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RARY

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List of Acronyms

CIDST	Centre d'Information et de Documentation Scientifique et Technique Scientific and Technical Information Documentation Center
CS	Civil Society
Csnet	Civil Society Network
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FFE	Fondation Friedrich Ebert Friedrich Ebert Foundation
KMF/CNOE	Comité National d'Observation des Elections National Election Monitoring Committee
LPSC	Local Project Support Cost

Introduction

This report covers the period from January to September 1997. Along with the October 96 and January 97 Quarterly Reports, it constitutes Rary's Annual Report. In this period, Pact/Rary hired staff, launched its activities in both regional offices and in the capital and achieved initial results. The project also gained acceptance from decision makers and from the communities where it is implemented, an essential element to its success.

Throughout this period, Pact/Rary staff translated the complex set of outputs and objectives of the initial project into a concrete, multifaceted approach on the ground. This required that the team reassess on numerous occasions its orientations and modify its activities accordingly. The result was a learning experience that translated into a project that is well adapted to the dynamics of each of the regions where it is implemented.

The nine-month format of this report gives a global view over a period of intense activity, as well as a synthesis of a learning period leading up to Pact/Rary's first annual work plan. The contents of this document define and confirm Pact/Rary's approach to fostering an environment truly conducive to the participation of citizens in public affairs as they relate to the interests of the poor, and will serve as the basis for the project's actions for the year 1997-98.

I. Implementation Strategy

Project Outputs

The purpose of the Participation and Poverty program is to *foster a national policy, regulatory and resource environment in which private enterprise can flourish.*

Pact has translated the civil society component of P&P as *the expansion and deepening of interactions within civil society and between civil society and decision makers to improve the development of policies, rules and procedures and resource allocation decisions affecting the poor.*

In pursuing this goal, the Pact/Rary project will have three principal outputs: *an increased openness of decision makers to the participation of civil society in governance, a qualitative and quantitative expansion of civil society in terms of broader participation, greater representativity and increased capacity, and a social and political environment more conducive to citizen participation in the formulation and implementation of policies, rules and procedures and resource allocation decisions affecting the poor.*

Approach

In the January 97 Quarterly Report, Pact/Rary further defined the approach set out in Pact's project proposal. It is this approach that was articulated throughout the period January to September. The approach translates each project output into intensive interventions that focus project resources on pressing issues that have a direct and immediate impact on people and on institutions. Pact/Rary believes that investing resources on issues of immediate local relevance and helping partners to resolve them through open and participatory means is a method essential to achieving sustainable change.

Through this approach, Pact/Rary has positioned itself as a service provider to government institutions as well as to civil society, providing assistance to both in developing the ability to engage in constructive dialogue about significant issues. Pact/Rary seeks out real needs and responds to those needs, concentrating energy where there is will, and interest, in new approaches.

Recognizing the difficulty in generating new processes, Pact/Rary has developed a global vision through which all development actions are seen as processes by which the capacity of civil society and institutions to deal with issues in a open, participatory and constructive fashion are either reinforced or weakened. The project has sought to develop relationships with donors and other projects, offering its assistance in developing project processes that empower local institutions, not bypass them. Through this global approach, the project also promotes coordinated actions by all actors working in one region. Concerted efforts by all actors, systematically empowering institutions, are necessary if significant, sustainable change is to happen.

Project acceptance by decision makers, civil society, donors and projects, as well as the results described in this report, indicate that there is strong potential for Pact/Rary's practical, hands-on, needs and issue-driven approach to fostering an environment conducive to citizen participation in public affairs. The result will be better-conceived and better-run public programs, serving the interests of the poor.

II. Project Objectives, Activities and Results

Five types of activities¹ were implemented over the course of the past nine months, which together combine to produce P&P's three outputs. This report is structured around those activities, and combines activities at the national level and in each of the field offices.

- Partnerships, Networking and Coalition Building

¹ Four types of interrelated activity are described in Pact's project proposal on page 22. Project management constitutes the fifth activity type.

- Research
- Civic Information, Education, Communication and Advocacy
- Organizational and Institutional Development

II.A Partnerships, Networking and Coalition Building

Pact/Rary's objectives for PN&CB were broad. In our view, partnerships are essential to the project's success. Pact/Rary's objectives under PN&CB for the period January to September were:

- To successfully integrate the project into its environment
- To facilitate the circulation of Pact/Rary's principles and methods
- To transfer project ownership to local representatives and project partners
- To promote local input and contributions to project orientations and implementation
- To increase Pact/Rary's impact on decision makers and community leaders
- To prepare other organizations to take over after Pact/Rary

II.A.1 Activities and Results

Partnership building has proven to be the single most important activity in the first nine months of project life. By building project ownership among key actors and identifying and working closely with people who share Pact/Rary's principles, Pact/Rary was able to establish itself as a valuable asset to the regional landscape and gain acceptance by regional decision makers.

As a result of partnership building, regional actors sensitive to the need for greater participation by citizens in public life, coming from civil society, elected bodies (executive and administration), and the education sector, have become dynamic advocates of the ideas put forward by Pact/Rary, and have taken on an active role in project activities.

Partnership building has also put Pact/Rary in a position to extend its impact beyond project scope to reach communities in which Pact/Rary's partners are active, and beyond project duration through key partners.

* **Creation of distinct steering committees (CoRary) for Tana, Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa**

Results

Both Tana and Fianarantsoa have active steering committees. The creation of Mahajanga's steering committee has been delayed due to intense project activity early on, as the office tackled the issue of property taxes.

The Tana CoRary is made up of project partners such as Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FFE), KMF/CNOE and CIDST, as well as representatives from national-level CSOs, government and donor organizations². The Tana CoRary has been involved in key project decisions, including the decision to take on the property tax issue in Mahajanga, and the review process on project orientations for the national level.

The Fianarantsoa CoRary is made up of 15 members from all sectors of the Fianarantsoa community, including a UNDP representative. It has taken full ownership of the project's objectives and methods and is promoting Pact/Rary principles in all sectors of Fianarantsoa. The members have divided up into 6 sub-committees, each working on issues ranging from health to transportation and municipal fiscal policy. These committees have in turn integrated in their group public officials concerned with the issues at hand. In short, representatives from many of Fianarantsoa's institutions and key projects and organizations are directly involved in putting major regional issues in the forefront, with Pact/Rary's technical support.

* **Build a network of partners in institutions and civil society organizations**

Results

Pact/Rary's network of partners in Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga has been instrumental in bringing about institutional change at the Commune level. Pact/Rary's principles of managing public interest

² The list of CoRary members for Tana and Fianarantsoa are in annex A.

issues reached the Mayors, executive staff and city councils in large part through Pact/Rary partners, with dramatic results³.

Pact/Rary partners have kept the project abreast of developments in the fields of transportation, health and fiscal policy, which has translated into concrete opportunities on several occasions.

* **Initiate relationships with other development actors**

Results

Relationships and partnerships are essential to the promotion of processes that reinforce the ability of institutions to manage issues in an open, participatory and constructive fashion.

Pact/Rary has worked to convince the Urban Project⁴ of the importance of public policy issues management as part of any technical assistance program. Pact/Rary's relations with the Urban Project have resulted in a partnership to bring support to the establishment and training/mentoring of a Communications department in the Communes of Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa. In October Pact/Rary will conduct a training module on **Communications and public management** for delegations from the country's major urban areas as part of a seminar organized and financed by the Urban Project. Pact/Rary most likely will team up on an ongoing basis with the Urban Project's training program, which provides tri-monthly training seminars. Through this same partnership, Pact/Rary plans to contribute to the development of public policy issues management in a new French-funded program for secondary cities, due to begin next year.

The German Friedrich Ebert Foundation (FFE), which is collaborating with the Ministry of Decentralization and Budget on a pilot project to reinforce decentralized institutions, has also agreed to cooperate with Pact/Rary in Mahajanga. By working closely with the FFE and its government partners Pact/Rary hopes to contribute to building a

³ Project impact on institutions is reported under Organizational and Institutional Development

⁴ The Urban Project, sponsored by the Cooperation Française, is providing substantial technical assistance in financial management and urban planning to the country's 7 largest cities. The overhaul of local property taxes that lead to a dramatic increase in Mahajanga is among the French project's activities. The Urban Project will manage a major support program to the country's 10 secondary cities starting next year.

national support program, which will prepare municipalities to manage public policy issues in an open and participatory manner.

In Fianarantsoa, the regional office of the Ministry of Plan, which will be merged with the Ministry of Decentralization, will use Pact/Rary's work with the Commune of Fianarantsoa as a pilot case to develop a support program for other communes in the Province of Fianarantsoa.

*** To prepare other organizations to take over after Pact/Rary**

Results

The CIDST⁵ has realized and is committed to the importance of bringing up-to-date policy information to CSOs and other actors involved in issues. It has conducted an inventory of current policy information sources in Mahajanga and is working with Pact/Rary in Fianarantsoa to support the CoRary's efforts to bring issues to the forefront. It has recently entered into partnership with other actors in Fianarantsoa, including Pact/Rary, to bridge the information gap between small entrepreneurs and private sector development projects.

The KMF/CNOE⁶ in Fianarantsoa is in the process of re-assessing its role as a result of its relationship with Pact/Rary. The organization's provincial leadership has been a key actor in developing Pact/Rary's activities and is convinced of the opportunity of focussing on issues to bring about an evolution in governance.

⁵The government-run Scientific and Technical Information and Documentation Center (CIDST) has offices in the Capital and is opening up offices in five major cities in an effort to bring information to information-poor regions. In many regions it represents the only public access to recent documentation.

⁶KMF/CNOE is seen as a natural ally of Pact/Rary in fostering increased participation of citizens in public life. The Association's goals of greater government accountability and of a better informed citizenry willing to play an active role in public life are complementary to Pact/Rary's push for an expanded and enlightened public debate. The Association has a national reach, with offices in roughly 90 Fivondronana (out of a total of 111).

Pact/Rary represents an opportunity for KMF/CNOE to move closer to issues where the principles it defends apply. People's concerns over health, education, jobs, land and other essential issues are at the root of participation. The KMF/CNOE's objective of fostering participation can only benefit from an increased role in the dissemination of targeted information on specific issues. This will in turn bring the Association to reassess its civic education activities and its actions at the community and regional levels.

II.A.2 Indicators of success

In relation to the overall indicators of success for Partnerships, Networking and Coalition Building identified in the project proposal, the following results have been achieved.

* **Indicator: 20 partnership agreements with CSOs and decision makers**

Seven partnership agreements are effective at this time. Two are with donors/projects, one is with a government institution, two are with decentralized municipalities, one is with a civil society organization and one is with a media organization.

* **Indicator: Formation and/or consolidation of 4 CSO networks/coalitions**

One informal group of small enterprise development actors and one platform of youth associations have been created as a result of project activities.⁷

* **Indicator: Functioning partnership between 5 CSOs and organizations responsible for economic data collection and policy analysis**

Groundtruthing activities by CSOs assisted by Pact/Rary for the Policy Analysis project have not materialized, for several reasons. A major CSO partner experienced an internal crisis, and both Pact/Rary and Policy Analysis concentrated efforts on other priorities during this period.

* **Indicator: Existence and functioning of a P&P advisory group**

Pact/Rary has two functioning advisory groups which meet regularly and are involved in project orientation and key decisions. Lists of members are in annex A.

⁷ The group was put together to address issues relating to the relationship between small entrepreneurs and promoters and micro-finance projects as a result of a partnership initiated by Pact/Rary. The platform of youth associations was created as a result of networking made possible by a public event put together by Pact/Rary, and by facilitation by Pact/Rary staff.

* **Indicator: 5 CSO-initiated issue fora**

No CSO-initiated fora have taken place so far. It is expected that CSO's will engage in this activity during the project's second and third years.

II.B Research

Objectives under Research set out in the project proposal were:

- To select initial key policy, regulatory and resource allocation issues to be the focus of project activities
- To identify needs on the part of civil society and decision makers and to respond to those needs as a service provider
- To reconcile traditional Malagasy cultural norms, values, concepts and customs, institutions and communication forms with broad principles of democracy, the role of civil society, accountability and social responsibility for the plight of the poor.

II.B.1 Activities and Results

* **Identification of key issues**

The project has identified key issues in Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga, using criteria developed with each steering committee (CoRary). In Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa, the final decisions on issue selection were taken by CoRary.

In Mahajanga, the controversial issue of property taxes was selected, and has been the focus of project activities since June. In Fianarantsoa, several issues were selected by the CoRary in July. CoRary members have divided up into working groups to address each issue.

In both regions, project activities focus on the newly created decentralized urban commune at the provincial capital level. The commune is the basic unit of the decentralized state and is called upon to assume increased responsibilities in the management of health and primary education, both issues that have significant impact on the poor.

* **Needs identification**

Through numerous discussions with decision makers and CSOs, and observations of ongoing relations between decision makers, civil society and the media, broad areas where there are needs were identified.⁸

From this needs identification, Pact/Rary has developed an extensive program of training and facilitation that will reinforce the ability of the commune to manage public issues in an open, participatory and constructive manner.

* **To reconcile traditional Malagasy cultural norms with broad principles of democracy**

Pact/Rary believes that the designated terrain for the reconciliation of Malagasy cultural norms with democratic concepts is the decentralized commune. The commune is the level of state closest to the citizen, and it is mandated to manage major aspects of social well-being and regional development. Communes must deal with hard questions relating to fiscal policy, public services, infrastructure, health and primary education. In that arena is played out the dynamic between the old ways of government decision making and a new impetus for a participatory process.

PactRary has concentrated its resources on that arena, guiding decision makers through new methods that question many cultural reflexes relating to information use and to relationships. The project wishes to concentrate its resources on documenting the change that is being fostered at that level, so that it's experience may be used in a practical manner by Pact and by other project partners in developing a constructive participatory process in other communes and at other levels of government.

II.B.2 Indicators of success

* **Indicator: Completion of an expanded survey**

The survey conducted by Pact in preparation of the P&P project proposal was deemed sufficient for project purposes. Knowledge of the terrain was acquired through numerous personal contacts,

⁸ The areas are described in annex B

informal discussions and project presentations rather than by more formal approaches.

* **Indicator: Civil Society Profiles for 2 target regions**

Both the Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga offices have an intimate knowledge of most regional civil society organizations and their level of development, and each has drawn up a listing. The project, however, has not invested in more formal and complete surveys to profile civil society. Rather, project resources were invested early on where the need was felt most: in those CSOs and local institutions directly concerned by pressing issues.

* **Indicator: Strategy document reconciling traditional concepts with democratic principles**

The strategy document is replaced with the careful documentation of the Rary experience in order to produce adequate models of institutional building and participatory mechanisms at the commune level.

* **Indicator: Institutional profiles and mentoring plans for 20 partners**

Pact/Rary will begin mentoring of several CSOs in the coming year. In collaboration with the LOVA program, Pact/Rary will generate institutional profiles for each organization.

II.C Civic Information, Education, Communication and Advocacy

Objectives under IEC were

- Provide training in advocacy, issues management, conflict resolution, mediation and economic policy analysis
- Develop viable information identification, retrieval and management systems
- Create a Civil Society Communications Network
- Organize exposure visits between different partners

II.C.1 Activities and results

*** Advocacy training**

Training in advocacy will be given to project partners directly involved in an issue, and will be accompanied by mentoring activities. It is expected that this type of training will begin in the coming project year.

*** Create a Civil Society Communications Network**

Pact/Rary has explored the possibility of linking up civil society organizations with a national correspondence network that would be used to bring CSOs closer to issues of concern to them. Organizations would be inventoried by sector, and ministries and projects would be encouraged to pass on information to them on issues of sectoral interest. Network feasibility was discussed on several occasions with a World Bank partner and a common list of CSOs was put together. In September the idea was abandoned by the national CoRary, in favor of mini networks that could be developed around specific issues.

Rather than produce information packages for CSOs itself, the project has chosen to reinforce the capacity of decision makers to produce information about current issues and to involve CSOs in the decision process. It is expected that the communes of Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga will be able to produce such information in the coming project year. Pact/Rary is actively working with the commune of Mahajanga to produce information packages on the current issue of property tax and fiscal policy.

Work with media professionals has so far been kept at an informal level, and has been aimed at developing interest for more active forms of journalism. Pact/Rary has been instrumental in linking regional journalists to issues and to new information sources, which has resulted in news reports generated by investigative reporting as opposed to passive reporting of staged events. If the interest of journalists is confirmed, Pact/Rary will seek to provide them with training in the next project year.

Pact/Rary has been conducting press monitoring activities since January of this year, and has conducted interviews with CSOs that have regular contact with government. This activity has allowed Pact/Rary to gain perspective on the complexity of state - CS

relationships at the national level, and to orient project activities accordingly for the coming year.

* **Develop viable information identification, retrieval and management systems**

In Mahajanga, Pact/Rary has conducted an inventory of information sources in government and information needs in civil society organizations. This was a first step toward improving the circulation of information and addressing the issue of access to information. The project has chosen not to pursue the effort further until now, concentrating resources on helping the community resolve the current issue of property taxes. It is hoped that this first experience will be pursued by Pact/Rary partner CIDST, who conducted the inventory.

Following expressions of interest by business groups in Mahajanga to become more involved in fiscal policy at the commune level, Pact/Rary is looking for partners to train business leaders in economic policy and link them to national economic policy issues.

* **Organize exposure visits between different partners**

One exposure visit was organized between Pact/Rary partners in Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa. Members of the executive and the council from the two cities exchanged experiences in executive - council relations, in managing public issues and in participatory methods with each other and with cities more advanced in participatory methods such as Antananarivo and Antsirabe. Executive staff members from Mahajanga debated freely on the roots of executive - council conflict with council members from Fianarantsoa, and vice versa. Further exchange visits are planned for the coming year.

II.C.2 Indicators of success

* **Indicator: A self-sufficient CSnet with 25 subscribers; a total of 12 information kits produced.**

The CSnet is replaced by new communication service at the commune level. It is expected that each service will produce information kits on three to four issues concerning the commune.

- * **Indicator: Media reports on 6 examples of effective advocacy and government/CSO exchanges**

Expected to begin in the coming project year.

- * **Indicator: Media and press monitoring by a project partner**

Press monitoring activities will be pursued at the regional level, to assess project impact on the quality of regional news reports. It is not expected that this activity will be carried out by a project partner.

- * **Indicator: 4 CSOs operating expanded/innovative civic education programs**

No CSOs other than the KMF/CNOE have been identified. It is expected that the KMF/CNOE will evolve in the way it conducts its civic education programs through its involvement with Pact/Rary.

- * **Indicator: 20 journalists having participated in workshops on the role of CSOs**

Understanding of the role of CSOs in governance is deemed second in priority to journalists developing an interest in actively pursuing news stories rather than passively waiting for staged news events. If informal efforts are successful, it is estimated that 10 to 20 journalists will receive training in journalism. Once this has been achieved, Pact/Rary would facilitate links between journalists and CSOs, and this activity would include the role of CSOs in democratic governance.

- * **Indicator: 15 examples of dialogue between CSOs and decision makers**

Initial exchanges between CSOs and decision makers are expected in the upcoming project year.

- * **Indicator: Existence of a draft code of ethics**

The idea of drafting a code of ethics for government has been replaced by efforts at helping the communes of Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa to adopt principles of open circulation of information and of an open, participatory and constructive process of decision making.

II.D Organizational and Institutional development

II.D.1 Expected results

Respond to the organizational development training and mentoring needs of CSO partners

II.D.2 Activities and Results

In the period January to September, Pact/Rary identified a strong need for institutional development on the part of decision makers at the level of the newly created decentralized communes. Simultaneously, the interest of civil society organizations in taking an active role in public affairs was deemed quite weak.

In the context of major conflict on property taxes in both Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa, we found that communal institutions did not have the ability to manage public issues in a normal democratic manner. On the issue of property taxes, neither the executive, the council nor the Local Taxation Committee was able to normally play its role, and this led to a major financial crisis for the commune and to the further demobilization of citizens and groups in regard to communal affairs.

Sensitive to the essential role of the commune in generating an environment conducive to the participation of civil society in governance, and the critical needs identified, Pact/Rary shifted the bulk of its institutional reinforcement efforts towards the communes of Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa. In June and July, Pact/Rary began mentoring activities with the executive staff and city council to a new approach in the management of public interest issues.

The initial results are promising. In both cities, the city council has decided to create a Communications Service and to develop a communal information policy. In Mahajanga, the council has also decided to open up the Finance Commission to civil society involvement.

In Mahajanga, business groups working with Pact/Rary have expressed willingness to engage in dialogue with the city, and have participated in an opinion survey carried out by Pact/Rary, which is seen as a first step in the search for a solution to the crisis.

Pact/Rary is now helping both cities to develop a durable statute for the communications service, and in developing a policy on information. It is directly involved in Mahajanga in assisting the city in the management of the fiscal policy crisis. The project has begun to train executive staff from both cities in the management of relations, within the framework of public issues management.

III. Project Management

Objectives under project management were mainly to fill the project posts with qualified and motivated individuals, and to establish a national and two regional offices.

The nine posts originally planned in the project proposal have been reassessed due to the establishment of the LPSC⁹ system at Pact Madagascar and to a concentration of project activities at the regional level.

The positions of Finance Officer, Office Administrator, Accountant and Driver were eliminated, those functions being taken care of by the central administration of Pact Madagascar. The position of Executive Assistant, responsible for certain administrative functions, was created.

The position of Senior Program Officer was eliminated, due to a concentration of activities at the regional level. The Information Officer is now considered as the senior program officer, and has taken the title of Issue Officer.

A need in each regional office for an assistant function to the Regional Program Officer has been identified, and will be addressed in the coming months.

The Pact/Rary team is now made up of a Director, an Issue Officer and an Executive Assistant for Antananarivo, and a Regional Program Officer for each of Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga. Each regional officer is assisted by an accounting clerk - secretary, whom they share with the LOVA program.

⁹LPSC stands for Local Project Support Cost, and was developed and applied by Pact Madagascar to manage shared project support costs such as logistical and administrative services.

IV. RESULTS/ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE COMING YEAR

This is the first annual work plan for the Pact/Rary project. It marks the completion of an intense trial period where the project established itself and developed a concrete approach on the ground. Lessons learned during the initial phase confirmed and further defined Pact's vision of the three project results. Intermediate results, activities, means and indicators were defined for each result, and are described in this plan.

Program Goal

The overall goal of the Participation and Poverty program is to foster a policy, regulatory and resource environment in which private action can flourish.

Private initiative often finds little support within the formal sector. Lack of openness in state institutions, excessive centralization and bureaucracy, corruption and the weakness of the administration have created a sizable gap between the state and citizens. Private initiative often bypasses state institutions, or uses corrupt, informal and/or discretionary channels, weakening further the institutions. Madagascar's development requires that private initiative be able to evolve within a formal, open system that rewards legal, rule-abiding initiatives. For this to happen, decision makers, civil society and business organizations must begin to collaborate in resolving key issues that stem from fundamental changes brought about by the transition to a market economy.

Rary's three project outputs will respond to this need throughout the coming year. Assistance will be given to decision makers in developing new approaches and mechanisms based on relationship management and communications. Civil society and business organizations' ability to enter the public arena and develop articulate positions will be reinforced. The values and ideas on which partnership and collaboration can develop will be promoted. The result will be an increase in the flow and exchange of information, in debate, and in the search for viable policy and implementation solutions.

Fostering a more open and collaborative environment will in turn contribute to creating new incentive for initiative and investment by all actors. The incentive need not only be geared to private endeavor, but should also be geared toward voluntary investment in new systems and new arrangements. Individuals and groups in civil society, business and the state must have an incentive to invest legally and in a rule-abiding manner in order for there to be an environment conducive to formal private initiative.

In this sense, Rary's results contribute to USAID/MADAGASCAR's other strategic objectives of Smaller, Healthier Families and Biodiversity Conserved in Priority Zones. Success in both these objectives depends on collaborative efforts at developing new arrangements in which all concerned parties have an interest and are willing to invest. Fostering an environment conducive to such collaborative efforts contributes to building a sustainable institutional environment for the management of health and the environment.

Project Focus

In the first year of operation, Pact/Rary has identified the newly-created decentralized communal entities as having the greatest potential and the greatest need for an open and participatory system of public management. Madagascar's 1392 communes make up the closest, most direct link between citizens and the new democratic state. Urban communes in all six provinces are under pressure from a growing urbanization, and from wide-ranging reform in fiscal policy, health, and education. The ability of communes to work with civil society organizations and with business toward successful implementation of new programs and toward a dynamic conducive to private initiative will have tremendous impact on the poor. With new responsibilities in health and in education, the commune must become a viable economic entity in order to bring proper public services to those for whom there is no alternative.

Pact/Rary will invest the bulk of its resources on developing a global approach of institutional development in the urban communes of Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga. In the process, Pact/Rary will associate as much as possible with the Ministry of Decentralization and will seek to link regional concerns with national policy. Priority will be given to horizontal exchange among communes. Through a partnership with the Urban Project of the Cooperation Francaise and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Rary will work to apply lessons learned in Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa to other cities that are targeted for support by the French program.

Monitoring of the national level public arena, and interviews with several players from civil society have indicated that the national level policy environment would require significant resources and time to invest, with uncertain results. Furthermore, the national level is politically more charged and more volatile than the regional level. For those reasons, and because great need and potential was found at the commune level, Pact decided that Rary would concentrate resources at the level of the large urban commune, beginning with Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga.

Project Management

Increased focus on the communal level leads Pact/Rary to request the creation of one new permanent position in each of the two field offices. Antananarivo staff will remain as is, with the position of Training Officer left unfulfilled. Short-term technical assistance will be used to respond to specific needs in developing curricula and in interventions in the field. This staffing change can be accomplished without adding funds to Pact's budget.

Antananarivo staff will continue to bring technical support to the field offices, to ensure liaison with national level partners, to coordinate short-term technical assistance, to coordinate and supervise ME&R and to bring legal and technical references to the field.

IV.A Result 1: Increased Openness of Decision Makers to the Participation of Civil Society in Governance

Pact/Rary began its activities with the idea that the project's approach to decision makers should be that of a service provider, responding to a need stemming from concrete experience in managing issues. Rather than attempt to sensitize decision makers on the role of civil society, Pact/Rary accompanies decision makers in developing ways to better manage their relationships and resolve current issues through a new and practical approach. New and proven experience in issue management through an open, participatory and constructive process leads to a more natural institutionalization of mechanisms and practices that encourage citizen participation.

Decision makers have a significant impact on the development of civil society. The apparent stagnation and disinterest of civil society organizations stems in part from an absence of information about their environment and about collective issues. Longstanding dysfunctional relations between the government apparatus and citizens has an impact on the ability and willingness of CSOs to engage in public life. Institutional development of CSOs is only part of the answer. Under Result 1, Pact/Rary will invest to strengthen the ability of decision makers to communicate, and will foster an understanding among them of how it is in their own interest to invest in information and dialogue.

New institutions created under Madagascar's new Constitution are experiencing a financial and operational crisis. They need support in many areas, among them the ability to manage issues and programs in a participatory manner. A concerted effort by all development projects to carry out their regional activities through a process that involves and supports the new institution is critical. Because of the weakness of these institutions, projects sometimes choose to bypass them or to curtail involvement and participation. Pact/Rary will lobby projects and assist them in finding ways to reach their objectives as well as involve decentralized institutions and citizens. The viability of decentralized institutions will have a tremendous impact on the welfare of the poor, and must be supported by all means possible.

IV.A.1: Intermediate Result: Decision makers have a more complete perception of the role of decentralized institutions.

Activities/Means:

- * Train decision makers at the communal level on the nature and function of each of the institutions that make up their environment (City Council, Executive Staff, Mayor, decentralized regional services)

of the State, CSOs, the Media) and of the types of relationships necessary to develop a positive dynamic for development.¹⁰

IV.A.2: Intermediate Result: Decision makers implement a policy on information and communication.

Activities/Means:

- * Advise and assist the Comité Technique (CT) responsible for making recommendations on the establishment of a municipal Communications Service (CS)¹¹. Pact/Rary will assist the CT in the implementation of a participatory process that will result in viable, widely understood and accepted statutes and mechanisms for the CS.
- * Training and logistical support to the Communications Service, including facilitation services and counsel to the Executive Staff and Council to overcome apparent hurdles to the normal operations of a communications service in the present context.¹²
- * Assistance to the Comité Technique (CT) and the Executive staff in the development and implementation of a communal policy on information and communications, both internal and external.

IV.A.3: Intermediate Result: Mechanisms for exchange among the Executive, the Council and citizens exist and are being used.

Activities/Means:

- * Facilitate improvements to the management by the Executive Staff and Council of their relationship.
- * Assist with the development of principles and procedures for the sharing of information and ideas.

¹⁰ This activity will be conducted in partnership with the Friedreich Ebert Foundation

¹¹ Decisions in Fianarantsoa and Mahajanga on the creation of the CT and CS stem from Pact/Rary's counseling activities to decision makers

¹² This activity will be conducted in partnership with the Urban Project of the Coopération Française

- * Advise and assist the municipalities in developing and managing specific issues through participatory mechanisms.

IV.B Result 2: A Qualitative and Quantitative Expansion of Civil Society in terms of Broader Participation, Greater Representativity and Increased Capacity

In the past five years, Madagascar has experienced a significant increase in the number of civil society organizations. For several reasons, this increase has not translated into significant increase in the level of participation of citizens in public life. First, many civil organizations were established as a result of new donor policy on the funding of development activities and often do not have links to constituents. Second, the weakness of links between individuals and groups outside of family and clan as well as a weak sense of personal responsibility within institutions lead to little personal involvement in public life. Third, lack of information and knowledge and a weakness of communications prevent citizens and groups from identifying links between themselves and their interests, and government policy and actions.

Rary's approach to the expansion of civil society is issue-based. Rary will focus on strengthening capacity in membership-based civil society organizations where a natural link exists between the interests of members and current government policy decisions. The project will look for cases in which the link between interests at the grass roots, CSO leadership and current public issues is most direct. In this approach, the issue is used as a stimulant to foster greater personal involvement at all levels and to initiate an evolution in the type of relationships between the grass-roots and CSO leadership, and between CSOs and power holders.

IV.B.1 Intermediate Result: CSOs are more concerned with the issue of representativity.

Activities/Means:

- * Training for CSOs on the issue of representation within the context of current issues
- * Training in communications and dialogue related to specific issues for CSOs willing to initiate new or reinforced links with their constituency.

IV.B.2 Intermediate Result: CSOs are better informed on issues of concern to the poor.

Activities/Means:

- * Technical and logistical support to CoRary in its work on the circulation of information and the initiation of dialogue on issues.
- * Support to decision makers on information policy, communications and participatory methods.
- * Facilitation and technical support to existing and new networks and coalitions.
- * Continued lobbying efforts in order to promote increased communications and exchange by decision makers, projects and CSOs.

IV.B.3 Intermediate Result: CSOs are more predisposed to involvement in the public arena.

Activities/Means:

- * Advocacy Training for CSOs
- * Technical support and mentoring in advocacy to CSOs involved in specific issues

IV.C: Result 3: A Social and Political Environment more conducive to Citizen Participation in the Formulation and Implementation of Policies, Rules and Procedures and Resource Allocation Decisions Affecting the Poor.

Results 1 and 2 contribute to the achievement of Result 3. Included under Result 3 are activities and intermediate results that impact not specifically on either decision makers or civil society organizations, but contribute in a general way to the development of an environment conducive to the participation of citizens in public affairs. The media, journalists, fora, and the adherence by opinion leaders to the principles promoted by Pact/Rary fall under this result.

IV.C.1 Intermediate Result: Issues clearly emerge from media reports and interviews.

Activities/Means:

- * Facilitate links among journalists and decision makers, information sources and CSOs through the project's work on specific issues.
- * Train journalists covering relevant issues on reporting techniques and on the technical aspects of the issues.

IV.C.2: Intermediate Result: Partners are sensitive to developing processes that reinforce local institutions.

Activities/Means:

- * Advise and assist partners to develop and/or modify processes that reinforce the institutions they are dealing with.
- * Develop expertise in relationship management, communications and participatory methods for use in other regions in partnership with other projects.
- * With our partners, develop a new model of intervention that can serve as a foundation for assistance programs for other decentralized entities.

IV.C.3: Intermediate Result: New fora for exchange and dialogue are initiated.

Activities/Means:

- * Link regional actors with like interests through informal methods
- * Assist and support initiatives to establish new fora

IV.C.4: Intermediate Result: There is an increase in the circulation of information and in dialogue.

Activities/Means:

- * Advise and support the CoRarys and their subcommittees working on specific issues.

IV.C.5: Intermediate Result: Local actors carry forward the principles and methods introduced by Pact/Rary.

Activities/Means:

- * Facilitation and support to the CoRarys, through regular discussions on process, method and tactics, exchanges with other regions and increased responsibility for decision making and project outcomes.

Annex A

CoRary Antananarivo

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Annex B

Needs identified in Mahajanga and Fianarantsoa

Executive - Council relationships

In numerous decentralized communes, executive - council relations constitute a major obstacle to a more open and participatory process. For structural and political reasons, but also for reasons of lack of information and exchange between the two institutions, city councils are often in open conflict with the mayor and executive staff. If the commune is to function as a local democratic structure, close to local and regional needs and aspirations, both institutions need to recognize each other's role and responsibilities. Moreover, the executive branch needs to develop the ability to manage relationships in order to better manage public issues.

Executive - CSO/citizen relationships

Recent experience clearly points to the inability of city managers to develop and implement new programs in a participatory manner. This weakness has led to repeated conflict with citizens and threatens the viability of the commune and its ability to assume new responsibilities in health and education, of particular importance to the poor. Further, lack of openness and dialogue also stunt the growth of civil society, which is largely ignorant of and detached from communal affairs. The ability of decision makers to inform and involve civil society is instrumental to the reinforcement of civil society in terms of participation. Decision makers need to learn how to manage information and to organize and manage dialogue.

Communications

Communes lack the ability to communicate and to inform. They require intensive support to develop this ability, and to build a communications service that can operate in a professional manner, protected from direct interference by a comprehensive information policy understood and agreed upon by a critical mass of council members and executive staff. Lack of credible and substantial communication are at the root of major conflict and are an obstacle to developing the capacity of the city council to make enlightened decisions and serve as a link between citizens and the commune.