

PD-ABN-797

**PLANNING OF A PROFILES ADVOCACY
WORKSHOP: SUMMARIZATION OF
WORK COMPLETED IN DAKAR**

Dakar, Senegal

October 13-25, 1996

Jay Ross

BASICS Technical Directive: 000 AF 56 017
USAID Contract Number: HRN-6006-C-00-3031-00

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

BACKGROUND 1

COURSE PREPARATION IN DAKAR 1

COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD BANK ON PROFILES ADVOCACY
IN THE REGION 3

ACRONYMS

BASICS	Basic Support for Institutionalizing Child Survival Project
PROFILES	Computer graphics program
ORANA	Organisation de Recherche pour l'Alimentation et la Nutrition Africaine
SANAS	Service de l'Alimentation et de la Nutrition Appliquée du Sénégal
SARA	Support for Research and Analysis in Africa

BACKGROUND

The principal objective of the visit was to plan a PROFILES advocacy workshop, tentatively scheduled for March 1997. This workshop will be offered to nutritionists and policy makers working in nutrition in the nine member countries of ORANA (Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin, Mauritania, and Guinea). For a variety of reasons, interest in nutrition problems and appropriate interventions is weak in the region. The PROFILES software and advocacy process uses current data and new scientific knowledge to make decision makers more aware of these problems and of the benefits of feasible cost-effective solutions.

The proposed workshop leads on from the development last year of a PROFILES advocacy presentation for Senegal. This involved the translation of the PROFILES user interface into French and the training of the BASICS Regional Nutrition Advisor in Dakar (Dr. Serigne Diène) in all aspects of the software and the advocacy process. The results of this activity are already encouraging. The Director of Public Health within the Ministry of Health was so impressed with the arguments relating to maternal anemia that he asked his aides to examine ways to increase effectiveness of the existing iron supplementation strategy (one of the elements of the BASICS “minpak”). The newly recruited Director of SANAS (Service de l’Alimentation et de la Nutrition Appliquée du Sénégal), the Ministry of Health’s Nutrition Office, has been using the PROFILES economic arguments in his own efforts to stimulate greater interest and investment in proposed nutrition interventions, such as the “minpak.”

The expected results of the proposed training course would be an increased institutional capacity for nutrition policy analysis throughout the region and eventually, as a result, appropriate increases in nutrition investments. We plan to use an advocacy workshop manual developed by the SARA project. This has already been translated into French and field tested in Mali and Benin. PROFILES training material would be integrated with the advocacy module.

COURSE PREPARATION IN DAKAR

In Dakar I worked with Serigne Diène, Lamine Thiam, and Maty Ndiaye. Thiam is a Nutritionist recently graduated with a MPH (with a focus on nutrition and epidemiology) from Johns Hopkins, and with 10 years previous field experience with World Vision, now working as a consultant for SANA as their Regional Nutrition Advisor based in Dakar. Ndiaye is a Trainer and Workshop Facilitator consulting for SARA. The process we used to plan the workshop was very systematic.

Directed by Ndiaye, we worked from needs as we saw them to training objectives to “competency objectives,” the later being the things we considered that the participants should be able to do as a result of the training. These include the following—

- Define advocacy and explain the role that PROFILES plays in the advocacy process.
- Choose an advocacy objective by applying selection criteria.
- Explain the importance of understanding the decision making process.
- Identify the groups and resources for nutrition advocacy in one's own country.
- Identify the data requirements for PROFILES.
- Apply selection criteria in evaluating data for PROFILES.
- Explain the important nutritional, demographic, and economic concepts used in PROFILES.
- Describe the objectives of a national nutrition program for one's own country.
- Apply criteria to select feasible interventions alleviate malnutrition in one's own country.
- Explain the importance of obtaining a consensus on data, PROFILES models, priority problems, etc.
- Use the PROFILES software to estimate the consequences of malnutrition.
- Use a spreadsheet program to estimate the consequences of malnutrition.
- Identify and categorize different advocacy audiences in one's own country.
- Identify procedures for determining the attitudes and beliefs of important advocacy audiences in one's own country.
- Formulate three or four technical arguments for nutrition advocacy in one's own country.
- Identify messages and presentation formats for different audiences in one's own country.
- Create a computer-based presentation incorporating messages identified.
- Devise an actual plan of action for nutrition advocacy in one's own country.

Specific training activities were identified that would accomplish these competency objectives. Some of these activities are covered in the Advocacy Module, some required that existing material be adapted, and some will need to be developed from scratch. Time has been scheduled this week (October 28-30) to revise some of the activities in order to make pedagogical improvements. The envisaged course is now about 60 hours long, with the expectation that this will require two 5-day weeks.

To maximize the benefits of the course it will be necessary to limit the participants to those most likely to be able to utilize the training. By establishing selection criteria that ensure a minimum level of competence, involvement, and technological capacity, we expect that all participating countries will develop PROFILES applications that will actually be used in a relevant nutrition advocacy strategy. Of the eight ORANA countries, excluding Senegal, which already has launched a PROFILES application, we expect that about five will participate and that there will be two or three participants from each country. A number of other issues such as who will pay for what, how to screen applicants, equipment requirements, logistics, etc. have been discussed, but not resolved.

We anticipate that at least a few of the countries attending the workshop will require follow-up technical assistance to implement their advocacy plans made at the workshop. It is expected that this support can be provided by ORANA, SANA, BASICS, and other donors. By then Thiam should have the technical capacity to provide technical assistance. Diène or I will also be able to

help. Whether this will require country visits or can be done remotely will depend on the types of problems encountered. In addition, we hope that participants at the course who are (or become) particularly skilled in aspects of the PROFILES process will also be able to provide follow-up support to colleagues in greater need. A mechanism for financing this kind of peer follow-up would need to be devised.

In a debriefing with ORANA's Director, he indicated satisfaction with the progress so far. He would like to institutionalize this course, repeating it as turnover takes its toll on nutrition staff at the country level and including Francophone countries not presently members of ORANA (e.g., Gabon, Chad, Central African Republic).

COLLABORATION WITH THE WORLD BANK ON PROFILES ADVOCACY IN THE REGION

The Senegal PROFILES presentation was shown to interested staff at the World Bank and the Bank-funded Community Nutrition Project. It was well received and there were a number of good suggestions, including the comparison of our generic cost estimates with actual current total health or nutrition expenditure to provide a yardstick to measure the relative cost of the proposed policies.

In Dakar, Diène and I met with Thierry Brun, a World Bank Nutritionist consulting on the Integrated Health Services Development Project in the Ivory Coast. Project development funds allocated for a PROFILES application under this project have still not been used. I will send a proposal to the Ivorians next week with terms of reference for such an application. Brun feels that a demonstration by Diène of the Senegal product would help the Ivorians appreciate what we are offering. This would be a good opportunity for BASICS to demonstrate its leadership in nutrition advocacy in the region and to "leverage" World Bank support for this activity in the Ivory Coast. Brun will be in Abidjan the first week of December and could arrange a meeting and demonstration then. Diène and I would also like to involve Thiam in this activity as an introduction to the PROFILES process. With my proposal in their hands and with the personal contact, we hope that the Ivorians will request technical assistance to develop a PROFILES application and that the bulk of this work will be financed through the Bank loan.

Tonia Marek, who was at the same meeting in Dakar, proposed using PROFILES as a tool for evaluating the World Bank Community Nutrition Project to illustrate the functional benefits of documented nutrition improvement. She also suggested using the detailed disaggregated cost data to include cost-effectiveness statements in this work. Although none of this necessarily requires PROFILES, it would help by feeding the evaluation results straight back into advocacy. This interest from the Bank is important for a number of reasons: 1) it helps build BASICS' credibility in nutrition and advocacy to have Bank collaboration; 2) it demonstrates the ability of the PROFILES to pull together the often disparate players in the nutrition community; and 3) on a more technical note, the availability of Bank cost data will permit cost-effectiveness analysis of

nutrition interventions that can be used in further advocacy work. The conspicuous absence of such analyses has hampered advocacy efforts by forcing us to use generic cost data from the literature that may not be appropriate in specific contexts.