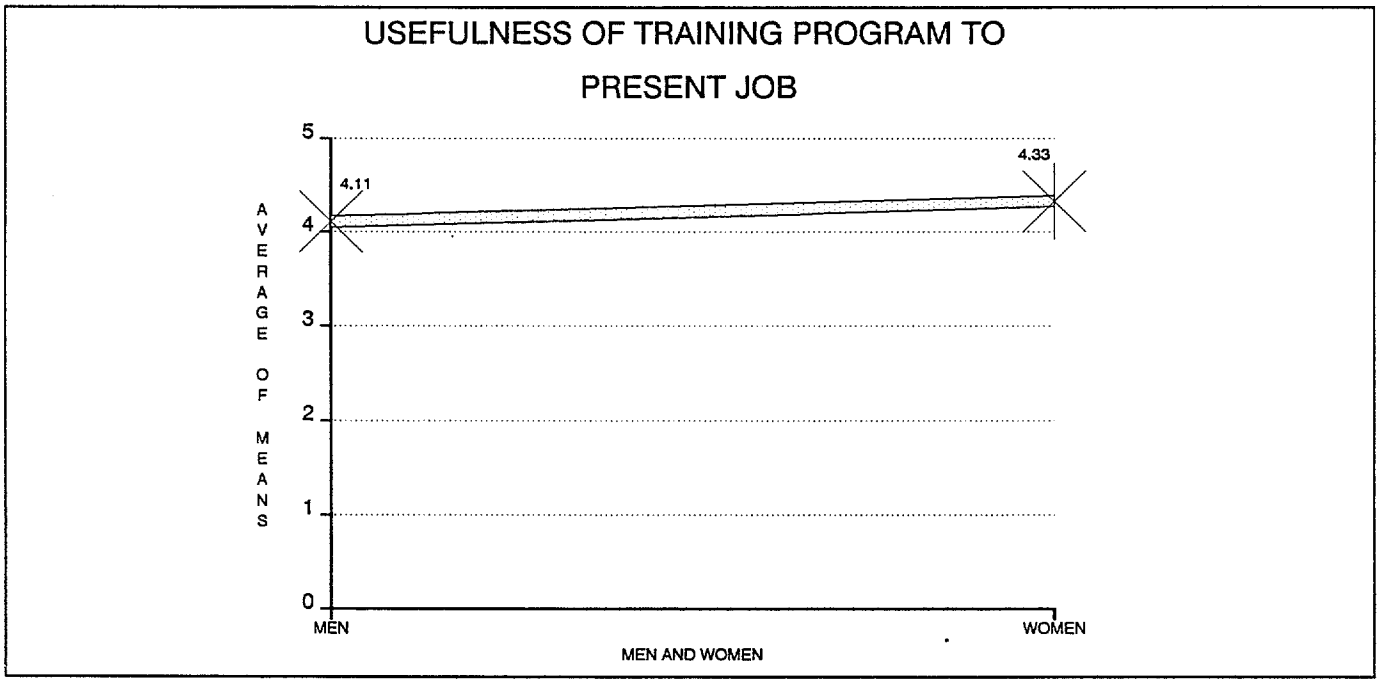
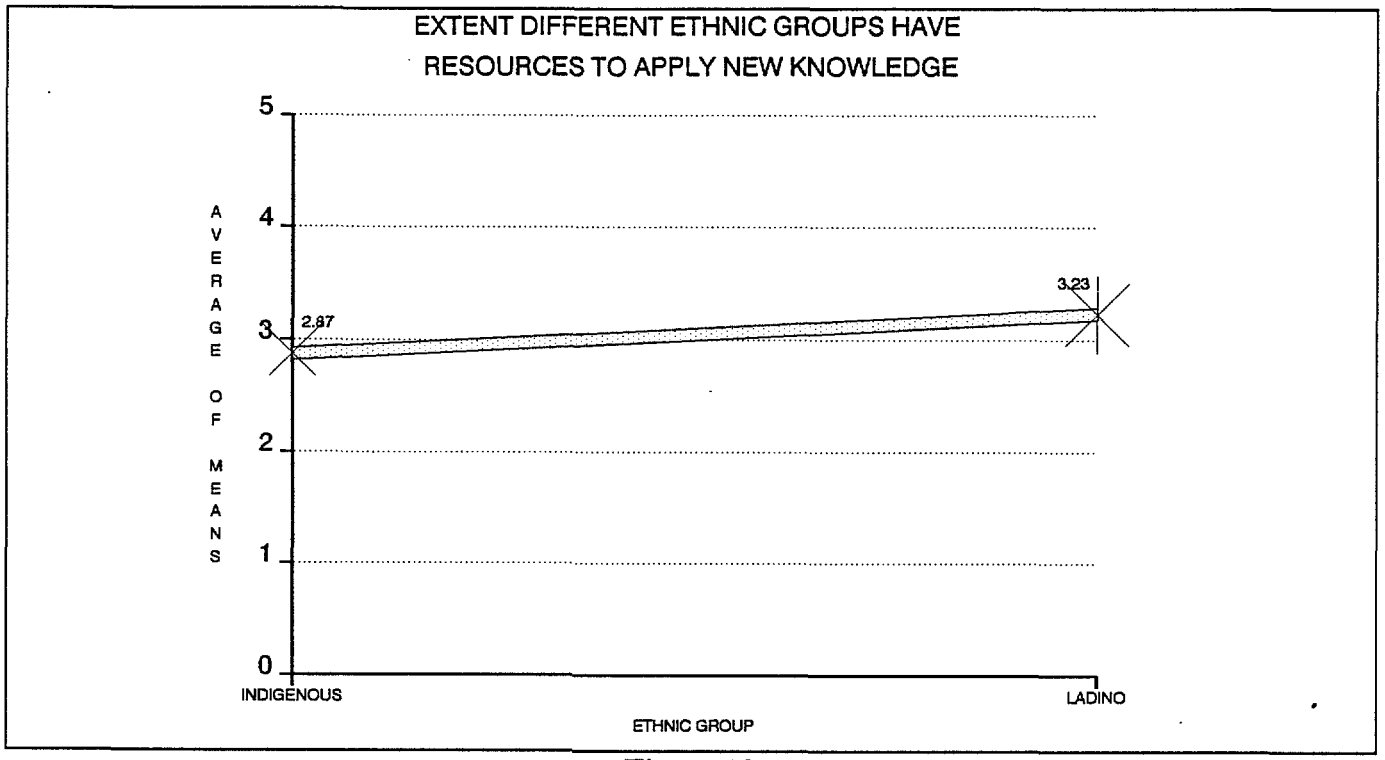


Figure 9



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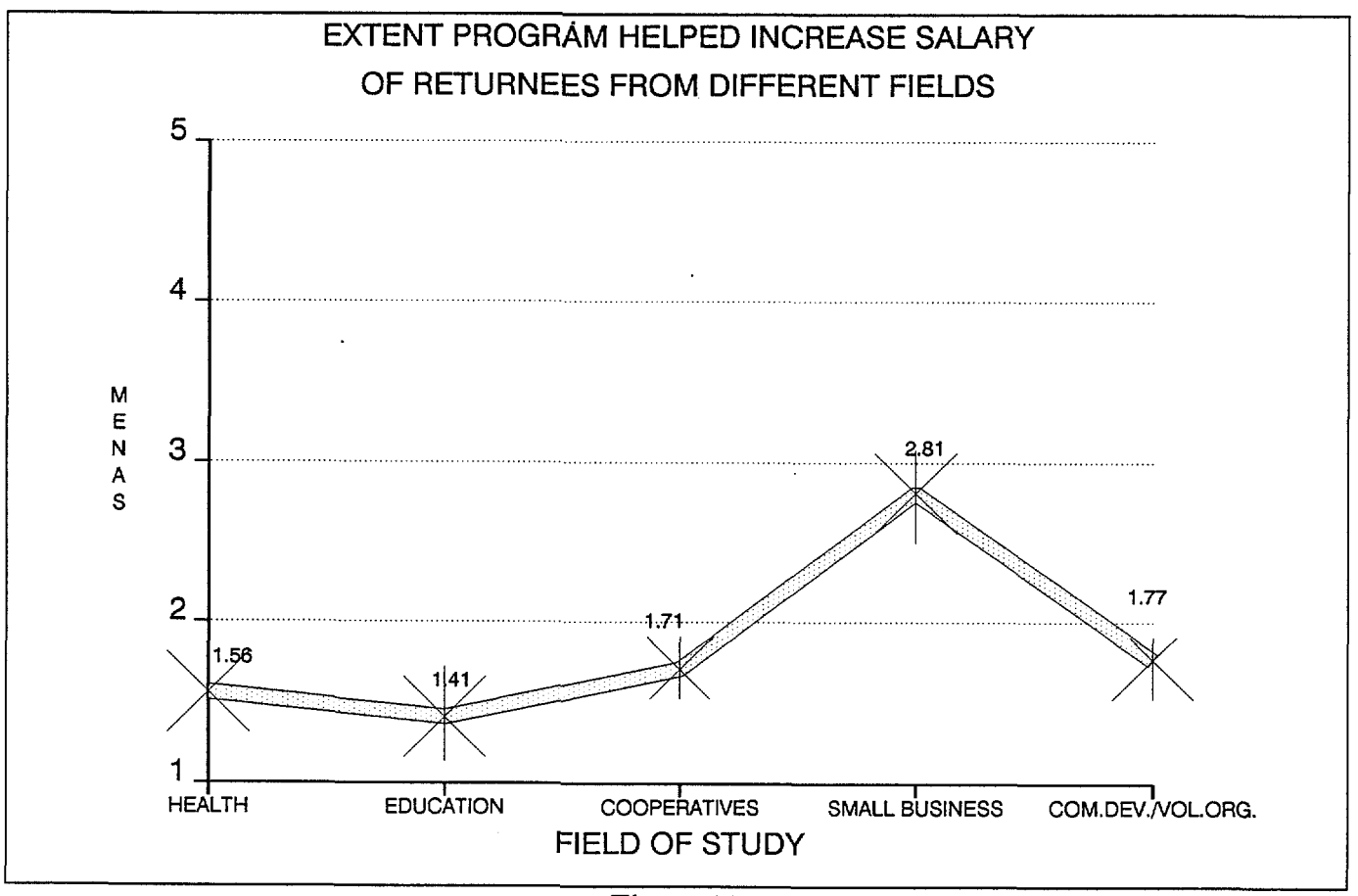

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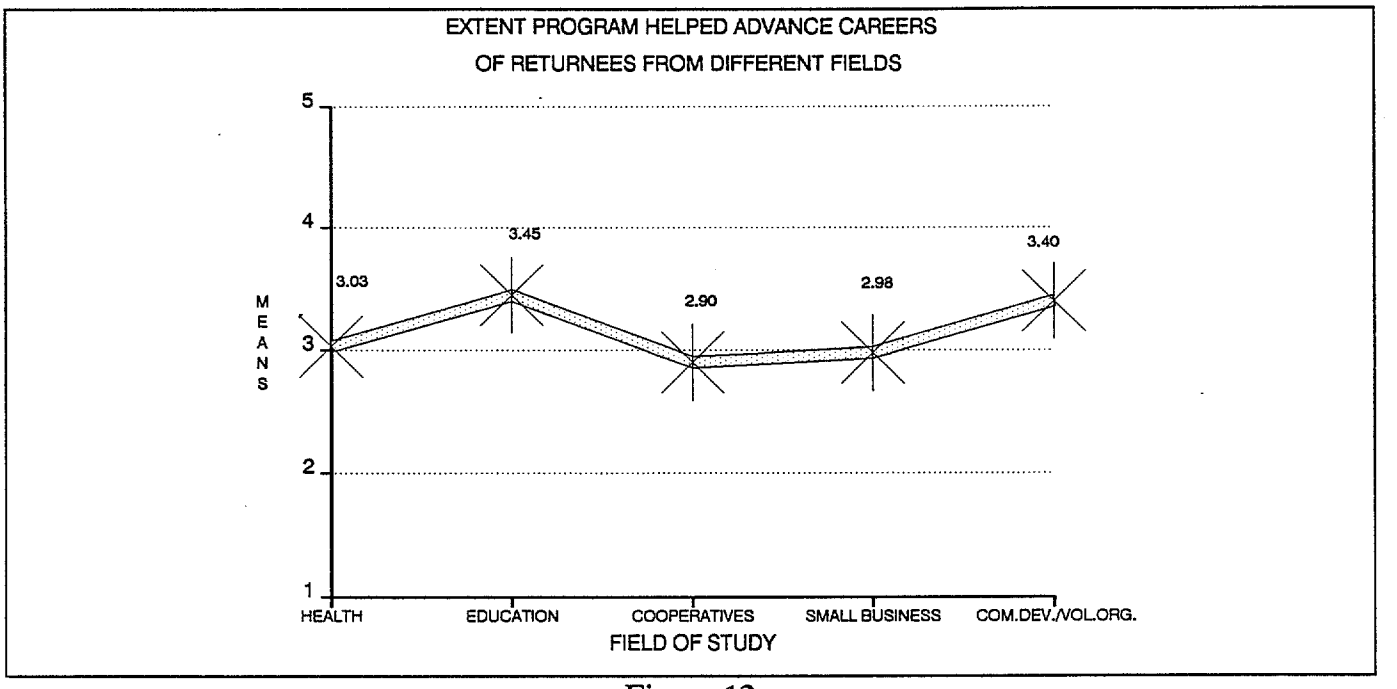

Figure 12

Benefits of Development of Ties with U.S.

The benefits of training to the development of ties with people in the U.S. varied both according to the returnees' fields of training and according to the length of training. Compared to Trainees in other fields, those trained in either education or community development/volunteer organizations found the training more useful. Recent returnees found the training more useful for developing ties than did those trained in the first two years of the project (see Figures 13; 14).

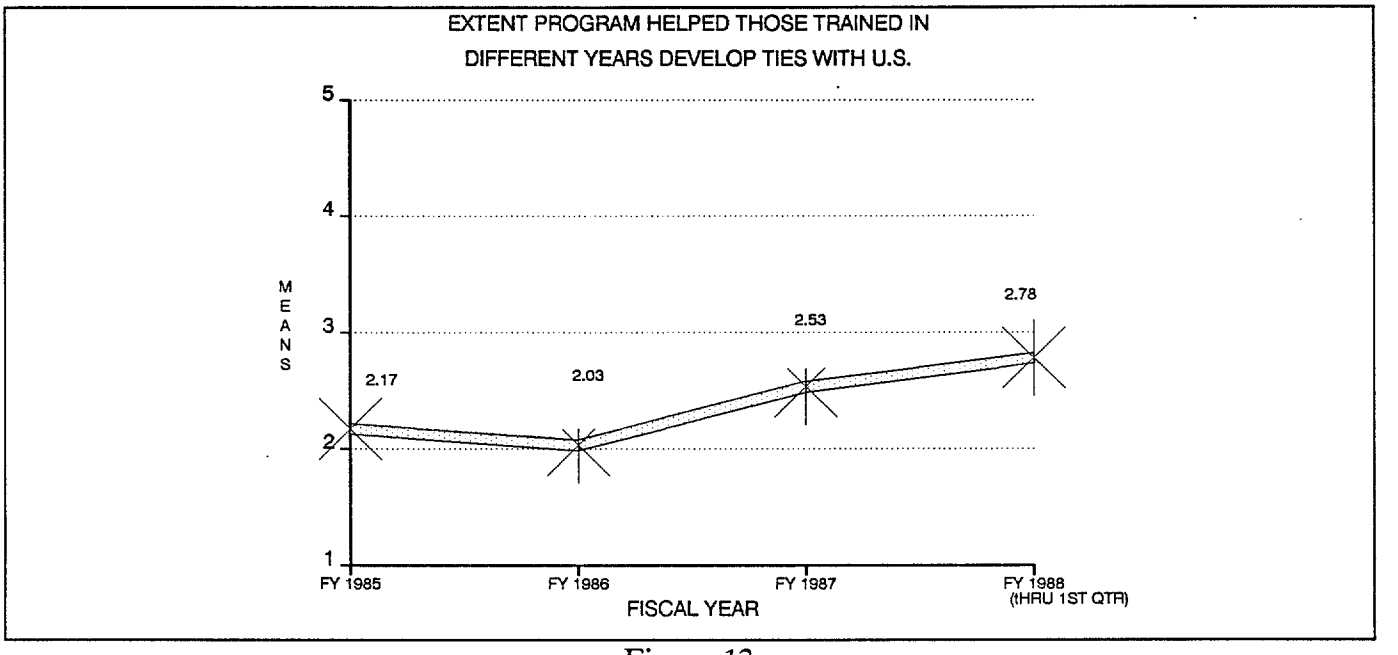

Figure 13

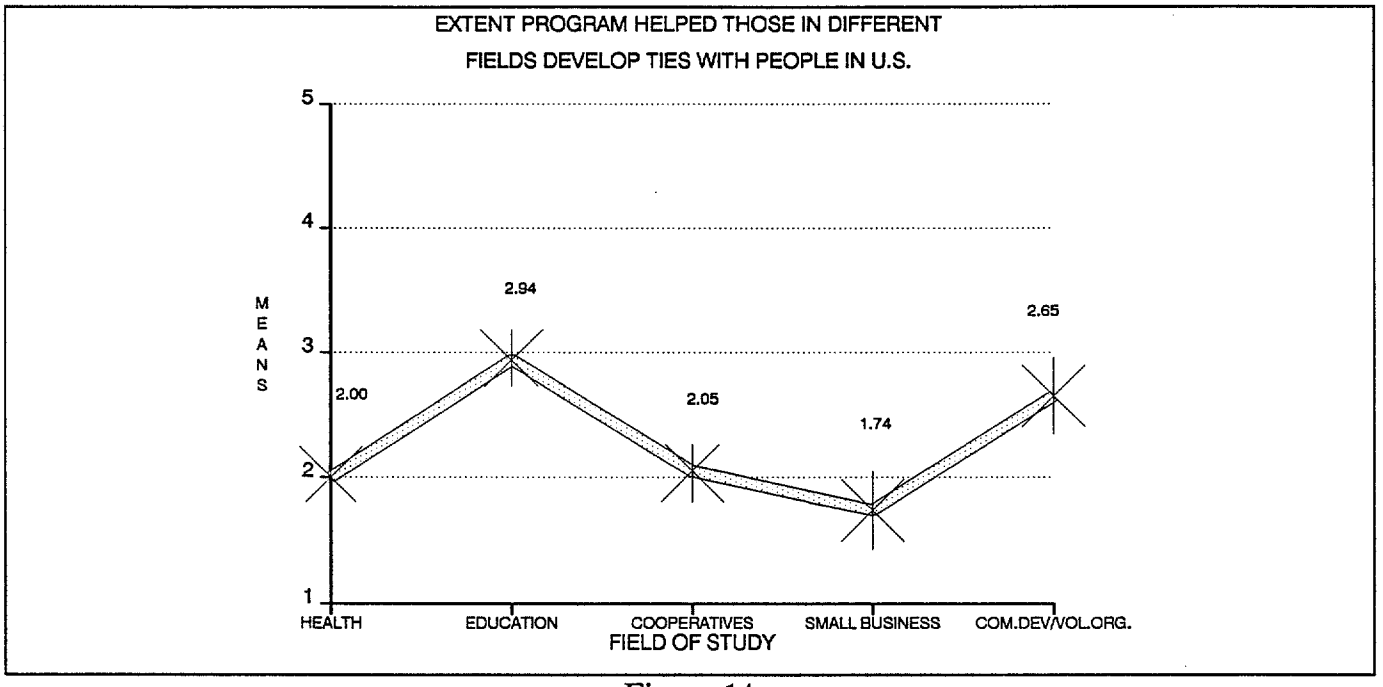

Figure 14

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

USAID/G's project management and staff is the major strength of the CAPS project. The Mission project management has been able to interpret and communicate CAPS vision and to marshal the grantee agency's staff (PAZAC [Paz en America Central]) and representatives of the referral agencies. The organizational agreement with the Secretaria General de Planificacion (SEGEPLAN) has proved convenient, and management is efficient and cost effective.

The technical processes for the most part have been efficient. The Mission has developed credible recruitment, preselection and selection procedures. The recruitment process (distribution of application forms) would improve if the Mission reverted to previous procedures that guaranteed a more ample pool of candidates from which to preselect and select. The recruitment, preselection and selection processes are adequately documented.

Compared to technical training costs for other Missions, Guatemala's CAPS technical training costs have been low. Moreover, compared to other Missions, Guatemala's CAPS technical training costs have demonstrated a cost decline over the period of project (see Figure 15). On the other hand, compared with other Missions, Guatemala's costs for long-term academic training, in spite of the Mission's insistence that cost be reduced by the contractor, rank as the most expensive. One of the reasons is that the Mission is tied to one contractor, who is obligated by AID's previous and costly contractual agreements with sub-contractors [e.g. American Language Institute of Georgetown University (ALIGU), and Washington International Center (WIC)].

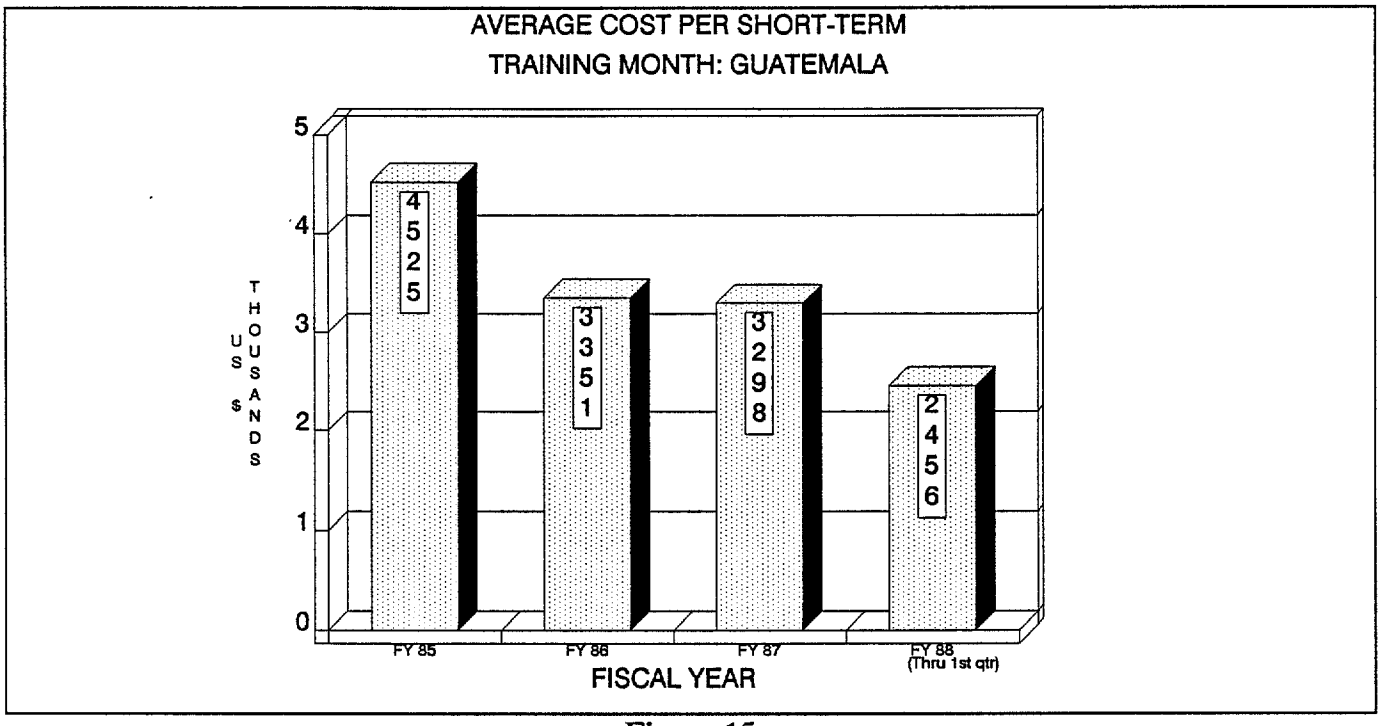

Figure 15

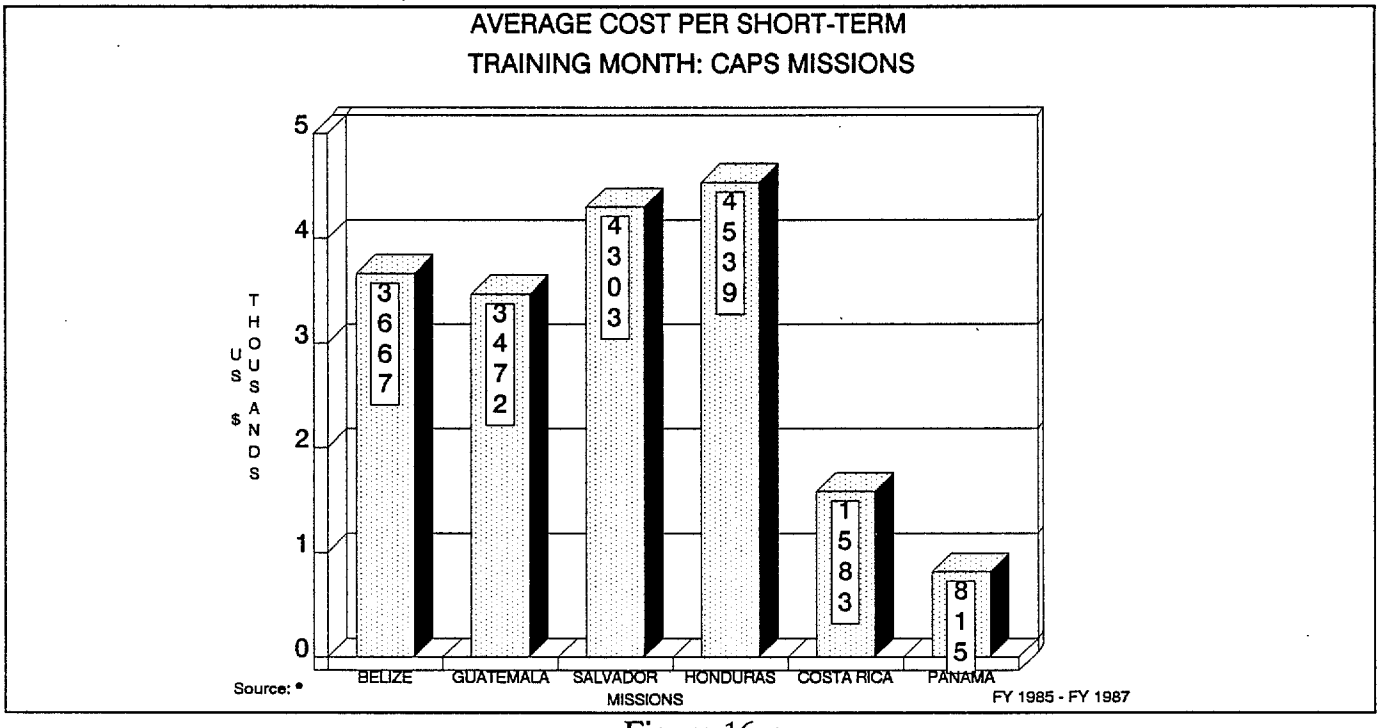

Figure 16

Source: Aguirre International: Second Annual Report, October 1, 1986 to September 1987.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the Guatemala's CAPS process evaluation have led to a number of recommendations:

- USAID/Guatemala should revert to the previous method of distributing application forms in order to ensure an adequate preselection and selection pool.
- Increase the number of candidates that go to the USAID/Guatemala final selection committee to ensure a sufficient pool from which to select.
- Ensure that final selection remains in the hands of a broad based USAID/Guatemala committee (which includes a member of the special concern committee).
- Hold periodic workshops (attended by the Training Officer and other Mission staff) for the members of the referral agencies on how to implement the CAPS project's dual goals and selection criteria, in order to keep CAPS vision present before all personnel.
- Require the signatures of the members of the USAID/Guatemala final selection committee on the final selection *Acta*.
- USAID/Guatemala should develop a systematic weighted scale to categorize and rank applicants both at the preselection and selection stage.
- USAID/Guatemala application forms should include items that permit systematic classification of applicants as Indigenous.
- USAID/Guatemala should include primary and secondary school addresses as indicators for classifying an applicant as rural/non-rural for long-term training.
- USAID/G should improve the quality of its PIO/Ps and seek to write PIO/Ps which adequately describe the Trainees, their social context, their training needs and Follow-On activities. If necessary the Mission should seek training for its Training Officer in PIO/P preparation.
- USAID/Guatemala should provide the placement contractor (PIET) with detailed PIO/Ps to ensure that training programs include more direct involvement with North American families.
- USAID/Guatemala should provide PIET with detailed PIO/Ps so that training programs targeting the Indigenous can be designed according to their specific needs--and with consideration of Guatemala's level of development.
- USAID/Guatemala should require of PIET that training sites be more widely distributed throughout the U.S.

- USAID/Guatemala should provide returnees with clear and concise alumni association information that establishes the relationship of the alumni association and the Follow-On program and describes its benefits.
- USAID/Guatemala should clarify the organizational structure of PAZAC and its authority level with the Government of Guatemala.
- USAID/Guatemala should ensure consistency of data by charging one PAZAC staff member with the responsibility for the entry of the entire data base.
- USAID/Guatemala should insist that OIT require contractors (PIET, WIC, ALIGU, and HAC) to use TCA;
- USAID/Guatemala should require that PAZAC use TCA reporting forms for all vouchers and reporting schedules.
- USAID/Guatemala should arrange for an evaluation of the quality of Exit and Re-Entry data collected in-country by the Mission, and if appropriate, should arrange for the coding and analysis.

Additional detail on the implementation of the Guatemala's CAPS project is contained in the report that follows.