

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INPUT SHEET

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Batch 52

1. SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION	A. PRIMARY	TEMPORARY
	B. SECONDARY	

2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
Research and development in aptitude testing, semi-annual progress report, Sept.-Nov. 1966

3. AUTHOR(S)
(101) American Institutes for Research

4. DOCUMENT DATE 1966	5. NUMBER OF PAGES 27p.	6. ARC NUMBER ARC
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7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS
AIR

8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (*Sponsoring Organization, Publishers, Availability*)

9. ABSTRACT
(EDUCATION R & D)

10. CONTROL NUMBER PN-AAD-248	11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT
12. DESCRIPTORS	13. PROJECT NUMBER
	14. CONTRACT NUMBER CSD-798 Res.
	15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

CSD-798 Res. (3)
PN-AAD-248



Research and Development of Aptitude Testing

(Contract AID/csd-798)

Semi-Annual Progress Report of Activities

Covering the Period

1 September - 30 November 1966

I: PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This project is the fourth phase of a long-range program of research and development that was begun six years ago by the Agency for International Development and the American Institutes for Research. Its aim is to assist the developing countries in the introduction of effective selection and guidance procedures so as to reduce wastage in education and training, and speed the development of productive human resources.

The initial three phases were limited to the Africa Region. The first phase consisted of experimental research in Nigeria which demonstrated the feasibility of adapting modern testing techniques to a different cultural setting, and resulted in a set of indigenous aptitude tests that greatly increased the accuracy of educational and occupational selection of Nigerian youth. The second phase was the development in Nigeria of the specialists and the institutional framework necessary to apply these techniques to practical selection problems in education, in government, and in the private sector. The third phase was the generalization of the Nigerian experience to other African countries; and here, as in Nigeria, the consequent improvement in human resource development programs has been substantial.

The fourth phase -- i. e., the current activity -- is a first step toward the further extension of the program to developing countries outside Africa. Its objectives are to translate the new techniques and insights developed in Africa into a more general form suitable for use in also the other Regions; and to begin, in a modest way, the lengthy process of professional and institutional development that will be necessary to create in these Regions the centers of excellence in testing that are required. Just as the Bureau for Africa six years ago provided the "seed money" that started the program in African countries, the present TCR project is trying to stimulate the growth of professional testing worldwide.

The contract was signed on 27 May 1965. It called for the provision of 58 man-months of professional services, to be provided within the total term of the contract, which was set at 20 months over-all.

II: RECAPITULATION OF EARLIER REPORTS

Report 1: 1 June 1965 - 21 February 1966

The first project report was written at the end of a reconnaissance visit to seven countries outside the Africa Region that had expressed interest in participating in a project directed at the basic objectives stated above. It presented data relevant to the suitability of each country as a potential project site, and confirmed the enthusiasm of all seven countries for a joint effort in testing research. But it pointed out also that none of the countries was prepared to accept the workplan that had been written into the contract, and that the existing workplan would have to be changed before the research could proceed.

The reasons for this attitude on the part of the host governments were spelled out in detail because they seemed instructive:

When the project was planned, considerable thought was given by both AID and AIR to the specific ways in which a limited amount of seed money could best be invested. And the initial decision, based largely on the African experience, was to invest in a research-oriented activity to be carried out in three steps, as follows:

- 1) Locate in the Regions outside Africa three countries that would constitute as excellent a laboratory for testing research as was Nigeria for the earlier phases;
- 2) Replicate in these three countries the experimentation and data collection that had led to effective techniques in the African studies; and
- 3) Collate the findings from these separate locations to produce a general handbook on overseas testing that would describe the technical developments and the institution building required to introduce effective testing in various cultural settings.

It was assumed that providing detailed information of the "how-to-do-it yourself" type would provide a head start for testing activities in many or most of the countries with which the Agency has technical assistance agreements. And this assumption was reflected in the workplan prepared.

When the prospective host governments were brought into the discussion, however, it was found that

- 1) The needs and the local recognition of needs for improvements in testing were far greater in these countries than had been the case in Africa six years ago, so that there was not the same need for an initial period of pre-commitment trials and demonstration, and so that
- 2) Their interest lay not in doing generalizable research that might some day lead to action programs but in starting on operational research and training and test construction and institutional development right now.

The local officials could care less about the Handbook our project was to produce. They wanted tangible improvements in their own testing operations in the shortest possible time.

Thus, the report concluded with two basic questions to which answers had to be found. How should the workplan be revised to accommodate both the host countries' immediate needs and the Agency's long-range objectives? Which of the seven countries that had specifically and urgently asked to be included should be selected?

Report 2: 22 February - 31 August 1966

The second report was written after the above questions had been answered and the implementation of the revised workplan had been begun. The following major developments were reported:

New Project Objectives. In accordance with the findings of the reconnaissance visits, the workplan was revised in a number of important respects. The new plan was

- 1) To establish project centers in three countries, as originally intended; but
- 2) To begin the project in each of these locations with the creation of an institutional framework that would not only house the activities of the present project but also develop into a center for testing services that would continue after the project has ended;
- 3) To carry out, within this institutional framework, a program of research and development that would (as the first product of the activity) provide materials responsive to the host country's most critical testing needs;

- 4) To utilize the data generated from these practical projects as the basis for a handbook on overseas testing to be published (as a second product) by the time the project has ended;
- 5) To carry forward the training, planning, and organizational development that are necessary to provide (as a third product) a solid foundation for the future development of the institutions that hosted the study; and
- 6) To promote the utilization of these institutions as regional resources by accommodating third-country trainees, sponsoring region-wide conferences, and similar programs.

This, it was felt, was the approach most consistent with the fundamental aims of the activity; and the above steps constituted a new workplan (which is still the workplan today).

One characteristic of this revised scope of work, although implicit in this summary, was specifically stressed in the report. The requirement for institutional development was limited to a meaningful beginning, since the total task of developing financially and professionally self-sufficient testing centers will take far longer than the two years programmed as the contribution of TCR. To complete this task, further support within the respective CAPs or from other external sources will be essential; and

- 7) To assist the host countries in the development of meaningful plans and proposals for continued testing support

therefore became another important project objective.

New Contract Provisions. Changing the scope of work from the conduct of experimental research to research plus institutional development naturally required a corresponding change in the programming of the level of effort to be provided. It was decided, therefore, to extend the contract from its initial length of twenty months to a new total of thirty-six months and to increase the number of specialists assigned to the project from one to two per field site. An amendment incorporating these changes was executed on 23 June 1966.

Selection of Sites. For a variety of reasons, some of them explained in the report, the three countries selected as project sites were Brazil, Thailand, and South Korea.

Progress on Implementation. Because of the extensive time required to effect the above changes in the project design -- the development of the new scope of work alone required four months -- the field work had barely begun at the time this report was submitted. Most of the report therefore was devoted to accomplishments in the home office in making the necessary preparations.

The major home-office activities included

- 1) The development of new plans and budgets, which included a July planning trip to Thailand and South Korea;
- 2) The completion of a first draft of the Handbook, based on African data, for the guidance of the field staff;
- 3) The recruitment and orientation of field technicians;
- 4) The arrangements for travel, shipping, procurement, and other logistic needs; and
- 5) The provision of professional guidance to field sites through the interchange of comprehensive weekly communications.

The status at the three field sites at the end of the period covered in the report was as follows:

	<u>Brazil</u>	<u>Thailand</u>	<u>Korea</u>
U.S. Technicians			
--Chief-of-Party	At post 3 mos.	Awaiting OK	Not selected
--Associate	At post 1 mo.	Not selected	At post 1 wk.
Project Agreement	None	Drafted	MOE Letter
Institutional Home	Vargas Found.	None	None
Local Support			
--Office Space	Provided	None	USOM provided
--Counterparts	Part-Time	None	None
--Local costs	In Part	None	None
Research Done	None	None	None
Key Need	Pro-Ag	Pro-Ag	Chief-of-Party

Thus, much of the underbrush had been cleared, but extensive negotiations on local arrangements and the recruitment of two additional technicians still lay ahead before productive work could begin.

III: PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Both of the preceding reports were submitted at "logical" reporting points in the development of the project rather than at the regular six-month intervals that had been foreseen. It seemed appropriate to delay the first report until the entire reconnaissance operation had been completed, so as to be able to present the resulting issues to the Agency with all data in hand; and then, having raised these issues, to submit the next report when they had been resolved. The net result has been a reporting schedule that is by now three months out of phase.

To get back on schedule, this report covers the relatively brief period from 1 September through 30 November 1966. It will concentrate on accomplishments at the field sites, where the main focus of activity has been throughout these three months, and thus complement the preceding report, which was devoted chiefly to home office preparation.

IV: PROGRESS TOWARD OBJECTIVES

A. Accomplishments In The Home Office

The main priority in the home office was to complete the staffing of the project by filling the two positions that were still vacant at the time of the last report. This has been done, and we are highly pleased with the caliber of the two individuals selected.

The requirement in Korea was for a very senior specialist, capable of gaining the respect and confidence of the large professional community with whom he would have to work. For this position, we selected Dr. Dan H. Jones, who had extensive practical experience plus top professional qualifications, and who had earlier served a tour in India as a high-level advisor. As of 30 November, he had obtained all necessary clearances and completed his pre-departure orientation.

The requirement in Thailand was for an associate to the Chief of Party, to take responsibility for the test development part of the operation. For this position, we selected Dr. Joel B. Arcnson, who, although just completing his doctoral work, had several years of practical experience in test development in industry and in a major test publishing firm. As of 30 November, he had been nominated and approved, and was about to begin his orientation.

The second priority in the home office was to move ahead on the planning of a special conference to be held in Lagos at the half-way mark of the field phase. This conference would bring together the Chiefs-of-Party and the senior counterparts from all three sites in a joint session with staff of the West African Examinations Council, to exchange experiences helpful to each other's ongoing projects, and to promote parallel studies that will lead to generalizable results. A tentative agenda was drafted in the home office and circulated among all sites for comment, and on the basis of the comments now flowing in, a revised agenda is being prepared.

To supplement the agenda, field staff are also being provided with a detailed check-list of information and data relevant to testing in their respective countries that they are to assemble and bring with them to Lagos. Having comparable factual information from all three sites should make it possible to move quickly from generalities to specific practical applications.

The balance of the home office activities was devoted to the continuing needs for administrative and logistic backstopping, professional guidance, and close liaison with AID. The interchange of communications between the home office and the field sites in particular has increased as the project has grown. During this period, an average of five letters and four reports has come in each month from each site, and an average of five letters and five reports has gone back to each site in return.

B: Accomplishments In The Field

To provide the Agency with a first-hand account of progress in each country, we asked our Chiefs-of-Party to write individual summaries of project activities from the time of their arrival to date. These summaries are presented below:

The AID-AIR Testing Project in Brazil

by

David Angell, Ph.D.
Chief of Party

The Brazil phase of the project began on 12 May 1966 when the Chief of Party arrived in Rio de Janeiro. Clearance for a second staff member -- Dr. Ann G. Angell -- was obtained on 20 July; and she began work, on a part-time basis at first, on 25 July. Approximately eleven man-months have been devoted to the project to date.

Organization. Project activities have been carried out, since the beginning, within the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, a semi-independent (but government-supported) educational and research organization. For the first six months, no formal administrative ties existed between the Vargas Foundation and the AID-AIR team. However, agreement has recently been reached between the Foundation and USAID/Brazil on a number of points regarding the formal operation of the project, and it is hoped that an appropriate Pro-Ag will have been signed by the parties concerned before the end of the year.

The Vargas Foundation encompasses some half dozen separate institutes and schools, and has major facilities in Rio and São Paulo. Until now, the AID-AIR project has been centered in the Institute for Professional Selection and Guidance (ISOP) which has been one of Brazil's most active testing organizations for more than 15 years. But in August, ISOP received notification of the award of a grant from the Ford Foundation to support work in testing, and plans have been made to combine the AID and Ford projects within a separate Center that will operate with considerable autonomy within the over-all structure of the Vargas Foundation. ISOP will continue to operate its service-oriented testing programs but the responsibility for new test development would be shifted to the separate AID/Ford-supported Center.

Senhora Ruth Scheeffler, who has been the Director of ISOP, will instead become the director of the new Center; and Dona Nícia Bessa, who has been Chief of ISOP's Research and Statistics Section, will become Senhora Scheeffler's assistant. This will make effective use of these two experienced and capable individuals, but will naturally deprive the AIR project of their services as full-time counterparts, as had once been intended.

The matter of an Advisory Committee for the project -- Will there be one? Who would serve on it? What would be its functions? -- is not yet settled. A number of knowledgeable people in Brazil, including representatives of the Vargas Foundation and of the USAID Mission, have expressed reservations about the efficacy of operating under the aegis of a high-level decision-making body in the early stages of the project. Experience seems to have shown that it is difficult to convene such groups in Brazil, and difficult too for such groups to arrive at a consensus which is satisfactory to the various interests represented. Discussions which the AIR technicians have held with Brazilian administrators and professionals -- persons who might themselves serve on an Advisory Committee -- tend to confirm this observation. Although enthusiasm has been shown, without exception, for the role which a testing program might play in the efficient utilization of human resources in Brazil, there is a considerable lack of agreement among the individuals contacted as to the particular manpower problems which are most critical and which should be given

priority in the research. Persuasive arguments have been heard for undertaking work in at least six different areas covering a considerable range of educational and vocational testing needs.

At present, the AIR technicians in Brazil favor postponing the formation of an Advisory Council, mainly on the grounds that productive research and test development would be unduly delayed if it were necessary to await a Committee decision on where to begin. The eventual formation of an Advisory Committee is, of course, not precluded. In fact, it would seem essential for the activities of the new Test Construction Center, once it is established, to be reviewed and guided by an advisory group representing the many sectors of the economy in which testing programs could make a contribution to effective manpower utilization.

Facilities. For the first four months, the project was housed in the ISOP office in downtown Rio de Janeiro. On 12 September, the AIR technicians and the nucleus of the staff of the Test Construction Center moved into the new Vargas Foundation building in the Botafogo section of town. This fourteen-story building, still unfinished, was designed by Brazil's famous architect Oscar Neimeyer, and is one of the most modern in Rio. Only two floors of the building are presently occupied; the project's offices are on the eleventh floor.

Office space is ample and pleasant; furnishings are basic but adequate for the work. There are (or will be) sufficient typewriters and desk calculators to serve the Center's immediate needs. Under the Ford Foundation grant, funds are available also for the acquisition of a scoring machine and related equipment.

Local Staff. The Vargas Foundation has tentatively agreed to provide the services of technical personnel amounting to at least 40 man-months of effort, but as yet, no counterparts nor assistants have been assigned. Acquiring full-time counterparts is a major problem because of the wage structure in Brazil. With wages relatively low and inflation still rampant, most Brazilian psychologists (and other types of professionals) find it necessary to hold more than one job at the same time. Every psychologist with whom the AIR technicians have had any contact holds at least two positions, and some are working at as many as four different jobs, all permanent but part-time. Thus, the Vargas Foundation's agreement to provide salaries for professional personnel to work primarily on the AID-AIR project is somewhat academic -- there are no qualified persons presently in ISOP whose duties and schedules will permit them to take on this work at the going salary rate; and the Foundation is not in a position to be able to offer the higher salary nor guarantee the long-range job security that might attract people presently employed in other jobs. Under these conditions, it seems certain that counterparts are going to be available only on a part-time basis. Although it does not appear as satisfactory as having one full-time counterpart for each of the two AIR

technicians, the arrangement which is now being pursued is one in which three or four psychologists experienced in tests and measurement will devote part-time (hopefully, half-time or more) to project work.

During the last two weeks of the reporting period, discussions have been held with a half-dozen persons identified as experienced professionals in testing work. All but one of these expressed immediate interest in working (part-time) on the AID-AIR project, and all appear to be capable of making significant contributions to the project work. But the only way in which any of these individuals will be able to take on a project assignment is to be made "requisitadas" (i. e., put at the disposal of the Center) by their primary employers. Precedent exists for this type of arrangement in Brazil (it seems not uncommon, in fact), and two of the persons interviewed are presently exploring the possibility with their employers.

In addition to those new professional persons who will eventually be working on the project, the present staff of the Center includes five or six persons -- notably Senhoras Scheeffer and Bessa -- who can provide valuable short-term assistance on project work.

The Vargas Foundation has also agreed informally to provide the services of secretaries and clerk typists amounting to not less than 40 man-months during the contract period. One bilingual secretary is scheduled to begin work in early December, and a second one is presently being sought.

Local Support. Under the terms of the draft project agreement, the Vargas Foundation has agreed to provide the following, in addition to the personnel services described above: office space and furnishings, expendable office supplies, local travel for the Brazilian staff members, and computer time for data processing. The Foundation has also agreed to pay the salaries of two participants trainees during their stays in the U.S.

The draft project agreement also provides that USAID/Brazil will pay local travel expenses of the American technicians, guarantee transportation of personnel and materials on testing trips, provide a typewriter and a calculating machine, and fund two participants for Master's Degree training in the U. S.

Progress Toward Activity Targets. The following has been accomplished toward the six activity targets set for this phase:

Target 1: Negotiate a firm project agreement. The relatively unstructured situation in which the project had been operating in Brazil and the circumstances which led to that state were described in the last Progress Report. It was clear then and has become even clearer now that the tentative verbal arrangements made prior to the team's arrival in Brazil must be formalized, so that the objectives and responsibilities of the parties involved are explicit and understood.

In early October, following discussions with Senhoras Scheeffler and Bessa and with the Deputy Director of the USAID Human Resources Office, the Chief of Party drafted a proposed agreement between USAID/Brazil and the Getúlio Vargas Foundation. This draft was submitted to USAID on 11 October.

On 17 November, a meeting was held with the President of the Vargas Foundation, and final decisions were made on the Pro-Ag provisions. The draft was then turned over to the USAID Program Office to be reviewed with respect to policy and format and to be translated into Portuguese. It is hoped that this process will be completed shortly, and that an agreement will be signed by all parties within a few weeks.

Target 2: Establish research priorities. From the time of the team's arrival in Brazil, efforts have been made to learn as much as possible about testing activities in the country, past and present, and to determine areas of current testing needs. Publications and documents of indigenous Brazilian agencies and of USAID and other international organizations have been studied, and discussions have been held with many individuals representing institutions concerned with manpower utilization and human resources development.

To summarize the testing situation, it is apparent that the aptitude tests used in Brazil are (with a few exceptions) straightforward translations of standard American and European tests, which are used without local norms and without local validation. Brazilian psychologists and educators are quite aware of the deficiencies of this procedure, but have not been able to introduce the sweeping changes required. The major problem has been lack of resources (including personnel) to carry out the research essential to the development of good indigenous tests and testing programs.

The following are some of the high-priority testing needs which have been identified: (a) reform of the "vestibular" (university admission) examination system; (b) reform of the "admissão" (secondary-school admission) examination system; (c) introduction of standardized tests of academic achievement at all educational levels; (d) introduction of vocational guidance at the secondary school level; (e) scholastic aptitude testing at the primary-school level; (f) selection programs for teacher training; (g) aptitude testing of young adults for vocational training during their (compulsory) tour of military service; and (h) scholastic and vocational aptitude testing of adults in literacy training.

Each of the above problem areas has at least one adherent among the higher ranks of Brazilian public officials, who advocates it as the highest priority need. The decision as to where to begin, which must be made very soon, will probably be based largely on the research team's estimate of the feasibility of accomplishing a practical objective in a reasonably short period of time. This determination will include considerations of the

amount of technical and logistic support available from the agency with whom the team would be working in each problem area. It should be noted, too, that the testing programs which appear needed for these various problem areas are not mutually exclusive; tests developed for one area will be useful for other applications as well.

Target 3: Determine applicability of ID tests in Brazil. In cooperation with ISOP testing specialists, the team has been reviewing the tests in the ID battery to evaluate their applicability to the Brazilian culture and the Brazilian educational and vocational situation. Somewhat surprisingly, the Brazilian experts have expressed more concern about the mechanics of administering the tests to local populations than they have about the appropriateness of the content and format of the tests themselves. Local experts point out that test administration will suffer from the student behavior characteristic of Brazilian schools, where discipline in general is difficult to maintain, where sustained attention to a task is not a tradition, and where directions are something to be ignored or circumvented. The technicians have often been warned that tests and testing materials are going to disappear before their very eyes and that (as a specific example) they should never expect to retrieve more than about 25 per cent of the little plastic models used with the BOXES test.

Target 4: Prepare a written project description. A description of the overall aims of the project and of the general objectives and methods of the Brazil sub-project has been prepared and translated into Portuguese. In one form, this document will serve as a general source of public information; especially for people with whom personal contacts are to be made, as an initial source of information about the project and a basis for detailed discussions. In a somewhat different form, it is intended to serve as the basis for an invitation to a number of educators and administrators to attend a conference concerning the project, to be sponsored by the educational research branch of the Ministry of Education and Culture. This activity has been held up by the project agreement negotiations, and the purpose and nature of such a meeting will have to be reexamined in light of the project's formal affiliation with the Vargas Foundation.

Target 5: Acquire reasonable language skills. Competence in Portuguese is absolutely essential for the development of tests in Brazil and for the continued interactions with Brazilians in the course of project work. To acquire some measure of language skill in the shortest feasible time, the two staff members attended the intensive training course offered by the American Embassy on a part-time basis. They completed the 250-hour course in mid-September, and since then have continued to increase their language facility by daily contacts with Center personnel and other Brazilians met in the course of project work.

Target 6: Prepare for the Lagos Conference. In accordance with the tentative agenda that has been circulated, the team has assembled

extensive material for discussion with the other participants. There is a scarcity of empirical data, but the more general experiences and findings seem highly pertinent to the project's objectives.

Important Next Steps: The major targets for the next six months include the following specific items:

1) Contract Agreement. Negotiating the formal Project Agreement is currently the highest priority need. In view of the recent verbal commitments of the parties involved, no particular problems are anticipated in formalizing the document, but experience has shown that the Chief of Party must play a continuing and active role in the negotiations.

2) Assignment of counterparts. None of the work being contemplated can be accomplished without the assistance of competent Brazilian psychologists. Efforts to establish a satisfactory counterpart arrangement, begun in the closing weeks of the current reporting period, will be pursued with vigor.

3) Identification of priority research areas. Sufficient information has now been gathered to permit the early identification of the area or areas in which test development work will first be undertaken. Importance to the overall Brazilian manpower plans, potential impact, and level of support expected are the major factors on which these decisions will be based. At the present time, three areas are receiving serious consideration: (a) scholastic ability tests appropriate to the primary grades, (b) general ability tests for use with illiterate adults, and (c) tests for selection of teacher trainees.

4) Development of work plan. As early as feasible, a detailed plan of work specifying immediate and long-range objectives and describing the planned approach, will be developed by the AID-AIR technicians, their Brazilian counterparts, and Sras. Scheeffler and Bessa.

5) Implementation of new research. Barring unforeseen administrative problems, actual research and development activities should begin during the coming reporting period. This work will involve: (a) translation and adaptation of existing tests, (b) development of new testing procedures, and (c) tryouts and empirical evaluation.

6) Assisting in the establishment of the Center for Test Construction. The Vargas Foundation's Center for Test Construction will be formally launched in December, when the first funds from the Ford Foundation grant are to be made available. During this critical early period, the AIR technicians will provide what assistance they can in the design, operation, and technical work of this new institution.

General Comments and Observations: The project in Brazil has developed slowly, for reasons described in the earlier progress report and elaborated in previous sections of the present report. They will not be reiterated here.

The reactions of Brazilian public officials and members of the professional community to the aims of the project have been uniformly enthusiastic. But so far no extensive local support has been sought. It is hoped that this enthusiasm will continue when the team starts asking for the time, materials, services, and other inputs an operational project requires.

On the basic organizational and logistic requirements, actions needed six months or more ago are now being taken. The prognosis for the future, therefore, seems much brighter, with regard at least to the minimum administrative and logistic support.

There remains some uncertainty in the mind of the Chief of Party concerning the adequacy of the arrangements for local transportation, particularly testing trips of some duration to rural and outlying areas of the country. In May or early June, USAID/Brazil (through its Contract Services Officer) informed the Chief of Party that it could not guarantee to meet the project's transportation requirements through the Mission's motor pool, that the machinery for acquiring a vehicle locally was complex and at that time not functioning at all because of an uncertain currency situation, and that if the contract authorized acquisition of a vehicle in the U. S. for shipment to Brazil, then that was the proper action to take to guarantee adequate transportation support. In November, the Mission reversed this position completely, and guaranteed that it would meet transportation needs locally; and the vehicle authorized under the contract -- which had already been ordered -- was cancelled.

In view of these two dramatically different USAID opinions, the Chief of Party is understandably apprehensive. He continues to feel that a permanent vehicle is the appropriate way of meeting the project's special transportation needs, and has outlined the reasons for this judgment in a memo to USAID and in communications to AIR.

The AID-AIR Testing Project in Korea

by

Sam C. Cho, Ph.D.
Acting Chief of Party

The Korean phase of the project began on 25 August 1966 when the Acting Chief of Party arrived in Seoul. The Chief of Party, Dr. Dan H. Jones,

is scheduled to arrive next month. A little over three man-months, therefore, have been devoted to this phase of the project to date.

Organization. At present the organization of the project is amorphous. USOM and local officials have agreed that no formal organization should be attempted until (a) the Chief of Party arrives, and (b) the specific testing needs to be met have been determined; and no progress on organization has therefore been made.

Presently, the Acting Chief of Party reports to the Chief Education Advisor, USOM/K, and the preliminary activities of the project have been programmed by the Education Branch. It is hoped that this close relationship with USOM will continue even after formal ties with indigenous institutions have been established. The counsel, guidance, and encouragement of the Chief Education Advisor have been invaluable; and the thorough, methodical, and structured operation of the Mission as a whole has helped to make time spent to date fully productive.

Facilities. The project is currently operating out of the Headquarters Building of USOM/K, and the Mission has provided excellent logistic support. A large office has been made available for use by the project staff; and two desks, chairs, a filing cabinet, a book shelf, a manual typewriter, and a desk calculator also have been provided.

A pool of typists is available in the Public Services Division of the Mission. In addition, custodial and security forces are provided.

Transportation to and from work is provided by a commuter bus which is available for a nominal fee. The Mission provides transportation for official travel.

Local Staff. Counterpart arrangements have not been made pending the Chief of Party's arrival.

Local Support. Preliminary letters of understanding have been exchanged by the Ministry of Education and USOM/K. Formal arrangements for local support will be made when the organizational framework is established.

Progress Toward Activity Targets. The following has been accomplished toward the four activity targets set for this phase:

Target 1: Selecting of the Chief of Party. After screening approximately 60 candidates for the position, AIR nominated Dr. Dan H. Jones. Clearances for Dr. Jones were quickly obtained and he is to report for duty on 21 December 1966.

Target 2: Establishing the project office. In addition to the basic facilities provided by USOM, there was a need to obtain also the specialized equipment a testing project requires. Complete sets of ID tests and related materials were received on 17 November 1966. A comprehensive list of other necessary items, including reference books and journals, was compiled, and orders for these materials have been placed.

Target 3: Familiarization. One basic need was for a review of Korean research and products in the testing field. Much work has been done in Korea, and a systematic survey of the literature was begun.

A second need was for the establishment of working relationships with the local community of professionals who should participate actively in the research. Briefing sessions were held at a wide variety of host government institutions, including the Central Education Research Institute, Seoul National University, the Ministry of Education, the Air Force Academy, the Office of Labor Affairs, and the Kwang Woon Engineering College; and with individual members of the Korean Psychological Association.

Target 4: Assisting with other research undertakings. Pending the formal organization of the testing project, the AIR technician has been a de facto member of the USOM Public Services Division. In this role, he has critiqued the methodology sections of several government-sponsored research projects, and has participated in the planning phases of other important research.

The reports reviewed include (a) Agricultural Education Survey of Korea, (b) Effectiveness of Manpower Training Efforts of Trade and Industrial and Fisheries Education in Korea, and (c) the research planning sessions of The Study of Compulsory Education in Korea. Through these research activities it has been possible to assess the readiness and the level of sophistication of at least a segment of the potential partners in ability test development, and these insights should contribute materially to the design of the testing research.

It is hoped that the AID-AIR testing project can continue to contribute to a number of the long-range programs to which the Mission is committed.

Important Next Steps. The major targets for the next six months include the following specific items:

- 1) Formal Organization. It is expected that the formal organization will be completed during the next six months, and that the project will become an integral part of an appropriate indigenous institution.

- 2) Policy Decisions. Policy decisions, research priorities, and specific objectives will have to be set by the local officials who will take responsibility for the research.

3) Logistics. The permanent project site, research libraries and laboratory will be established; and staffing and training of staff will be begun.

4) Participant Training. Arrangements for participant training in support of the project should be completed. For FY67, the training of two participants is foreseen.

5) Experimental Research. Several pilot studies in test development, data processing, analysis and interpretation will be undertaken.

6) Coordination Conference. Preparations for the coordination conference to be held in Lagos, Nigeria will be completed.

General Comments and Observations. If the goal of economic stability is to be reached, Korea must make optimum utilization of her resourceful manpower. Many responsible ROKG and the Mission officials believe that economic stability can be reached in the near future.

All of the officials contacted by the project staff up to date are cognizant of the pressing need for reliable, valid and usable batteries of ability tests, and are eager to help to develop and use such tests. But one major problem to be solved during the next six months will be to narrow down the field of testing without losing the active support of the many different interest groups which should cooperate in the research.

As test development and research progress, the needs for an efficient means of data processing will grow increasingly pressing. With the assistance of the Mission, the existing data analysis systems, potential user groups and the feasibility of obtaining a computer system or sharing console time will be determined. However, until a computer system is made available, an electronic calculator seems to be a minimum requirement for data processing, and a unit of this type should be obtained.

It would be helpful also if provisions can be made for the U.S. technicians to travel to the U.S. as necessary for workshops and for consultation.

The AID-AIR Testing Project in Thailand

by

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Chief of Party

The Thailand phase of the project began on 7 September 1966, when the Chief of Party arrived. A second specialist was recently nominated, and

it is expected he will assume his duties in January 1967. Thus, less than three man-months have been devoted to this phase of the project to date.

Organization. The project is being carried out within the Ministry of Education, which directs public education and in addition has a measure of control over private schools. Responsibility for the elementary schools, however, is in the Ministry of the Interior, and university education is administered by the Office of the Prime Minister. Thus, the Ministry of Education includes Adult Education, Secondary Education, Vocational Education, Teacher Training, Educational Techniques, Physical Education, Religious Affairs, Fine Arts, and Educational Planning.

The Director-General of the Department of Teacher Training, Mr. Bhunthin Attagara, has been charged by the Minister with the responsibility for all testing within the Ministry. Presently this is being carried out by the Test Bureau of the College of Education under the able leadership of Dr. Chawal Paeratakul; and the AID-AIR project has also been sited at the College of Education. Although our project has no formal link with Dr. Chawal's Test Bureau, a cooperative working partnership will be developed.

The AID-AIR project has been given the formal title of "Selection Research Project." Under the terms of the PIO/T the Chief of Party reports administratively to the Director, Mr. Bhunthin, "and through the Director to the Council." This Council is to consist of senior Thai officials who are representative of sectors chiefly concerned with testing, and is to have overall responsibility for policy and program development.

Until now no Council or Advisory Committee has been established, and, at least for the present, policy and priorities are being set informally by the Project Director; Dr. Saroj Buasri, President of the College of Education; and Dr. Lamaimas Saradatta, who is Head of the College's Department of Educational Research, and Director of the Bangkok Institute for Child Study. Miss Opal Wattha is providing liaison with the Ministry of Education, and has been able to achieve outstanding support.

Facilities. For the first few weeks the project was accommodated in temporary offices while some structural alterations were proceeding to prepare the project's permanent quarters. These were occupied on 25 October. The total space is 24' by 45' and is subdivided into two private offices, a general office area, a conference room, and a room for clerical and secretarial staff. This space is quite sufficient for the project's needs and should remain so for the immediate future.

The major needs are for air-conditioning, as productivity is markedly affected by Bangkok's sweltering climate; and for potable drinking water, which is also made pressing by the climatic conditions. Requests have been initiated for both of these items.

However, it should be noted that the basic office furniture is entirely satisfactory, and that all the supplies that have been requested have been promptly provided. Supplementary equipment is to be furnished under the contract, and has been ordered through the home office of AIR.

Local Staff. Two full-time counterparts are called for in the project plans, and both have been provided. The senior counterpart is Dr. Poj Sapianchaiy, whose Ed.D. from Indiana University has major emphasis on research and statistics. Dr. Poj joined the project as soon as it began, but could not be relieved of all of his graduate teaching commitments immediately, and will therefore not assume full-time duties until mid-December. He brings an excellent background to the project, and his contribution is expected to be substantial. He is well regarded by his professional colleagues, and the opportunity to work full-time on research and development should enable him to sharpen his research skills and to gain experience of a kind that was impossible while he was carrying a heavy teaching load.

The second counterpart is Mr. Sawat Pratoomraj, who will join the project during the latter part of December. Mr. Sawat was awarded the Master of Arts degree with a major in psychology from the University of Hawaii in June 1965. Since that time he has been working in the Test Bureau and teaching in the College of Education.

Participant training opportunities are now being explored with USOM. If any scholarships are made available the Director-General of Teacher Training has agreed to assign any individuals selected for participant training to the project prior to their departure for on-the-job training.

Until now there has been no supportive clerical staff and recruiting such a staff has proved to be a most difficult task. The chief reason is that in preparing a budget in the PIO/T the estimates made were unrealistically low and failed to take account of the changes wrought by the very recent huge influx of foreign projects and foreign firms. An experienced English-speaking secretary is a valuable commodity and will earn as much as 6,000 - 8,000 bahts as a confidential secretary in industry. At the level at which we are recruiting we could probably find a suitable person for 3,500 - 4,000 bahts. The budgeted amount of 2,500 bahts is too much for a beginner and too little for anyone with experience. So much has the market been distorted that an experienced English-language secretary will usually earn more than a professional man with a doctorate degree. Such salary inequities are bound to have repercussions upon the morale of professional staff, but there appears to be no solution.

The Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation (DTEC) has been approached with a formal request to revise the budget to provide for one secretary at 4,000 bahts per month, with a typist to be hired later

with whatever money remains. If this is approved we have a suitable candidate with several years of experience in industrial organizations to whom we shall offer the position.

A similar difficulty is expected to be encountered in hiring a driver when the project vehicle arrives, as the budget estimate is below the minimum paid by USOM to their drivers. Nowhere has specific budget provision been made for the hiring of scoring clerks when they are needed, although the PIO/T does provide for one clerk from the MOE rolls.

A technical problem which looms large is that of translation. In response to a request to the Ministry of Education two staff members of the College of Education, one from the English Department and one from the Thai Department, have been assigned to work with the project one or two days each week. They will commence their duties in December, and their help should substantially advance the time when experimental testing can begin.

Local Support. Provided by RTG are office space, basic office equipment (including desks, chairs, bookshelves, cupboards, fans, water cooler, Thai typewriter) and clerical and interpreter services as noted above.

The RTG is also providing transportation and per diem expenses within Thailand for American and Thai counterpart personnel. In addition, budget provisions have been made for air fare and per diem to enable the senior Thai counterpart to travel to Lagos, Nigeria for the purpose of participating in the International Conference on Testing in Developing Countries to be held for one week in early 1967.

Other RTG support is the housing allowance for the U.S. technicians; education allowance (which will probably not be used); duty-free first entry privileges; and return transportation to the U.S.

USOM has been providing transportation for official project use on a temporary basis, whenever the availability of vehicles permits. The project vehicle provided for under the contract has been ordered and should be available in early 1967, after which time adequate transportation should be available full time.

USOM is also providing supplemental household equipment, APO and Medical Unit privileges, and the PX and Commissary privileges consistent with applicable regulations.

Progress Toward Activity Targets. The following has been accomplished toward the five activity targets set for this phase:

Target 1: Personal Orientation. Personal orientation is an ongoing phenomenon which is never completed. However, the initial period is certainly the most important and it is then that the greatest proportion of time should be devoted to familiarization. Printed and mimeographed reports, giving descriptive accounts of Thai education, plans, and projections were one source of useful orientation. Personal contacts were a second. During the first two or three weeks the Chief of Party talked with the Minister of Education; the Directors-General of Teacher Training, Vocational Education, Secondary Education, and Educational Techniques; the Director of the Office of Educational Planning; the Director of the External Relations Division; the President of the College of Education; and the Director of the Bangkok Institute for Child Study. A half-day meeting with the full staff of the Test Bureau, College of Education, supplemented numerous individual talks with the staff.

During the latter part of September and early October several trips were made at the suggestion of Mr. Bhunthin. These resulted in visits to different kinds of institutions and to different regions of the country. The towns visited were Bangsaen and Ayudhya (Central Region), Korat (North-east) and Pitsanulok and Chiangmai (North). The institutions visited included rural elementary schools, vocational secondary schools, academic secondary schools, a comprehensive secondary school, teacher training institutions of various levels, technical institutes, and the University of Chiangmai. These visits provided a far clearer understanding of the realities of Thai education than would have been available from any other approach.

The Chief of Party also attended a meeting at which the Education Division of USOM was addressed by representatives of the National Education Council, the Education Planning Office, the Health and Education Sector of the National Economic Development Board, and the Education Division of the Budget Bureau. The topic was the Five-Year Plan for Education: Policy Implications and Expected Trends. Such occasions provide an opportunity to view problems in a broader and longer-range perspective.

Target 2: Establishing Office. As already indicated, excellent progress has been made on the logistic front. But the task is not yet completed.

Target 3: Informing the Professional Community. This target is seen as especially important if the professional community is to support the program, make inputs, and use the products of the research. A number of specific steps have been taken. The Chief of Party and his senior counterpart attended a four-day seminar on the Teaching of Psychology and the Functioning of Psychologists in Thailand, which was attended by sixty senior people from educational and clinical settings, industrial management, and various government departments. An opportunity was

provided to make a formal presentation to the group of the plans and objectives of the project. The follow-up question session and a series of informal discussions indicated wide interest in sharing the outcomes of the research.

One immediate outcome of this session was an informal invitation to the Chief of Party to talk to a group of Chulalongkorn University faculty about the project. In the near future a formal invitation is to be issued.

A handout describing the project has been prepared, translated into Thai, and distributed in either the Thai or English version to the institutions visited during the orientation period, to participants in the Psychology Seminar and to a number of other individuals who it was thought should be informed. Other printed accounts of the project, based upon this handout, have appeared in the Publication of the Department of Teacher Training, and in a circular to faculty of the College of Education.

In addition, a meeting with the President and the Heads of Departments of the College gave this group a chance to learn about the new project housed in their midst. As a result many people have offered cooperation and support, and have expressed their desire to share our results.

Target 4: Planning for Testing. A survey was conducted of the testing projects carried out by or known to the staffs of the Test Bureau and the Bangkok Institute for Child Study. The most valuable outcomes were identification of some specific problems which have been faced and the means of solving them. Such technical matters as security, sampling techniques, item types, etc., were included.

In planning for experimental testing it was decided that the non-verbal ID tests would be tried out in as close to their original form as possible. Changes would be made only in items where totally unfamiliar objects or printed words (in English) appeared. Two tests, Boxes and Mechanical Information, have been scrutinized item-by-item by Dr. Poj and the Chief of Party to identify such items. Dr. Poj has translated the instructions for these two tests and further work will be done on these translations after the translation staff join the team.

A tentative decision has also been reached to do some experimental testing with translations of standard American tests. If this is done it will enable a better judgment to be made as to where on the continuum of complexity test development should be concentrated.

Target 5: Planning for Nigeria Conference. Because of the number of steps necessary to obtain approval for the senior Thai counterpart to travel to Lagos, this request has already been initiated. Also, the tentative conference agenda was discussed in detail by the present professional staff, and detailed comments were sent to the AIR Pittsburgh Office. Further discussions and data collection are planned when the final agenda arrives.

Important Next Steps. The major targets for the next six months include the following specific items.

1) Complete Office Establishment. The steps necessary to accomplish this object are the procurement of office equipment from local and U.S. sources.

2) Assemble Full Staff. During the next six months the second U.S. technician and second counterpart are scheduled to commence duty. Recruiting will continue for a secretary and a driver, and, if the demand occurs, for a typist and for a scoring clerk.

3) Establish Office Routines. As the staff increases and the amount of confidential testing material handled begins to grow, routine procedures will be devised and formalized in the form of written SOP's.

4) Continue Translation. Translation, checking, and refining of wording of the instructions for the non-verbal ID tests will continue. As further reports and other materials are prepared these will also be translated as appropriate.

5) Develop Test Items. Where it is obvious that certain ID test items are inappropriate, even for experimental testing, attempts will be made to devise items suitable for tryout as replacements.

6) Begin Experimental Testing. The present first priority of the research -- i.e., the selection of students completing 10th grade for entry into vocational school -- dictates the first ID tests to be tried experimentally. These are Boxes, Mechanical Information, Manual Dexterity, and Finger Dexterity. Attempts will be made to devise a Thai parallel for the Names test. Other tests to be considered at this time are Figures, Tables, Graphs, Checking, Marking, and possibly Similarities.

7) Attendance at Nigeria Conference. Plans for and the outcomes of the Lagos conference in early 1967 will assist in sharpening our attack on the development of tests. Attendance at the conference is looked upon as potentially an extremely valuable opportunity.

8) Formation of Advisory Council. It is hoped that during the next six-month period a formal Advisory Council can be established to assist in planning and policy making.

9) Developing a Work Plan. Going beyond the initial priority of selection of vocational school students will require a systematic work plan. Many of the previous steps should contribute to this development, especially the attendance at the international conference and the formation of the Advisory Council.

General Comments and Observations. In starting a new project in a country where the ground-rules are unfamiliar a certain amount of frustration and delay is unavoidable. The problems encountered in the Thailand phase of the project have been described already. They are related to logistics (delays in obtaining basic office equipment) and personnel (impossibility of recruiting English-speaking supportive staff for the amounts budgeted). Technical problems have been pushed into the background while a search for solutions to these minor but intrusive problems has been proceeding. Indeed, translation is the only technical problem with which any progress has been made. In spite of the absence of specific outcomes or products, however, it is thought that a sound start has been made and that we can look forward confidently to the beginning of experimental testing and the collection of data within the period to be covered by the next report.

On the personal side, finding adequate housing proved to be a major ordeal, and required vastly more time and effort than should have been consumed for such a mundane task. The same pressures which have forced up the salaries of English-speaking secretaries have been operating on house and apartment rentals. Only after a month of living in a hotel did I reluctantly reach the conclusion that I would have to considerably exceed my housing allowance. It then took another month before I was able to find and move into suitable living quarters. In considering the cost of my temporary housing allowance and the value of my time, and multiplying this by the number of other AID people with similar experiences, I would seriously question the economics of the present system. Where housing is plentiful and cheap, allowing direct-hire and contract employees to fend for themselves may be a satisfactory method. In Bangkok, in the latter part of 1966, this just is not true.

A number of indices may be used as evidence for the acceptance of a testing project and as indications of its potential impact. Most of these are qualitative and anecdotal, and consequently must be viewed with the same kind of suspicion with which the test specialist always looks at such evidence. Nevertheless, it has been refreshing to be greeted spontaneously and unanimously with some such expression as "That's just what we need" when introduced as an agent of psychological testing. The spectrum represented by this kind of comment included American education advisors at USOM, an Australian Colombo Plan engineer working with a Bangkok technical college, a Dutch UN criminologist working on a juvenile delinquency project, the Rockefeller Foundation representative in Thailand, Thai educational and clinical psychologists and psychiatrists, principals of technical institutes, teacher training institutes and schools at various levels, and many others.

The invitation to talk about the project with a group of Chulalongkorn University faculty is further evidence of the interest created.

However, the most concrete pieces of evidence for support are to be found within the Thai government. In addition to the Test Bureau, the Civil Service have just begun a small testing operation of their own. More recently the Ministry of Education has been preparing a proposal for the development of standardized achievement and ability tests for use in the elementary and secondary schools of Thailand. When completed, this proposal will be submitted to an external foundation with a request for financial support.

The need for testing is widely accepted and strong support will be lent to projects which promise to deliver reliable and valid instruments for use in selection and guidance.

Our major concern now is for time. It was initially intended that there would be forty-four man-months spent in the field phase for each country. If the present termination date is retained Thailand will have had only thirty-four man months of U.S. technician time. Consideration will be given to extending the time period of the contract to allow the full time in the field.

V: IMPORTANT NEXT STEPS

As indicated in the reports of the field staff, only the Thailand project has been "legitimized" with a formal Pro-Ag and a clear-cut institutional affiliation. Achieving the same status in Brazil (which needs the Pro-Ag) and in Korea (which needs both) is the highest priority need.

Similarly, it is only in Thailand that full-time counterparts have been assigned. Since the research cannot proceed without the participation of qualified counterparts, completing the staffing arrangements in Brazil and Korea is another most urgent need.

None of the teams has been able to develop a work plan based on local priorities, partly because the technicians have been at post for such a short time, and partly because multi-sector advisory committees have not been established. One of the assignments given to the field staff as an activity preparatory to the Lagos Conference is to take the steps necessary to develop realistic research priorities, and to bring to Lagos a description of the three projects to be done first. This, it is hoped, will provide a beginning for the detailed planning that is required. The Lagos Conference is expected, in general, to identify most of the steps that should be taken at each site to assure the attainment of the key project objectives.

The completion of the adapted test instruments that are now in varying states of readiness and the collection of evaluative data must also be moved ahead as rapidly as possible, in light of the short time remaining. The time that had to be devoted to preparatory activities was far greater than had been expected, and it will take an intensive research effort to try to catch up. Fortunately, there seem to be no administrative barriers left to preclude devoting ourselves to full-time experimentation.

Maintaining the continuity of the program after the TCR seed money has been expended is becoming an ever growing concern. Each of the host governments has made or is making institutional shifts, personnel reassignments, and budgetary commitments predicated on a long-range effort in testing. The problem of finding a source for continuing external assistance, within the Agency or outside, will have to be given explicit attention in the six months ahead.