

## INSPECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON A.I.D. PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROGRAMS

Senator Kasten: As you know, this subcommittee has involved itself quite extensively in the development of your scholarship program under the Jackson Plan. The primary reason we have done this relates to the fear that we have that the Agency will simply handle this program like it has handled participant training programs, that is to say, not very well.

While participant training programs are potentially one of the most lasting and important contributions we can make to L.D.C. development, unfortunately, an I.G. report in December of last year, finds a number of major deficiencies. Some of those are as follows:

- 1. A.I.D. is not making an adequate assessment of candidates for training.
- 2. Participants are not qualified in English or academically, but are being sent nonetheless for training, resulting in waste, disappointment and delay.
- 3. You do not follow up adequately to insure that return participants are being used on development projects nor are you evaluating the effectiveness of their training.
- 4. A.I.D. lacks the data to oversee adequately the contractors who now handle about two-thirds of all participants. The I.G. Report found that A.I.D. has no effective way of assessing and comparing contractor performance, cost, or effectiveness. Amazingly, A.I.D. essentially does not know how many, how well, and at what cost participants are being trained.

These problems have persisted for years, with your I.G. and G.A.O. having reported on them on several occasions. What is your response to the latest findings of your I.G.?

Mr McPherson: --1. It is A.I.D. practice that each project paper specify human resource requirements and implications as specifically as possible, whether or not the purpose of the project is human resources development. The project paper specifies how the training will be provided and the qualifications required for trainees. A.I.D. must approve all candidates nominated and must be vigilant to ensure that unqualified candidates are not selected simply because of their position or status.

Some USAID Missions will this year develop Country Training Plans (CTPs) to provide a systematic and comprehensive overview of country training needs, priorities and resources. These plans will also identify fields for which additional needs assessments need to be conducted. In addition, A.I.D. is developing a methodology to determine the availability and quality of candidates for training early in project design stages. The CTPs and assessments will help ensure appropriate development of project training and candidate selection plans.

--2. Participants should be qualified both academically and in English language proficiency except in programs which (1) are conducted in the nominees' native language; (2) use interpreters; or (3) take place in a third country where English is unnecessary.

A series of English Language proficiency tests developed and maintained by the American Language Institute of Georgetown University (ALIGU) under a contract with AID are given to all participant candidates. A revised and consolidated battery of ALIGU tests will be supplied to our Missions in May and will replace older test forms. Nearly all U.S. universities and colleges require that enrolling participants obtain an acceptable score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) which is administered by the Educational Testing Service and is revised and administered several times a year. In addition to English language tests, A.I.D. participants must qualify for several of the U.S. examinations (e.g., S.A.T., G.R.E., G.M.A.T.).

In 1985 A.I.D. will conduct a review of a sample of participants to determine whether they are performing at a satisfactory level in their U.S. institution.. This sampling will be conducted by the Office of International Training. When participants are not performing acceptably, the appropriate AID office and the contractor will be advised.

--3. A.I.D. Missions do follow-up and evaluate the effectiveness of their training programs. Consultations with Missions show that most A.I.D.-sponsored participants have returned to work on the jobs anticipated by the project. Most have had to agree to a certain number of years of service, or to reimburse the costs of training. After a time in the particular specified job a participant may move on to another job in the country, continuing to make an economic contribution. Participants are enthusiastic about their U.S. training and the contacts they established in U.S. communities. This is a very important aspect of the training program.

A.I.D. is placing new emphasis on systematic follow-up, especially in the months immediately after return to country. The Agency is currently developing a microcomputer monitoring, follow-up and evaluation system for use by all A.I.D. Missions.

The Agency is also conducting a contractor cost study that will be completed by October 1985. This cost effectiveness study is looking primarily at the administrative (and overhead) costs that contractors charge to perform a variety of participant training services. It will focus on participant training activities performed in FY 1984 and will recommend reasonable ranges of costs for contractors to perform certain training activities.

The Agency is developing procedures to evaluate contractor bids and monitor of participant training contractors so that they can be managed more cost-effectively. We are developing a standardized contracting format (including budgets) to evaluate proposals and contracts. We are also developing standard scopes of work and reporting formats for contractors to use in reporting

participant data and contract progress. This will ensure that contractor costs can be compared and analyzed more easily by the Agency in the future.

We believe these activities ensure contractor compliance with Agency policies, procedures and regulations.

Clearances:

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