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**Evaluation of
Central
Agricultural
Training for the
Latin America
and Caribbean
Region,
Peace Corps**

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INTRODUCTION

This executive summary has been prepared from the final report of the evaluation of the Central Agricultural Training (CAT) program of the Peace Corps Latin America and Caribbean Region office. The evaluation was conducted by a joint Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI), and Office of Policy and Planning/Evaluation (OPP/E) team between November, 1979 and May 1980. During this period, two field data collection trips were made to Costa Rica, Honduras, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala which permitted the team to interview 94 volunteers, 27 trainees, 21 Peace Corps in-country staff members, 11 host-country agency officials, and 16 CAT and 6 non-CAT training staff members.

From the team's perspective, the basic questions that the evaluation seeks to answer can be stated as follows:

- How successful is CAT training in preparing Peace Corps volunteers with the skills needed for their field assignments (performance);
- Are there problems with either the content or the method of CAT pre-service training that influence eventual PCV performance; and
- In what ways can the overall Peace Corps training program be modified to enhance the probability that trainees will perform effectively in their roles as PCVs (effectiveness)?

The reader is cautioned that due to the extremely brief nature of this summary all examples, background data and sup-

porting evidence have been deleted. The team therefore urges that this paper be used as an outline and that the full report be read by all interested parties.

EVALUATION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The team members are positive about the CAT's performance because of the following factors: the model is appropriate; the center fulfills its objectives; the problems attributable to the center's performance are correctable and minor (some had been corrected before the team finished this report); and volunteers and in-country staffs interviewed by the team overwhelmingly supported the performance of the CAT and its staff.

The evaluation has, however, identified some areas that require improvement. They are presented in a framework of six broad issue areas (Scheduling of Training Cycles; Trainee Background; Training Components; Evaluation/Feedback Qualification; Programming and Training - Administration; and Programming and Training - Effectiveness). A concluding section deals with a justification of centralized agricultural training as a general training model (Model Justification).

SCHEDULING OF TRAINING CYCLES

Findings

The manner in which trainee groups are scheduled into the CAT center has an appreciable impact on the quality of training at that center:

- The CAT has almost no role in the choice or modification of dates for training cycles scheduled into it.
- Short-term overlaps of training cycles create intense short-term demands for additional instructors that the CAT has trouble responding to.
- No upper limit exists on the number of trainees received at one time at the center, leaving a potential for overuse of physical and staff resources.
- Insufficient down-time at the center has left little time for staff training and evaluation, and for curriculum improvement and development.
- Year-end holiday periods are undesirable for completion of training and for trainee entry into the country of destination.

Recommendations

- A process of negotiation between the CAT and in-country Peace Corps staffs should be instituted to permit minor modifications in trainee cycle scheduling and thereby avoid short-overlaps in training cycles.
- An upper limit on the number of trainees accepted at the CAT at any one time should be determined jointly by the CAT and the Peace Corps/LAC region.
- An annual CAT down-time of minimal length (10-20 days) should be required. Its scheduling should be negotiated in the same manner as cycle scheduling.
- End-of-year training completion dates should be avoided.

TRAINEE BACKGROUND

Findings

The background of a trainee significantly affects the impact of training and volunteer performance and effectiveness.

- Prior participation in community service/development work was found to be a common background characteristic of volunteers who were identified as "successful" by in-country staffs. However, TAC sheets and recruitment procedures put little functional emphasis on this characteristic when filling trainee slots.
- No significant difference was found in the frequency of successful adaptation to Peace Corps service between specialist volunteers and generalist volunteers. Programming criteria (leading to a meaningful job) appear to be more determinate than background characteristics in predicting rates of volunteer maladjustment.
- Specialists and generalists alike found that CAT training was valuable to their personal preparation for Peace Corps work. Specialists appreciated the opportunity for practical experience and "adapting down" their skills.
- Increasing third world emphasis on credentialed proficiency in its foreign technical assistance personnel poses a challenge to Peace Corps emphasis on generalists.

Recommendations

- Put primary emphasis in TAC sheets and recruitment procedures on the candidate's motivation as measured by participation in other community service/development work experience. When relaxing TAC requirements to fill trainee slots, relax educational and work experience requirements before experience in community service/development.
- Expand selection procedures in staging in order to emphasize and upgrade the importance of motivation and sensitivity to community service/development in trainees accepted for training.

- Stress acquisition of community development skills in training in order to produce motivated and skilled volunteers.
- Continue and expand the training of specialists at the CAT.

TRAINING COMPONENTS

The training components are composed of three elements: technical, language, and cross-cultural.

Technical Skills Training

Findings

- Technical training methods, content and staff performance were generally rated very positively by volunteers and trainees.
- The relevancy of technical training was, however, found to be often lacking as it related to job site characteristics. Those factors which impeded training relevance were found to be not so much related to CAT implementation of technical training objectives as: (a) inadequate programming-training coordination (i.e., sites were often not adequately surveyed, assigned sites were frequently changed after the formulation of the training objectives, etc.); (b) reliance on memorization of technical facts rather than a problem-solving generic orientation to technical skills acquisition; and (c) the inherent inability of any training center to provide all the ecological factors necessary to address the wide range of technical practices needed by different programs.

Recommendations

- Change the focus of technical training from a knowledge specific to a problem-solving skills orientation. Classroom technical training should teach generic agricultural skills (i.e., general grain crop requirements, fruit-tree cultivation, or small animal husbandry principles). Practical field training should reinforce this orientation by providing experience with a country specific crop or animal from each generic area to illustrate the general principles.
- Reorient the programming-training communication process to specify generic skills needed as well as country specific examples to be used to illustrate the general principles.
- Provide more country-specific technical materials as a backup for the generic training and to constitute the trainee's own reference library at the job site. Upgrade the technical materials holdings of the CAT center.
- Affirm recent changes in pre-training research which allow more CAT staff time in-country for formulation of technical training objectives.

Language Skills Training

Findings

- CAT-trained volunteers and trainees were again generally very pleased with language training methodology, content and staff capabilities.
- Some greater flexibility in the use of blackboards and written reference materials (grammar books, exercises, etc.) was desired by them.
- The negative comments referring to staff performance related generally to temporary teachers with little prior teaching ability hired on short-term basis.
- The training received by advanced Spanish speakers was not considered adequate for their needs.

Recommendations

- Coordinate the scheduling of training cycles to avoid short-term overlaps and the need for the hiring of temporary instructors. (See Scheduling of Training Cycles above.)
- Permit greater use of additional teaching materials. Recent changes at the CAT have allowed more flexibility in this area.
- Provide more, and a wider variety of language training for advanced speakers, i.e., advanced grammar classes, formal use of Latin American novels and magazines, more field trips, or instruction in letter-writing.

Cross-Cultural Skills Training

Findings

- Cross-cultural training in general, and classroom presentations of area studies information and cultural adaptation processes specifically, were rated very negatively by most volunteers and trainees interviewed. This problem is widespread in Peace Corps cross-cultural training worldwide.
- The live-in with a local family, the field trips, and the use of PCV's as training assistants were very highly valued by most.
- Relevancy of "area studies" information and cultural adaptation exercises was questioned frequently. As in technical training, the emphasis on country specific material when generic skills are probably more appropriate for circumstances was a major contributing factor.
- The live-in and field trip experiences were poorly analyzed between trainees and training staff. This prohibited the results from being integrated into the rest of cross-cultural training as general learning models.

Recommendations

- Reorient cross-cultural training to a focus on providing cultural adaptation skills, rather than country-specific information to volunteers. Teach them how to decide what information they need and how to obtain it in a culturally sensitive way. The value of the "core curriculum" which incorporates this philosophy is affirmed here.
- The team supports the planned upgrading of CAT staff capabilities in the core curriculum and cross-cultural training areas, by requiring formal training for its instructors.
- Formally integrate the analysis of the live-ins and field trips into the cross-cultural curriculum.

EVALUATION-FEEDBACK/QUALIFICATION PROCESS

Findings

- Staff performance in the evaluation-feedback process was often severely criticized, particularly as it relates to poor counselling skills and inappropriate personality traits in some of the staff that participated in it.
- Technical training and language acquisition qualification criteria were understood and accepted easily by trainees and volunteers. Cross-cultural qualification criteria were considered vague and irrelevant.
- The reliance put on CAT qualification data by in-country staffs varied widely. Reversals of CAT qualification recommendations by in-country staffs damages the credibility of the CAT staff.
- Little time is given to regular staff evaluation and staff meetings at the CAT.

Recommendations

- Increase the level of staff competency in evaluation-feedback skills by requiring training and prior experience in the staff members who will direct this process.
- Negotiate the choice of cross-cultural behavioral objectives between in-country staffs and the CAT staffs much as is done for technical and language objectives.

PROGRAMMING AND TRAINING - ADMINISTRATION

Findings

- The training process is heavily dependent for its effectiveness on programming and administrative procedures, i.e., site surveys, preparation of the DOW, pre-training research and in-country support, and the Memo of Understanding. Inadequate and untimely preparation of these documents inhibits effective training.
- Lack of a clear definition of responsibilities in the administrative process and standardized formats lead to breakdowns in the programming-training relationship.
- In-country Peace Corps staff are inadequately trained in programming and related administrative procedures, as well as in development theory and practice.

Recommendations

- Standard formats should be designated for programming procedures and responsibilities should be defined for their preparation and implementation.
- In-country staffs should be given updated training in programming, administration and training processes.

PROGRAMMING AND TRAINING - EFFECTIVENESS

Findings

Volunteer "effectiveness," as opposed to "performance," defines the impact that the volunteer's work has on the socio-economic conditions in which he works. Not only training, but all aspects of the Peace Corps system, recruitment, staging, training, and in-service support, impact on this factor. Two broad issues run throughout this system:

- A lack of understanding of development as a concept and a practical process among volunteers and in-country staffs means that programs often do not effectively address basic human needs and that the volunteer's potential effectiveness is diminished from the beginning of his service.
- A frequent lack of "professional" attitudes and behavior in volunteers often further reduces their potential effectiveness, i.e., behavior towards host-country colleagues is inappropriate, personal appearance is insensitive to local standards, and the motivation of volunteers is sometimes not directed to aiding people but rather self improvement.

Recommendations

- Emphasize volunteer orientation to community service through a professional attitude in recruitment, staging, training and in-service work. The mechanisms have been described in preceding sections.
- Staff and trainees should receive extensive exposure to development as a concept and be trained in the generic skills required to participate in it effectively.

MODEL JUSTIFICATION

In addition to an evaluation of the performance of the Centralized Agricultural Training Program as it is implemented by the CAT center, it is important to reflect upon the appropriateness of the general training model itself. Is third-country centralized agricultural training appropriate (effective) for the needs of Peace Corps Latin American agricultural programs?

Even without having the benefit of intensive study of alternative models, it seems apparent that certain important advantages accrue to this training model. They may be broken down into four broad areas.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF SKILL ACCUMULATION

The economies of scale have a very direct impact on training quality. A relatively large number of trainees passing through a training site on a year-round basis permits the acquisition and maintenance of a larger and better equipped training facility, the retention of a body of highly qualified and experienced instructors, and a continuous refinement and development of the training curriculum. Though the ultimate cost per trainee may not be any lower than in in-country training, the quality, because of these advantages of scale, is greater.

TRAINING RELEVANCE

Relevance of country-specific training information will always be imperfect in any training center because of the diversity of volunteer sites and work conditions that is found even within one subregion of a host-country. A generic approach to training, as discussed earlier, would address relevance issues in the most efficient manner possible given this great diversity of sites. A generic training process, however, requires more preparation and resources to effectively implement. In this respect, a large permanent training center can respond more efficiently to what is needed and can permit more eventual relevance in training.

CREDIBILITY OF PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

There is a significant advantage for trainee credibility in the eyes of host-country agency counterparts in having attended an external center dedicated to skills training. The assumption made is that a foreign institutional skills training center, as opposed to an in-country facility, is more professional and therefore, credible.

TRAINEE ADAPTATION

If the process of adaptation is considered to be the acquisition of sensitivities and analytic skills, the wider the variety of experiences the greater the chance to develop and refine them. A third-country site provides a convenient mid-point in the adaptive process between the United States and the host country. It is a chance to be guided through an introduction to adaptive skills where the normal adjustment problems encountered have little immediate impact on the trainees future in-country service. It also exposes the trainee to an additional pattern of cultural behavior and thereby highlights the role of cultural dynamics rather than specifics.

Though the model as presently conceived and implemented is relatively efficient and appropriate in preparing the trainee for an effective period of service, it still may be, and is, being improved by changes in its structure. Recent variants in the usual model procedures have included: (1) a pre-training visit by Dominican Republic trainees to the Dominican Republic; (2) a mid-training field trip to Honduras by Honduran trainees; (3) the introduction of the "core curriculum"; and (4) the potential for the utilization of in-country training center staff at the CAT.

Finally, the possibility of providing technical, languages and cross-cultural training at the CAT followed by further in-country pre-service training can be explored.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is the final report of the evaluation of the Central Agricultural Training program (CAT) of the Peace Corps Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regional office. This training facility, located in Costa Rica and operated by the Center for Human Potential International of Elgin, Illinois (CHP) is chartered to provide agricultural, Spanish-language, and cross-cultural training to Peace Corps candidates for service in several Latin American countries.

The evaluation was carried out by a joint Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) and Office of Policy and Planning/Evaluation (OPP/E) team between November 1979 and May 1980. During this period, two field data collection trips were undertaken incorporating interviews and discussions with the CAT staff and trainees at the center, the in-country Peace Corps staffs, volunteers, and appropriate host-country supervisors in Costa Rica, Honduras, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala. In addition, interviews and briefings were conducted with the appropriate Peace Corps/Washington and CHP staffs. While in Guatemala, the team also conducted interviews with the staff and trainees present at the in-country training center. This was done in order to compare the training methodology employed there and at the CAT and to obtain insights on possible recommendations for the evaluation.

Based on discussions with OPP/E and LAC staff, the purpose of the evaluation was defined differently than in the original statement of work. The team began with the assumption (reflecting policy decisions taken in Peace Corps/Washington) that the LAC region will continue to utilize a central (third country) model for pre-service agricultural training. Not only is Peace Corps committed to recruitment policies which anticipate that intensive skill training will be needed, but there has also been general satisfaction with the operations of the Central Agricultural Training (CAT) facility over the past several years.

From the team's perspective, the basic questions that the evaluation seeks to answer can be stated as follows:

- How successful is CAT training in preparing Peace Corps volunteers with the skills needed for their field assignments (performance);
- Are there problems with either the content or the methods of CAT pre-service training that influence eventual PCV performance; and
- In what ways can the overall Peace Corps training program be modified to enhance the probability that trainees will perform effectively in their roles as PCVs (effectiveness)?

As detailed in the methodology appendix, a comparative evaluation of CAT-trained and non-CAT-trained volunteers was not pursued because, as general groups, their backgrounds differ as greatly (specialist trainees most often do not go to the CAT) as the types of programs into which they are placed. The training component could therefore not be singled out of a context including background and programming biases.

The paper begins with an overview of the elements and processes at the CAT involved in the training of candidates for Peace Corps service. This is then followed by a discussion of six issue areas identified by the team as significant for their impact on training. The discussion of these issues will be organized according to the findings of the data collection effort and followed by recommendations for improvement. Since the CAT facility is but one segment of the training process, the recommendations concern not only the center but also recruitment, the programming process, in-service training and the overall performance and effectiveness of volunteers. The recommendations are the team's own, though they frequently coincide with CAT, Peace Corps staff, volunteers, trainees, and host country opinions.

The paper then concludes with a general discussion of the relative merits of the CAT training model as compared to other models whether currently in use or proposed. Included as appendices are a discussion of the evaluation and data collection methodologies used in the evaluation, a tabulation of the quantifiable data points included in the evaluation, and a listing of the names of people interviewed.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FRAMEWORK IN WHICH TRAINING TAKES PLACE: AN OVERVIEW

The purpose of this section is to give the reader a descriptive overview of the scenario in which Peace Corps training takes place at the Centralized Agricultural Training facility in Costa Rica. It should be noted that the majority of the steps in the training process described below, their shortcomings and strengths, would most likely be common to all training models, central or otherwise, and are not the specific domain of the CAT. However, the center is a unique, multipurpose facility which specializes in agricultural skills training and which also offers language and cross-cultural training. Therefore, the steps in the training process are necessarily more numerous and detailed than in the case of other types of training facilities. For example, the agricultural training center in Frogmoore, South Carolina, teaches only technical skills. Most in-country training facilities appear to emphasize mainly language and cross-cultural training, and not technical training. In these cases, a description of the steps and details of the training process is less involved.

The process begins with the recruitment of potential trainees by the Peace Corps recruitment offices throughout the United States. This process is always done through the use of documents called the Trainee Assessment Criteria (TAC) sheets. These sheets contain categories of information prepared by the

in-country staffs and state, in general terms, which skills (academic degrees and work experience) will be needed to fulfill given job assignments. Upon expressing interest in a particular job assignment, a candidate's name is sent to the Peace Corps Washington office where a certain amount of "processing" takes place. This "processing" in the case of the volunteers and trainees interviewed, took from one week to six months. During this time it appeared to be quite common that programs, countries and even continents of destination were often changed in an attempt to "fill" certain programs.

The next critical stage of the training process involves the "pre-training activities." They are dealt with here as a unit, but there is no enforced pattern, sequence, or format specifying the way in which they are carried out. Ideally, however, the activities are as follows: the design of a Description of Work (DOW) for each training program by an in-country program officer (containing potential site selections and general terminal training objectives based on discussions with the appropriate host government agencies); the arrival of a pre-training research team from the training center to discuss and research training content and methodology for a particular cycle (in the past this involved approximately five man-days, this has been expanded to ten man-days under the new contract); the elaboration of a "Memo of Understanding" (MOU) between the country director and the training center director detailing the objectives of the training program, and finally, a "staging" exercise

somewhere in the United States (these are scheduled sometime prior to the departure of the trainees for Costa Rica and are designed to briefly acquaint the trainees with Peace Corps administrative and logistical processes, although they can also be far more comprehensive).

The steps in this ideal chain of events are often performed out of order (or not at all), and frequently by persons not originally designated or qualified as the responsible parties. For example, the DOW's are sometimes merely copies from past training cycles, or are prepared by the pre-training research team after departure from the country and without surveys of potential sites. The completion of these events in an untimely, incomplete and unstandardized fashion causes breakdowns in the programming and training process.

The next step in the training process is the arrival of the trainees at the CAT. An alternative to travelling directly to the training center from staging has been attempted for trainees going to the Dominican Republic and Guatemala. In these cases, at least one group of trainees per country made a five-day stopover in its country of assignment prior to continuing on to the center. This visit was reported by staff and volunteers to allow trainees to get a better idea of what the country was like, and to later help to make training more relevant.

After arriving at the training center, the trainees have an average training period of 12 weeks. This period includes

either one or two field trips of from two to ten days each. At the beginning of each program, trainees are tested on both their language and technical skills in order to assess competence and to assign them to an appropriate learning track. The language test uses FSI criteria and is administered by outside contractors. The assessment of technical skills is conducted by the CAT technical staff.

As a key element of cross-cultural training, the center has adopted a practice of placing trainees in the homes of Costa Rican families who live close by. Trainees receive room and board from the families in return for a daily fee paid by the center, and are encouraged to become integrated into all levels of family activity.

Depending on the training cycle, trainees also take part in one or two field trips to the Costa Rican countryside which is considered an integral part of their cross-cultural experience. Each trip normally covers a two- to five-day period during which trainees are given the name of a town in which they are to carry out an informal socioeconomic inventory.

An alternative to the Costa Rican field trips has recently been attempted for Honduras-bound trainees. In this case, the trainees traveled to Honduras midway through training for ten days where they spent four days in administrative and processing details and six days visiting their potential sites. This was done in an attempt to make the field trip experience more

relevant by giving the trainee an idea of the actual conditions and needs of his or her future site. The training center staff reported that this group returned from the field trip with a renewed sense of enthusiasm towards Peace Corps service.

Throughout each training program, the staff provides counseling and feedback services to trainees. These bi-weekly sessions are held on a one-to-one basis and are theoretically designed to provide for a personalized exchange of constructive criticism and interim assessments of trainee progress. However, the same members of the counseling staff are also responsible for providing on-going subjective evaluations of each trainee to the individual country staffs. These bi-weekly evaluations culminate in a final assessment statement (broken down by the three training components: technical, language and cross-cultural) on each trainee's fitness to become a volunteer.

The staff ultimately makes recommendations for volunteer selection based on the three training components. Criteria for these recommendations are based on those established in the Memo of Understanding between the center and each country director. The criterion for language competency is a minimum FSI rating (1+ or 2). Technical skills are evaluated by demonstrated proficiency in several skill areas as identified by written and practical examinations. In the cross-cultural area, the criteria are far more subjective but are still based on written goals and achievements made known to trainers and trainees alike.

With pre-service training complete, the trainees travel to their countries of destination where they normally receive some type of orientation or country-specific training prior to being sworn in as volunteers. The content of these programs varies substantially from country-to-country and between training cycles within a country. This variation will be explained in issue area three (Training Components) of this paper.

During service, volunteers are offered various types of in-service training. This type of training is usually principally concerned with language training although some cross-cultural training is offered. Technical in-service training has been minimal, consisting of Peace Corps job conferences and/or government run mini-courses on specific subjects.

Additional technical support is theoretically provided by the Peace Corps in-country staffs. Although each country staff employs an agricultural Program Manager who is normally an agronomist, the number of volunteers under his supervision often results in his carrying out the duties of an administrator rather than a technical advisor.

The preceding gives the reader a general overview of the current training process. Following is a more specific discussion of the issue areas which were identified by the team, accompanied by specific recommendations for their solution.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ISSUE AREAS: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The team has emerged from this period of evaluation of the Centralized Agricultural Training facility with a largely favorable view of the training occurring there. The training functions required by the Peace Corps CAT contract are performed completely and, by most estimations, with competence.

Some problems have, however, been identified and will be discussed below. They fall into three general categories: (1) problems of internal performance -- inadequate achievement of training functions due to inadequacies of the facility and/or staff; (2) problems of coordination with the various units of Peace Corps; and (3) problems relating to the choice of general training goals -- "training for what purpose?" To exclude any of these from consideration (even though the CAT has direct influence on only the first problem, only partial on the second, and very little on the third) would have seriously limited the potential prescriptive value of this evaluation.

For the purpose of clarity, the problems have been grouped into six general issue areas, for each of which the findings are first introduced and then followed by specific recommendations. The fact that most of this report deals with problems and potential solutions should not, however, obscure the well-grounded and widespread opinion of the effectiveness of the CAT as it stands now.

I. SCHEDULING OF TRAINING CYCLES

One additional issue has arisen since the preparation of the preliminary report that has significant direct impact on almost all of the other training issues to be discussed. This concerns the scheduling of training cycles into the CAT yearly schedule and its consequent effects. Specifically, questions regarding (1) the implications of overlapping training cycles; (2) the limits on CAT trainee capacity; (3) down-time requirements of the center, and (4) the choice of appropriate training cycle periods will be addressed here.

The scheduling of training groups into the CAT begins with the submission of Volunteer Group Summary Sheets (VGSS) and Trainee Assignment Criteria (TAC) sheets by the Peace Corps countries to Peace Corps/Washington. Numbers and backgrounds of volunteers requested, particulars of the staging and training to be received and their respective dates are specified on these documents. From there, the sheets are forwarded to the recruitment office for appropriate action, and to the CAT for commencement of the training research and planning.

Although some adjustment of training cycle dates may occur in Peace Corps/Washington at this point, it is an informal and irregular process and does not include any systematic input from the CAT. Training dates are still largely the preserve of the Peace Corps in-country staffs. The Latin America Region office usually functions only as a liaison between the

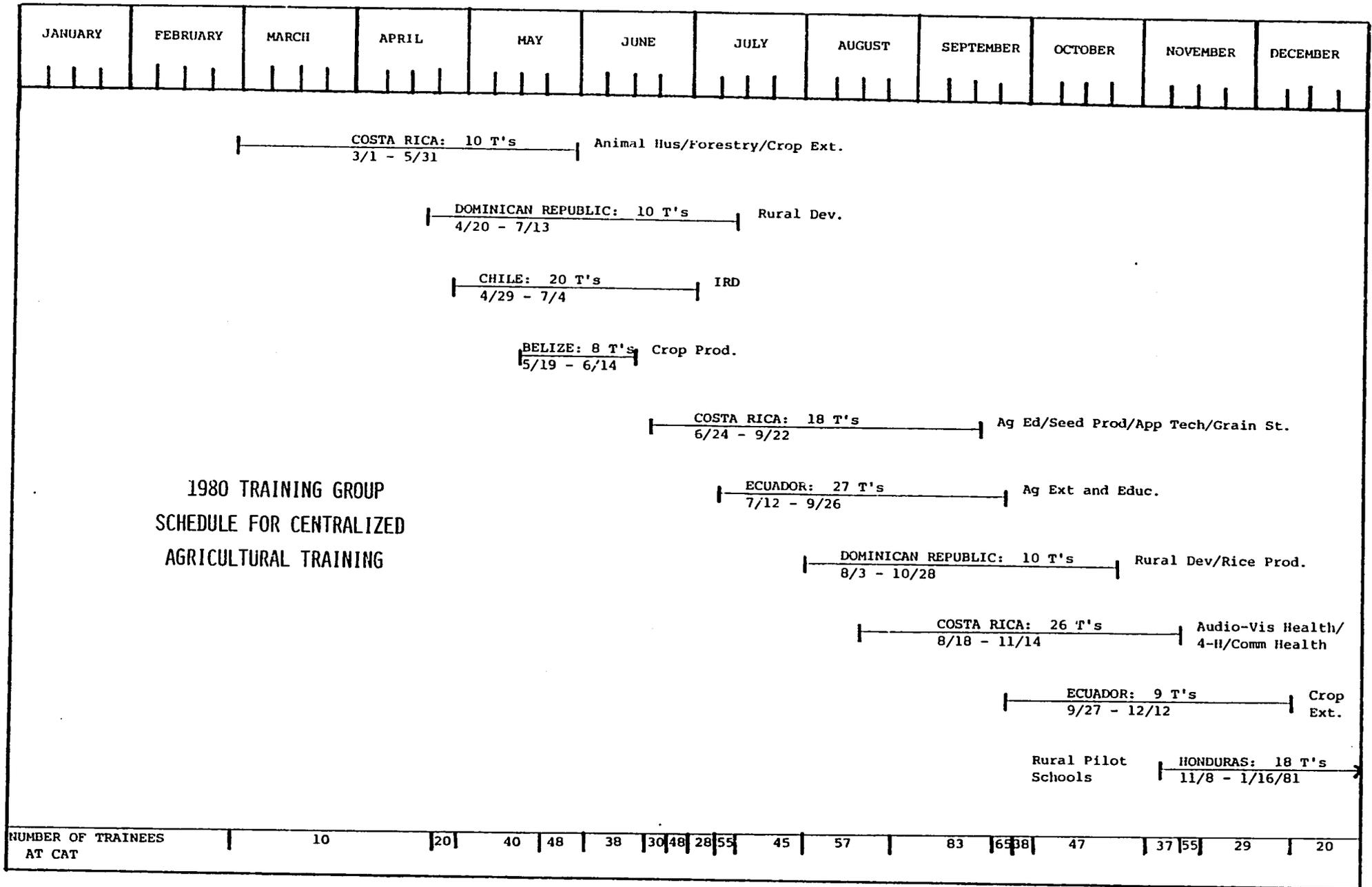
CAT and the in-country staff, with little mandate or leverage to play a more directive role in scheduling coordination. The CAT, despite being the agent most directly responsible for training, has almost no institutional role in modifying training cycle schedules to better fit its capacities. The consequences of this decisionmaking structure follow.

Short Overlaps in Training Cycles

The most intractable problem of CAT response to scheduling as it is now practiced arises when there is a short-term bulge in the numbers of trainees at the center. As one cycle is nearing completion of training, another cycle is being received. For this short time, often no more than a matter of a couple of weeks, the need for instructors, in particular, language and core curriculum teachers, increases dramatically. The center is then faced with the prospect of spreading its teaching resources thinner than its own recommended standards allow, or of trying to recruit additional staff for the short time of overlap. Both of these responses have a tendency to undermine the quality of training.

For example, the CAT training calendar for the rest of 1980 (see Figure 1) shows a Costa Rica Ag Ed/Seed Production group entering training 11 days before the completion of training of a Chilean group. For this 11-day period, the number of trainees at the center goes from 30 to 48, with a consequent short-term demand for more instructors. Should addi-

FIGURE 1



tional teachers be hired, they must either be let go after this period, or stay on until the next training group enters the center three weeks later, around the 15th of July. Several other examples of this short-term scheduling overlap can be found on the chart.

The recruitment of part-time staff for these and other short-term situations is extremely difficult. Qualified personnel are usually not willing to take employment on such terms. Unqualified personnel are more available but the questions of training and supervision then become crucial problems.

Spreading the staff thinner should be avoided if possible because it reduces the amount of staff-trainee contact. It may not even be feasible in the case of language classes where a maximum ratio of five trainees per teacher is mandated in the CHP-Peace Corps contract. If this ratio has already been reached, even a medium-sized group of 18 trainees would require an additional four instructors.

The consequences spill over into the cross-cultural area, as well. The value of adaptation exercises (field trips, live-ins, etc.) does not lie only in participating in them. Guided interpretive analysis of these experiences in conjunction with trained staff can help to transform them into general learning models. However, the requisite time and staff resources for this are severely diminished during short overlap periods. The analysis often does not get done at all. Additionally, this

problem leads to the use of staff members in cross-cultural training functions for which they are not qualified (see the sections on "Training Components -- Cross-Cultural Training," and "Evaluation/Feedback and Qualification").

Optimum Number of Trainees

A potential problem of the same general nature resides in the increase of trainees at the center over a certain optimum level. The contract identifies it as being approximately 75 trainees. Above such numbers, the potential exists for over-extension of full-time staff or the need to hire new part-time staff. Each of these responses poses its own attendant problems.

Although the center has in the past dealt with as many as 90 trainees, and will have 83 in the month of September 1980, it is believed by Peace Corps Washington that such high numbers will be exceptional and of short duration. In their view, therefore, such a problem is unlikely.

The team, however, feels that some value exists in stimulating discussion on this point with a view toward establishing a maximal limit on trainees, and listing a number of potential responses for situations where the number of trainees would rise above this limit.

Down-Time Between Training Cycles

Another problem found at the CAT that is related to scheduling problems is the lack of sufficient "down-time" (no trainees

at the center) for the center staff. There have been only irregular and infrequent periods of down-time during the last four years. This time, however, is crucial to the efficient functioning of the staff. It is a time when curriculum may be evaluated, updated and/or developed without the daily pressures of a training cycle. Similarly, staff orientation, training and evaluation can be more effective when a one- to two-week down-time is permitted. Without it, a significant negative factor affecting staff performance has been built into the model.

Inappropriate Termination of Training Dates

A fairly frequent criticism of scheduling by volunteers and trainees affected referred to inappropriate completion of training dates. Extremely unpopular are training cycles that terminate during the late December and early January holiday period. This period corresponds to the end of the fiscal year in host countries. Because budget allocations are frequently unclear in this period, the new volunteer often experiences difficulties in receiving host country agency support when it is needed most.

Some agricultural program volunteers have also found that the training cycle brought them into the host country in the middle of what would be their normal cropping cycle. This effectively reduced their potential contribution to only one complete season in two years.

Recommendations

- Negotiate training cycle dates between the CAT and Peace Corps in-country staffs. A very significant reduction in overlap problems can be effected simply by postponing or advancing training dates by only a week or two. A joint process of negotiation between the two most interested parties, the CAT and in-country staffs (with Peace Corps/Washington being a mediator in the process) is the most effective manner of resolving most scheduling problems.
- Determine a maximum limit for numbers of trainees to be placed at the CAT at one time. This limit would attempt to eliminate the potential for ineffective training through over-use of physical and training staff resources. It should be determined largely through consultation between Peace Corps/Washington and the CAT staff.
- Institute a requirement for an annual period of downtime at the center. The time might be as short as ten days and the period chosen might vary year-by-year according to the training schedule established (a gap of ten days could be found with only minor scheduling changes in the 1980 schedule).
- Avoid, if possible, training cycle completion dates in the late December, early January, period. Again, only minor scheduling changes would normally be necessary to forestall the problem of holiday period arrivals in-country.

II. TRAINEE BACKGROUND

Having now examined training cycle scheduling at the CAT, and before discussing the components of training at that center, it is useful to examine the backgrounds of the trainees that will be received there.

The impact of some elements of a trainee's background on the nature and general effectiveness of the training program is considerable. In addition, the differential emphasis that these elements are given during recruitment, staging, and training will affect not only training effectiveness, but volunteer effectiveness at the job site.

For purposes of this evaluation, trainee background has been divided into three component parts: (1) orientation towards voluntary work/community development; (2) demonstrated language skills; and (3) educational preparation and prior relevant work experience. The findings for each category follow.

Orientation to Voluntary Work

Early in the course of this study, while considering issues of how to assess the effectiveness of training, it became clear to the team that a wide body of opinion in the extended Peace Corps family believes that training can provide, at best, only a partial explanation of "good" volunteers.

Indeed, it is even skeptically suggested that without any training at all the same relative rates of good, bad, and average volunteers would arrive at their posts.

Skeptical about training or not, many Peace Corps staff feel that there are certain personality characteristics or motivations that are better indications than others about who will become "good" volunteers. For the purposes of this or any other evaluation attempting to improve training program impact, and for those who would desire to raise the quality of Peace Corps volunteers in general, it is essential to identify what these characteristics and motivations are in order to reorient training to cultivate and elicit them, and to recruit and select people possessing them. The problem has always been, however, one of defining the functionally specific criteria which would permit their identification.

Special emphasis was paid this issue in interviews by the team with Peace Corps in-country staffs. Coming out of this seems to be two somewhat conflicting viewpoints. One is a general resignation about the extent to which modifications in TAC sheet requirements can improve the overall quality of recruits given rather low levels of applications. The other is a belief (its strength usually inversely related to point one) that motivated trainees could be sought out and identified by using behavioral criteria which some staffs have already introduced into TAC sheet requirements. The most

convincing of the second line of reasoning was found in Ecuador.

There, the TAC sheets specify, for example: "You must have a BS/BA in any discipline with a strong interest in agriculture, and have demonstrated an interest in working with people by having been involved in community/school/church related social service project, e.g., volunteer youth work, community action involvement, visiting the elderly, etc...." Peace Corps staff in this country were very specific in their interviews about what they feel is the coincidence of an orientation to and participation in voluntary work and community development with effective, successful, and "good" volunteers.

This same belief was held in most other Peace Corps countries that the team visited, although less actively supported, usually for the reason stated above. TAC sheets of these countries often reflect the perceived value of this background in trainees: "4H or FFA background highly desirable," (Dominican Republic); "experience in the organization of groups is desirable," Guatemala); "experience with 4H, FHA, FFA, youth or other community rural organizations," (Chile).

The belief is that an orientation to voluntary work and community development brings a functionally meaningful context to the Peace Corps volunteer role that cannot easily be gained in academic or work experience. The net effect of this is to sustain and enrich the quality of work performed by the volunteer.

This is not to imply that a future career orientation to public service is needed to produce good volunteers. It means only that participation in social service (volunteer work with youth groups, Head-start, hospitals, and charity organizations among others) is an extremely effective preparation for being a Peace Corps volunteer and one that is difficult to gain in other work and educational pursuits.

Although this orientation may not be the only one available through which an attempt can be made to seek and recruit positively motivated individuals, it does seem at present to be well accepted as a vehicle by in-country staffs, at least partially operationalized as a concept and methodology, and apparently effective in the field. It does, however, need to be explicitly accepted and followed through on the recruitment level.

However, the search for, and development of, positively motivated individuals should not stop at recruitment. Motivation can be cultivated and elicited, and this should be a primary focus of training (see Programming and Training: Effectiveness).

Language Ability

In this team's survey of 88 CAT-trained volunteers and trainees, it was found that 25 percent of them came into training with what was identified as a "speaking ability" in

Spanish, which corresponded roughly to an FSI rating of 1+, or above. There were no striking variations from this figure when examined on a country-by-country basis.

Inversely, about 37 percent of this sample as a whole started training with no Spanish-speaking ability or training (Ecuador had a rather low figure of 20 percent in this area and the Dominican Republic a relatively high 50 percent for which the explanation is unclear). The remainder of this sample had varying degrees of experience with Spanish usually either in high school or college.

TAC sheet requirements most often do not include reference to a background in Spanish. This reflects a widespread feeling that Peace Corps Spanish language training has proved to be capable of adequately preparing a trainee for a "take-off" level of competency within the normal 8 - 14 weeks of training. That the sample group shows such a relatively high percentage (63 percent) of trainees entering training with at least some academic training or a speaking ability in Spanish tends to indicate that recruitment procedures are effective, even without TAC sheet mention, in channelling people with this background to the Latin America region.

Educational Preparation and Work-Related Experience

The relevance of a trainee's academic and work background to the training he receives and to his eventual job performance is a

subject of enormous consequence for the Peace Corps institutional mandate in development. Whether the well-trained generalist is capable of fulfilling the performance goals set in the bulk of actual and potential Peace Corps programs, or whether the specialist's greater skills will prove necessary for effective participation in development will determine the fundamental nature and size of Peace Corps in the years to come.

With respect to this issue of the capabilities of generalists versus specialists, it was not uncommon for the team to hear repeated reference to the maxim that "Specialists have a low tolerance to the work conditions that they find in their job assignments, and generalists are much more adaptable and successful in working within them." However, the great majority of people with whom the team was in contact were neither in agreement with this statement nor with its converse. Rather, it is generally felt that the generalist/specialist dichotomy is not important in explaining volunteer adaptability within a program. The characteristics of the program itself (e.g., its structure within the host country agency, the needs that are addressed by the program, and support from Peace Corps) appear to be much more determinate. Specialists neither tend to be more generally subject to frustration, nor less capable of adaptation to difficult work conditions than generalists.

In the CAT-trained sample, approximately 32 percent of the volunteers and trainees were found to have an academic

background in agriculture-related specialties (specialists). Inter-country variation from this figure ranged from 73 percent in Guatemala (reflecting the specialist-oriented nature of their programming) to 16 percent in Ecuador.

In terms of prior agricultural work experience, 36 percent of the total group had no prior experience, with Costa Rica and Guatemala varying far below this figure at 8 and 9 percent respectively, and again Ecuador having the fewest with prior experience at 84 percent. Very little, if any, difference was found in the content of technical training received at the CAT by generalist trainees and specialist trainees scheduled for the same program track.

The presence of these differing skills backgrounds in a technical class was perceived as both an advantage and a disadvantage. The informal learning process between specialist and generalist trainees in which the specialist is able to serve as an additional learning resource to the generalist is very highly appreciated by the generalists. However, the formal teaching tasks of the staff trainers were rendered much more difficult and of less technical depth by the "averaging" necessary to address a wide range of skill levels.

In this situation, it would seem that the real loser in terms of technical preparation imparted by the training would be the specialist, constrained by the presence of generalists to follow a course of training not equal to his/her level of

mastery of technical skills. However, what was found was exactly the opposite. Specialist trainees and volunteers, in the same proportion as the general sample, found great satisfaction in the training they received at the CAT. It was important to them to be able to practically apply their background of skills, something which many had never before experienced. Additionally, the "adapting down" of their practical skills, modifying them to fit into a non-American, less highly mechanized context, were seen as an extremely positive exercise.

One further aspect of the generalist/specialist issue which will clearly be of heightened consequence in trainee background questions, if it is not already more important in programming areas, is increasing host country insistence on proven technical expertise in foreign technical assistance personnel. Host country officials generally place primary importance on credentialed technical competency in volunteers, and place less emphasis on the cultural interaction goals of the Peace Corps Act. (In addition, this issue does not seem to be limited to Latin America.)

For the particular incidents in which this concern was expressed to the team by host country personnel working with volunteers, this matter is undoubtedly rooted more in questions of professional credibility than in actual volunteer job performance issues. The technical skills possessed by volunteers in the majority of Peace Corps programs are clearly largely appropriate for the work performed. It is, though, fairly

clear that the future of generalists in development, well trained or not, is becoming, at least politically, much more difficult to sustain. There seems to be here a fundamental challenge to present Peace Corps directions as far as its choice of the nature of the volunteers, and by extension, the training and programming that it will choose to support.

Women Volunteers in Non-Traditional Job Assignments

An additional background issue that became evident since the preparation of the preliminary report was that of women volunteers working in non-traditional job assignments. During the course of this study, a number of women volunteers voiced concern about the way Peace Corps, at all levels, presented the problems involved for a woman working in the agriculture field in Latin America. The generally negative picture given and the overemphasis on the problems to be faced, left many women trainees with the expectation of failure rather than of challenge.

It is significant to note that the majority of women volunteers interviewed during this evaluation did experience some initial problems but now feel that they have overcome them and are performing as well as male volunteers. It is their opinion that an exposition of problems should be allied with adjustment mechanisms and support from Peace Corps staff during training and in the field. Most women interviewed suggested that a crucial

element lacking in the support system is the presence of American women on Peace Corps staffs, both in-country and elsewhere.

Recommendations

- Upgrade the emphasis on a candidate's motivation in recruitment criteria. While all levels of the Peace Corps may believe highly in the value of the motivated individual for Peace Corps service, recruitment criteria do not specifically select for this. This recommendation would institutionalize the use and primacy of a surrogate measure of positive motivational characteristics; a prior orientation to voluntary service/community development, in recruitment of volunteer candidates. The mechanism used to express this preference would be primarily TAC sheet requirements.

The assumption underlying the primacy of this orientation in recruitment criteria would be that Peace Corps training can more effectively prepare most candidates in language and technical skills than impart the orientation and skills gained in voluntary service/community development. While recruitment should ideally try to identify candidates having, in order of priority: (1) an orientation to voluntary service/community development; (2) relevant agricultural work experience; (3) an agriculture-related educational background; and (4) a Spanish-speaking ability, it is obvious that such candidates may, quite possibly, not exist in the number necessary. Therefore, when relaxing the recruitment criteria to fill unfilled slots, the sequence and priority of relaxation should first concern any Spanish language requirements, then educational background, and then prior agricultural work experience. This will tend to produce better volunteers by retaining positive motivational characteristics, e.g., experience and participation in voluntary service/community development, in the remaining candidates.

It is when the relaxation of the criteria sequence described above fails to identify the required number of candidates that the second recommendation stated below gains added importance. At that point, candidates with skill backgrounds, but no evidence of a prior orientation to voluntary service/community

development, will be identified. Rather than refining and assessing the skills and sensitivities in the recruiting process, it then becomes necessary to cultivate and assess them in the training process; a much more difficult task.

- Upgrade the emphasis on trainee motivation in staging and training selection criteria. The team affirms the appropriateness and importance of selection in staging based on motivational criteria. Any model of staging, CAST or other, that is sensitive to and capable of applying motivational criteria to selection is to be recommended for wider use.

In the training process, greater emphasis should be placed on the cultivation, refinement, and assessment of the skills of community development by the trainees. The new "core curriculum" proposed for use in the CAT provides a good operational method for introduction of this concern into training. The team would, however, emphasize that the establishment of objective criteria for the measurement of community development skills acquisition and the integration of these measures into the selection process are crucial in preparing more effective volunteers.

- Continue training specialists as well as generalists at CAT. As recorded above, the overwhelming opinion of specialists trained at CAT was that the training they received there was relevant to the adaptation of their skills and extremely important to them in experiencing the practical application of their skills in an appropriate setting.
- Integrate relevant trainee skills into the training resources available at the CAT. Where the trainee's background in skills is particularly relevant to the content of technical training for a given track, he or she may be used in two ways: (1) a classroom teaching role may be assigned in the area of competency, or (2) he or she should be used to create more one-to-one learning situations with other less skilled trainees. The dynamics of the peer-to-peer learning process appear to be an extremely effective method of skills acquisition for both the generalist and the less skilled specialist trainee and its continued use at the CAT is strongly recommended.

- Include women volunteers as training assistants in staging and pre-service training. The woman volunteer should be, as for male training assistants, one who has a positive outlook on the program and who has performed successfully in a non-traditional role. Pre-staging materials for women candidates could include letters from women volunteers in the concerned program describing conditions and problems to be expected.
- Recruit more women for in-country staffs. Given the large number of women volunteers in the Latin America/Caribbean region, more qualified female staff should be recruited. Peace Corps/Washington and Peace Corps in-country staff training should include a specific component dealing with counseling techniques for women volunteers in non-traditional roles in the Third World.

III. TRAINING COMPONENTS

Training at the CAT has functionally been divided into three components: technical, language and cross-cultural. This section separately deals with these three components placing emphasis on the methodologies employed, the content offered, the staffs which teach them, and the materials used. Additionally, two issues: staff training and volunteer in-service training, which cut across all three components, are dealt with following this discussion of the three components.

Technical Skill Training

The overall impression concerning technical skill training as expressed by trainees, volunteers and in-country staffs was quite positive. Considering training methodology and training content together, since the vast majority of respondents made little distinction between the two, 48 percent of the volunteers made positive, often laudable, statements about technical training, 38 percent gave mixed comments, and 14 percent gave negative ones. It must, however, be strongly emphasized that the majority of both the mixed and the negative comments reflected reservations as to the relevancy of the subjects taught (crops and animals) to their eventual job assignments, and not to shortcomings of the training process itself. The only other significant issue concerning training methodology and content which engendered negative and mixed comments was

that of the memorization of vast amounts of technical information which later often proved to be unnecessary for the performance of their jobs. (See subsection below, entitled Training Relevance).

Volunteers, trainees and in-country Peace Corps staffs were also extremely pleased with the experience gained from the practical field work which the trainees accomplished at the center. The learning process of having to actually prepare the land, sow the seeds, weed, cultivate, water and harvest crops, as well as taking care of a wide variety of animals was seen as invaluable for their future work as volunteers.

Trainees and volunteers gave the technical staff the highest rating of all CAT staff. Comments ranked as positive were given by 65 percent of those interviewed; 23 percent gave mixed comments; and 12 percent gave negative ones. The negative comments centered largely on staff who are no longer at the center, or on subjects or methods which the staff was required to teach under the Memo of Understanding but with which the trainees and volunteers were in disagreement (most notable in this category has been organic versus chemical agriculture).

While both the number and areas of expertise of the technical staff can vary throughout a given year, the staff in place during the team's visit to the center in December 1979 was representative. At that time the staff was comprised of five trainers, most with appropriate graduate level degrees.

Two were American with considerable Latin American experience, three were from different Latin American countries and all were bi-lingual. There was, however, no member of the staff with experience specific to the Dominican Republic. The need for such a person was brought out by Dominican volunteers and country staff.

Opinions concerning the technical materials used in both the classroom and practical field work were quite high, and it appears that many volunteers take these materials with them and consult them during service. Volunteers and trainees did criticize a lack of organization and general availability of additional technical resource materials at the center. Comments also cited the need for a study space for the use of what materials did exist, the need for management, updating and quality control of materials.

Training Relevance

As has been noted above, the principal criticism by volunteers concerning technical training dealt with the issue of relevance. Several specific examples are presented here to point out the problem. In one case, a volunteer in Costa Rica was assigned to work with the National Development Bank as an extension agent in basic grains. The DOW and Memo of Understanding therefore specified training in corn and beans which he received. The Bank, however, decided to assign him to a tropical cocoa producing region and to provide assistance to

farmers on that crop. This required that he be retrained by the host agency in cocoa, making his original training irrelevant. In another case, a woman destined for the Dominican Republic to work with broiler chickens was assigned to a site where the people raise predominantly layers. Having been trained in broilers, as was specified in the DOW, she found herself at a loss to perform in her assigned role. In another case in Honduras, several volunteers were assigned to work with school garden projects. The Ministry requested that these volunteers receive training in chemical methods of horticultural production. However, the volunteers found that many of the chemicals for the use of which they had been trained were usually not available and that even when available were too expensive for the families and schools who were to use them. The volunteers therefore felt obliged to practice organic methods for which they had not been trained. In Ecuador, a group of volunteers was trained for extension work in basic grains along the coastal region. However, a drought in the area forced the farmers to abandon the cultivation of grains and to depend on the cultivation of subsistence coffee plots in the highlands surrounding their villages. Since the volunteers had no knowledge of coffee cultivation they felt that their training had not been relevant to their needs.

It is important to note that in none of the above examples, nor in the vast majority of others documented by the evaluation team, would in-country pre-service training have improved

relevance. Following are the key factors which tend to unfavorably affect the relevance of technical training to actual job assignments regardless of the location of the training facility.

Reliance on Memorization of Specific Information. At present, trainees are required by the Memos of Understanding to memorize a substantial amount of crop or animal specific facts which often prove irrelevant once on the job. Volunteers felt that this information, even when relevant, could more easily be looked up in resource materials when the need arose. In counterpoint, trainees are often not taught general principles of plant or animal growth which could then be applied to a multitude of crops or animals, nor are they helped to realize how the information memorized is, in fact, transferable.

The training staff, on the other hand, stressed that the list of facts to be memorized is mandated by the "contract" set forth in the Memo of Understanding, and if they were not to use the memorization methodology there would be no practical way to test trainees concerning their learning progress. Additionally, the staff maintained that a volunteer working as an extension agent would lose credibility with the farmers if he or she had to look up an answer rather than providing it on-the-spot.

Concerning the first point, the team feels that if the Memos of Understanding were to be changed to reflect a training emphasis on the principles, methods and procedures of plant and animal growth, instead of the memorization of specific facts, the center would be able to alter its competency testing procedures with minimum difficulty.

The second point, that of a loss of volunteer credibility, is not valid according to those interviewed. In interviews with volunteers and in observing their work in the field the issue of credibility centered more around the provision of accurate information rather than on-the-spot but possibly inaccurate or incomplete information. This was particularly brought out in comparing the style of host-country extension agents with that of the volunteers. In the case of the former, an agent would answer a farmer's question on-the-spot but the answer, in some cases, would be wrong or incomplete. In comparison, the volunteers, although possessing a substantial amount of memorized information, would often respond to a question by saying, "I am not sure but I will look it up," or "I do not know but I will take a leaf sample to the pathologist and give you an answer tomorrow." This approach, over time, seems to have been successful.

Inadequate Programming and Training Coordination. Training relevance is diminished when the coordination of the Peace Corps programming staff and the CAT pre-training research team

is incomplete because of: (a) failure to identify and properly survey sites prior to the arrival of the pre-training research team; (b) insufficient support and/or coordination from in-country staffs to the pre-training research teams; and (c) inadequate preparation or untimely arrival of programming and training documentation.

Ecological Constraints. There are ecological constraints at the CAT, or any other site, which limit raising the wide variety of crops or animals which may be encountered by volunteers. This is a somewhat minor point in terms of the CAT since instruction can be given there in almost all of the crops specified by in-country staffs. Nevertheless, there will always be some constraints and animals which cannot be offered.

Unforeseen Change. Unforeseen changes in volunteer sites or programs by either the Peace Corps or host-government agencies reduce relevance regardless of training site.

Emergency Situations. Emergency situations, i.e., Salvadorean or Nicaraguan volunteers or trainees being sent to other countries, similarly alter the destinations of volunteers and thereby reduce training relevance.

In order to diminish the impact of the above noted situations on training relevance to the volunteer job site, the team is recommending a more generic approach to the training method-

Additional Training Content

As part of the interview process trainees and volunteers were asked to suggest additional topics which they would have liked to have seen included in the training curriculum. Listed, these are:

General accounting/bookkeeping
 Principles of cooperativism
 Principles of ecology
 Formal Spanish letter writing
 First aid
 Motorcycle maintenance

In discussing the inclusion of these and other topics with both the training and in-country staffs it was felt by them that given the already extremely full curriculum, especially with the new "core curriculum," these subjects would best be left for in-service training at a later date.

Recommendations for Technical Skill Training

- The evaluation team endorses a change in the technical training methodology from the memorization of crop and animal specific data to a more "generic" problem-solving orientation. This change would imply the selection of general crop or animal categories which have similar growing and cultivation characteristics. Suggested categories could include: field crops, horticultural crops, permanent tree crops, grasses, poultry, ruminants and small animals. In terms of the practical field work, which the team strongly endorses, one crop, (which is the most representative for the country of destination) in each of the categories would be grown by trainees. Classroom instruction, on the other hand, would draw on the field work experience, as is the current practice, but would deal with the categories of crops and animals in a non crop-specific way. As such, classroom topics would include for example:

The principles of plant nutrition -- nutrient requirements, nutrient deficiency identification, nutrient supplements (both organic and inorganic);

The principles of soil science -- soil testing and analysis, soil structure and texture, nutrient availability in soils;

The principles of plant disease identification, cures and prevention (fungal, viral, insects; sucking, chewing, boring pests) and organic and inorganic cures and preventive measures;

Plant propagation -- sexual and asexual methods;

Poultry -- principles of nutrition, disease identification and cure.

An additional crucial element to the effectiveness of this training methodology, is that the general principles taught in the classroom be backed up through the use of crop or animal specific technical materials of a greater variety than is currently being used. It would also be important that these materials become part of each volunteer's personal resource library to be taken to his or her site.

It is not envisioned that the average training period of 12 weeks would have to be increased, however, a change in the training methodology of this type would necessitate additional changes or adjustments in other segments of the programming and training process. These changes follow:

As an integral part of the "generic" methodology trainees must be instructed as to the intention and purpose of the methodology. Specifically, and most importantly, trainees must be made aware of the transferability or the applicability of the information that they are learning to varying situations (crops, animals, ecological zones and farmer practices). Essentially, trainees must be aware that they are learning a technical vocabulary and a way of thinking (mind-set) which, in conjunction with adequate resource materials, can be used to solve problems as they arise.

The communication process between programmers and trainees would have to be altered to reflect the "generic" methodology. In-country staffs would need to be informed as to the changes in the methodology so that the documentation (Description of Work, terminal training objectives, and the Memo of Understanding) would reflect the new methodological orientation, i.e., the terminal training objectives would no longer state, "trainees will demonstrate competency in the seeding rates, fertilizer requirements and diseases of tomatoes, peppers and eggplant," but rather "trainees will demonstrate competency in the cultural and propagative techniques of horticultural crops, especially tomatoes, peppers and eggplant."

Likewise, the pre-training research team would complete its task analysis in terms of the generic skills necessary for job assignments as well as the specific crops or animals to be involved.

The technical training staff of the center should be reoriented to the generic approach. This task would require some retraining of the instructors and some change in technical training content.

- In an additional attempt to improve training relevance potential volunteer sites must be selected and surveyed prior to the arrival of the pre-training research team (for additional comments on this activity see Section V of this chapter: Programming and Training: Administration).
- The team endorses the extension from five to ten days for the time to be spent in pre-training research activities. Nevertheless, this period should be kept flexible to reflect the number of trainees to be included in the program as well as the diversity of site locations. If a training group were to include five volunteers to be assigned to a research station pre-training research activities might only require three days. On the other hand, if a group were to include 30 volunteers distributed throughout a country the size of Ecuador the time spent would require more than ten days (and/or the use of more than one researcher).

- The diversity of the country experience of the technical staff is commendable with the exception of the Dominican Republic. The team feels that that country is sufficiently different in terms of its ecology and farming practices as to merit a staff member with Dominican experience.
- The team recommends the upgrading of the center's resource materials collection to that of a full library staffed by a full time resource librarian who would be responsible for periodic updating and review of technical materials. Suggestions for materials acquisition should be solicited from in-country staffs, Peace Corps/Washington, CHP International/Elgin, and any other pertinent U.S. or international organization.

Language Skills Training

As they were for technical training, CAT-trained volunteers and trainees were generally quite pleased with the language training component. Approximately one-half (48 percent) of the respondents gave positive evaluations of content and methodology, and 38 percent were mixed. The mixed were generally positive statements with some indications of specific changes needed. Two common threads ran throughout most of the changes requested: (1) a feeling that language training was rather inflexible in the use of the audio-lingual method, and (2) a desire for more written study materials for use during and after training. These will be discussed at greater length below.

The volunteers and trainees were also very laudatory towards the language training staff. The staff received a very high positive rating of 65 percent and a mixed rating of 23 per-

cent. The negative comments generally dealt with teachers who were not permanent staff members. As has already been discussed in the section entitled Scheduling of Training Cycles, additional language teachers were frequently hired on a short-term basis to deal with large trainee numbers or short group overlap situations. Whether these teachers always received adequate training in CAT methodology was doubtful from the comments of volunteers and trainees. In any case, a distinction was often drawn between the "permanent" language staff and the "temporaries," with the temporaries being the subject of more frequent criticism.

Language Teaching Methodology and Materials

Trainees and volunteers often commented that they found it difficult to adjust to the language teaching methodology used at the center, particularly if they had already experienced the more academic approach of the American classroom. The CAT method has in the past emphasized a strict audio-lingual method with minimal use of written materials.

When recommendations were given by volunteers and trainees about how to improve the quality of language training, they were generally prefaced with a statement that said in effect "While I was not particularly happy with the teaching method at the beginning, I can see now that it produced very positive results and therefore was probably quite good." The recommendations usually concerned: (1) a greater use of blackboards,

notebooks and other materials to permit study outside of the classroom; (2) the provision of more grammatical reference materials for study during and after training; (3) more selective flexibility in the use of English explanations for grammatical points during classes.

Language Instruction for Advanced Speakers

Advanced speakers (FSI "2" or above) generally received little structured language training. They had limited classroom instruction and few organized conversation periods with language teachers. Written materials and outside reading (such as novels, magazines and newspapers) were also scarce.

On the other hand, the advanced speakers felt that they had good informal access to language trainers, given the constraints on the trainers' time, and that the field trips and other informal activities that they participated in were quite valuable. They did express a desire to have a greater variety of learning activities and more formal classroom contact with the teaching staff.

Country of Destination of Language Teachers

Trainees and volunteers were also of the opinion that a broad representation of nationalities among instructors was desirable on the language training staff. At present the Language Program Coordinator is Guatemalan, there is one Salvadorean instructor and the remainder of the language staff is Costa Rican.

Important to the trainees and volunteers interviewed in this respect was a desire to learn the particularities of idiomatic phrases, local accents and grammatical structures used in their countries of destination. Country specific vocabulary lists which were provided to them were appreciated but not considered sufficient in preparing volunteers for the variations in local language usage of the countries of destination. A particularly salient example of the need for a broader representation of nationalities on the language staff concerns the Dominican Republic and the Spanish language distinction between the usages of *usted*, *tu* and *vos*. While all three forms are known and used to varying degrees in all Latin American countries, there is great variation among countries as to the predominant form used. In Costa Rica, for example, the *usted* and *vos* forms are used almost to the exclusion of the *tu* form, whereas in the Dominican Republic the *tu* form strongly dominates to the virtual exclusion of the other two.

Since FSI testing criteria at the lower levels tend to be based on usage of the *usted* form, that is what is taught exclusively to the majority of trainees. Volunteers in the Dominican Republic recognized the logic of this but would have preferred to have been made aware of or been familiar with the *tu* form prior to arrival in-country.

Recommendations for Language Skills Training

- The greater use of written materials. The CAT language staff indicated that the methodology now being used incorporates more selective use and earlier introduction of materials, i.e., use of blackboards, note-taking, and reference materials. The team encourages the continuation of this flexibility.
- The provision of reference materials. Grammatical reference materials should be made available to trainees at the center and should be kept for reference during their term as volunteers.
- The continued minimal use of English during language training. The evaluation team would not recommend any substantial change in the use of English during the language training process as requested by some volunteers and trainees. The use of English is antithetical to the conversational approach used. Supplementary reference material availability would permit trainees to answer any questions they might have outside of the classroom.
- Greater language training for advanced speakers. Advanced speakers should be given more formal and organized attention in the language training component. Teaching methods which might be used would include: (1) advanced grammar classes; (2) the provision and formal use in class and for homework of Latin American novels, magazines, and technical training documents in Spanish; (3) instruction in writing skills, especially for official documents and letters; (4) greater use of short field trips for exposure to a variety of communication situations; and (5) an attempt to combine advanced speakers, regardless of the technical training track or country of destination into one language training group. This would help to justify the regular scheduling of classroom sessions for them.
- An attempt to geographically balance the language training staff. Recruitment of language staff should put a higher priority on finding nationals of the countries for which the CAT provides training, especially in the case of the Dominican Republic.

Cross-Cultural Skills Training

Cross-cultural training has been historically very difficult to effectively implement in any context. It is a young art for which the content and methodologies have not yet caught up with the degree of effectiveness now needed by many in training for cultural adaptation. Volunteer Activity Survey (VAS) data confirm that the problem is general in Peace Corps training worldwide. Although the team had limited exposure to in-country pre-service training in Latin America, the impression received was that the situation is no different there. At the CAT facility, this component of training was the least valued of all by trainees and volunteers.

Of the four major means used in teaching cultural adaptation at the CAT, (1) classroom (area studies and adaptation skills), (2) live-ins with a Costa Rican family, (3) field trips, and (4) the use of visiting Peace Corps volunteers as training assistants, three were given the highest positive ratings of any aspect of training at the CAT: the live-in was given 66 percent positive and 28 percent mixed, field trips 54 percent and 27 percent, and training assistants 83 percent and 3 percent (mixed comments were usually positive general statements which specified some specific improvement needed). Those opinions dealing with cross-cultural training as a whole, and the classroom content and staff in particular, were uniformly negative: classroom was given 13 percent positive and 18 percent

mixed, and cross-cultural staff 30 percent and 20 percent. The figures above reveal that although the trainees value some of the activities labeled as "cross-cultural," these activities have been poorly handled during their "cross-cultural training." Trainees and volunteers felt that cross-cultural training sessions and staff made no significant contributions to their understanding of the live-ins or field trips. Thus, trainees were actually exposed to new experiences rather than trained.

Recognizing this, a very major effort has been undertaken by the Peace Corps Latin America and Caribbean Region, through its regionalized training Statement of Work (SOW), to reorganize cross-cultural training. This has resulted in the formulation of a "core curriculum," destined to reorient and broaden the goals and content of this training. The recent implementation of the "core curriculum" at the CAT via the new contract, may treat many of the problems, discussed below, that were found lacking during this evaluation.

Inappropriate Focus of Cross-Cultural Training

Two different approaches can be identified to the facilitation of adaptation to a foreign culture. The distinction between the two is very similar to the "generic versus specific" issue in technical training which was previously discussed (see Technical Training section above). One approach relies heavily on imparting country-specific "area studies" informa-

tion, i.e., descriptions of socially appropriate and inappropriate behavior on the job, description of the national political system, of the economic behavior of small farmers, or of male-female relationships. The other emphasizes increasing awareness of the dynamics of cultural behavior by immersing the trainee in the culture, or a relevant surrogate for it, and then providing analytical tools for dealing successfully with it. These two methods, of course, tend to overlap in theory and in practice.

Until recently, almost exclusive emphasis has been placed on the country specific area studies information in CAT cross-cultural training. This has been for two reasons: (1) given the still formative nature of the art of "generic" cultural adaptation training, curricula and staff expertise are not as well developed and therefore less reliance tends to be put on this method than on area studies; and (2) third country training seems to be inherently overly sensitive to the relevancy of cross-cultural training to specific country of destination characteristics.

This emphasis has, however, proven to be ineffective at the CAT during the period of the previous contract. The little "generic" training given was inadequately handled and was poorly received by the great majority of trainees. In addition, most members of the CAT staff had relatively little background, experience, or training in "generic" cross-cultural skills and little curriculum from which to choose.

Even the country specific area studies training at the CAT has also suffered from problems that appear to be systemic in nature. It is basically a passive exercise for trainees and builds in no general practical skills useful in the volunteer's life and work. It is also questionable whether enough time could ever exist in training to impart the amount of country-specific data that is thought needed to be able to respond effectively to the range of experiences the volunteer will meet. Finally, it is not clear that country specific data given in training will be directly relevant to the volunteer's site. This last point deserves extra attention.

Proponents of in-country, as opposed to third country, pre-service training feel that physical presence in the country of destination during cross-cultural training more completely demonstrates and informs the trainee of the culturally sensitive data needed to perform effectively as a volunteer. However, a training center in Quito, Ecuador, is, in some ways, as far removed culturally in similarity from villages in the Colorado area, or the Amazonas state, as is Costa Rica. Additionally, job sites, nature of the work to be performed, and even assignment to a program frequently change during a volunteer's training and service, and what was specific data for one set of circumstances, is not for another. The team feels that the crucial cultural distance to be travelled in training is from the United States to Latin America and not from Costa Rica to another Latin American country.

Considerable value was often found by CAT trained volunteers and trainees in having been exposed to another culture distinct from their country of destination. The variations seen in cultural behavior between, for example, the Dominican Republic and Costa Rica, often tend to reinforce in the volunteer or trainee the understanding that different cultural dynamics are at play, and lead to a greater sensitivity in defining what they are and how best to work with them. Differing levels of development in these countries were also appreciated by many volunteers as demonstrating that development is possible and the direction that it might take.

Cross-Cultural Training Objectives and Staff

The relationship between the quality of cross-cultural terminal training objectives (both as guides to the content of training and as tools for measuring cultural adaptive skills), and the training staff's proposed use of them is direct and explicitly laid out in the CHP training proposal. Because these objectives measure behavioral and attitudinal changes rather than the more objectively verifiable skills acquired in technical and language training, their credibility is as much a function of how they are initially presented to trainees, as of how they are implemented. It is envisioned in the proposal that their presentation should be explicit in recognizing their limitations, clear in requesting voluntary trainee acceptance of them as standards, and open to the possibility of on-going modification of their criteria when needed. When this has not

been done effectively, or when implementation has not proceeded within this context, they will be seen, in the words of the proposal, as "Mickey Mouse"; unworthy and irrelevant, by the trainees. While the team found that the cross-cultural training objectives themselves were sometimes criticized, most often it was the staff's inadequate presentation and interpretation of them that was indicated as the most serious problem.

In a pattern that closely approximates that found in the evaluation/feedback process (see Evaluation/Feedback and Qualification section below), some staff members received very negative assessments about their ability to implement and assess progress towards these training objectives. Others, however, were praised for their sensitivity and clarity in this same area. This indicates to the team that critical opinions about the assessment of cultural adaptation skills acquisition is as much a matter of inadequate staff performance as of the measures actually chosen for assessment. Critical comments about staff performance often included a belief that the staff member poorly understood and ineffectively communicated the process, or that personality traits in some staff were inappropriate for this semi-objective assessment of largely subjective issues. Staff performance was also a large component of certain problems perceived even in the highly rated live-in, field trip and training assistant mechanisms of cross-cultural training. This will be treated below.

Inadequate Integration of Cross-Cultural Training Components

The live-in with a Costa Rican family and the field trips to other areas of Costa Rica or a neighboring country were almost universally lauded by trainees and volunteers. Frequently, however, the interviewees did not mention these experiences when talking in general about cross-cultural training, rather referring to them as relatively unrelated training procedures. This observation is symptomatic of a general breakdown in the integration of cross-cultural training components.

The live-in is undoubtedly a valuable experience in itself. It is usually the first serious example of adaptation to an unfamiliar culture that trainees face. However, part of its potential value is lost if the problems and successes that trainees find there are not put into a larger learning context. Lessons should be drawn from the experience with the help of trained staff.

It was found, however, that little of this "processing of the experience" takes place. Despite the assigning of staff "orientadores" (orientors) to each trainee and live-in family, little regular opportunity was given to the trainee to reflect on the dynamics involved. Problems in the live-in situation (a trainee receiving an inadequate quantity of food, an uncommunicative family or personality conflicts), stimulated a trouble-shooting process. However, little systematic and guided interpretation are given the trainee either individually or in the classroom setting. The problem here seems to

be simply one of a low priority being put on the value of this process and therefore insufficient staff time being allocated for it.

The field trips suffer from the same problem. Prior to the trip, a list of objectives to be accomplished by the trainee is drawn up by staff. Trainees then participate in the field trip, fill out their information sheets and return to the center. Little or no use of the data is made, and analysis of the trip as a general learning experience is rare. Many of the trainees react to the aimlessness of the field trips by either going to the beach, or another site, or by not seeking the information required. The great potential value of this learning experience is thereby lost for the trainee. The problem here, as in the live-in, seems to have been a low priority put on the integration of this element into training by staff.

The same problem has been found in the use of training assistants. Frequently, inadequate guidance was given to the training assistants by CAT staff to help them perform as a relevant training resource. Indications are needed of what to present, what not to present, and how to present the information they are expected to provide to trainees.

The use of training assistants as "area studies" resources is additionally restricted by limitations in their knowledge of the area. Staff members should theoretically possess more

teaching skills and better country specific data than the teaching assistants. The particular value of a training assistant lies in providing a personal picture of a volunteer's adaptation to the country and the job site and not in providing comprehensive data.

Recommendations for Cross-Cultural Skills Training

- Emphasis should be given in cross-cultural training to provide adaptive skills rather than merely imparting country specific data. A mix of both is required but the problems inherent in a focus on country specific data should relegate its importance to a secondary level. Adaptive skills should allow the trainee to be aware of what data is needed and how to go about getting it. The core curriculum seems to adequately address the concerns found important in this area by the team, and its implementation is therefore strongly recommended.
- Justifications for in-country training should be critically examined if based on cross-culture training relevancy issues. A focus of generic cross-cultural skill training can make third country cross-cultural training potentially as relevant as that done in-country. The advantages of in-country cross-cultural training can be balanced by other advantages found in third country training.
- Upgrade the qualifications of the cross-cultural staff. The core curriculum necessitates specific teaching skills and training in the content of the curriculum. Cross-cultural experience alone is generally not enough to prepare staff members to effectively implement cross-cultural training. Formal training should be required in this subject for the staff members who would teach it.
- Formally integrate the live-in experience into cross-cultural training. "Orientadores" should regularly consult the live-in family and the trainee in non-crisis times to interpret and analyze with the trainee the cultural dynamics at play. Regular staff-guided trainee discussion groups should treat live-in topics and problems as general learning models.

- Formally integrate field trips into the cross-cultural training. Pre-field trip discussions should examine the value and use of field trips as an exercise in cultural adaptation. Field trip objectives should be developed in conjunction with the individual trainees concerned. Staff-guided trainee discussion groups should take place after the field trip to discuss the data and problems found.
- Define and limit training assistant presentations at the CAT to predetermined areas. Training assistants should be given formal orientation to their roles by Peace Corps in-country and CAT staff members. Presentations should be limited to personal descriptions of, and reflections on the volunteer experience in the country of destination unless the training assistant possesses a particular expertise on some country specific area studies topic. A staff member should be present during the presentations to help put a context around the volunteer's experience and thereby extend the specific learning situation into the general.

Staff Training

Staff training at the CAT in the past has been largely limited to preparing newly hired language instructors in the teaching methods used at the center. Very little staff training in the technical, cross-cultural or counseling and feedback areas was provided for in the past contract. During the first evaluation field trip in November-December 1979, the trainers interviewed indicated the need for further training in several areas. Language teachers expressed the desire to be exposed to new teaching techniques and ideas in order to expand their professional repertoire and to revitalize their teaching skills. Staff dealing with cross-cultural training felt that they had a vague knowledge about both the objectives and the proper methodology for presenting this component. Finally, though

the technical trainers were well versed in their technical specialties, they felt that they were weak in the areas of group dynamics, the principles of adult education, and other subjects peripheral, but important, to their component. In addition to staff training not having been included in the previous contract, the virtual lack of "down time" at the center also greatly affected its provision. (See Section I of this chapter: Scheduling of Training Cycles.)

The present contract, on the other hand, specifies up to two weeks of staff orientation and training dealing with Peace Corps policy and philosophy, the content of the training plan, staff team building, the methodology of adult learning, differences in United States and host-country culture, interpersonal skills and counseling techniques, and the training evaluation system. Additionally CHP International proposed to conduct a workshop in Communication Learning Techniques for the language instructors.

By the time of the team's second field visit in March 1980 several of these areas including the language workshop had been dealt with through the use of visiting consultants. Given the brevity of the sessions and the diversity of the topics covered, staff members interviewed were noncommittal in their assessments of these activities. A further assessment of the effectiveness of these staff training attempts will have to be performed at a later date.

Recommendations for Staff Training

- "Down Time" and Staff Training. The yearly schedule of the Center should include enough staff "down time" to permit regular staff training sessions (refer to Section I: Scheduling of Training Cycles).
- The team supports the language and other staff training activities recently undertaken at the center, but urges the institutionalization of such training on an extended regular programmed basis on the areas specified in the contract. It is difficult to conceive of an adequate treatment of all seven of these areas in a mere two-week period.

In-Service Training

There appears to be no consensus among in-country staffs from country to country or within the same country as to the role and significance of in-service volunteer training and how it relates to CAT. As a consequence, the systems for providing in-service training, and their contents, vary greatly with each country. In addition, with the exception of Costa Rica and Guatemala, in-service training is performed by different contractors in each country.

Language is generally the primary focus of in-service training. "Cross-cultural" training is handled at best on an ad hoc basis. Technical training may be presented during Peace Corps sponsored seminars on specific topics, host-country training programs or conferences, or periodic Peace Corps job conferences. The wide variations in country practices may be compared in the rough outlines provided below.

Costa Rica

Language training was being offered at the other CHP center in Costa Rica to volunteers after five months of service. Cross-cultural training was limited, with topics covered including Women in Development. Almost all technical training has been supplied by host-country agencies and not Peace Corps.

The new model for in-service training, to be administered at the CAT facility, proposes to encompass "cultural adaptation" and "community development" skills training as well as the usual language training.

The Dominican Republic

Volunteers are given three one-week sessions of in-service training during their first year of service. These sessions concentrate on both language and "cross-cultural" skills (such as community development, Dominican cultural characteristics, an orientation to development and the volunteer's role in his or her community). Occasional volunteer and/or Peace Corps sponsored seminars and job conferences are developed in response to volunteer demands for further, specific technical training.

Ecuador

Language training is offered to volunteers during their third and ninth months of service. The cross-cultural component of this in-service training has been weak, but a new program

proposes to improve this component. Aside from conferences sponsored by volunteer host-country agencies, the Peace Corps Program Manager conducts a job conference once a year. The job conference includes technical skills training led by both the Peace Corps Program Manager and host-country agency representatives on subjects selected by the volunteers.

Guatemala

In this case, there is no concrete schedule for in-service language training. Volunteers with lower language levels are given priority and are summoned according to the workload at the Center. Therefore, volunteers might receive additional or no training during their service, depending on their language level. Volunteers can also receive technical in-service training at their sites and may request on-site training in a local Mayan language. In addition, some Program Managers organize job conferences three times a year with the participation of host-country officials.

Honduras

Volunteers with language levels of less than FSI "2+" may participate in language training every six months. This training includes a small cross-cultural component. There are also occasional technical seminars offered to volunteers by the Peace Corps.

The Relationships of Pre-Service to In-Service Training

Pre-service and in-service training programs operate quite independently and under separate contracts except in Costa Rica. There was no coordination of training content between these programs, and staffs appeared to have only perfunctory knowledge of other training programs. However, the director of the in-service training center in the Dominican Republic expressed knowledge of an interest in the CAT model for training, and supported the notion of greater cooperation between the programs in order to improve training continuity and relevance.

Recommendations for In-Service Training

- In-Service Training Components. In-service training should emphasize the cross-cultural and technical components as well as language. Many facets of these two components become more relevant to volunteers once they have already had some actual field experience.
- In-Service Training and Host-Country Participation. In-service technical training in areas specified by volunteers would also supply an opportunity to maximize host-country participation in volunteer service through the use of local training facilities and teachers, and the involvement of local officials and volunteer co-workers. In Ecuador, the participation of host-country agency teachers in job conferences has also led to greater volunteer esteem for local agency personnel.
- The Relationship Between Pre-Service and In-Service Training. Each Peace Corps Director should establish an in-service training program that satisfies volunteer needs and is compatible with pre-service training. There should be greater integration of training content between the CAT and in-country training staffs. During the pre-training research

visit the two groups should familiarize themselves with each others' prospective programs, methodologies and materials. Greater continuity between pre-service to in-service training would result, and the CAT would have another source for country specific information. In addition, the in-service training staff could more readily adapt their programs to the possible needs of incoming volunteers. Since this coordination in most cases would imply agreements between several contractors for the mutual use of training methodologies, materials and staff it would best not be organized by the staff of the CAT but rather through the LAC Region office.

IV. EVALUATION/FEEDBACK AND QUALIFICATION PROCESS

The evaluation/feedback and qualification processes compose the two elements of trainee selection at the CAT. The evaluation/feedback system occurs throughout training and has a threefold purpose: (a) to assess and document trainee progress for the CAT and Peace Corps Country staff; (b) to either reinforce positive trainee accomplishment of training objectives, or to indicate the need for improvement or modification in the progress towards these objectives, and (c) to provide a basis for deselection of those trainees not accomplishing the training objectives in the time provided. The qualification process continues throughout training and is used to measure completion of terminal training objectives. Recommendations for Peace Corps service or for disqualification are made on this basis to the respective Peace Corps country staffs. Each of these two processes is examined below.

Ongoing Evaluation/Feedback Process For Trainees

Every two weeks, each trainee talks privately with a staff member, spending up to one-half hour in a feedback exchange. At that time, the staff member shares information from comments and written reports submitted by the language, technical and other staff members. Usually, the language trainer (and sometimes the technical trainer) will have already discussed this information in a preliminary feedback

session with the trainee. The team saw no similar written information for cross-cultural training.

The value of these sessions was severely compromised for a large number of trainees by the generally negative reactions it elicited in them. Almost half (46 percent) of the CAT-trained volunteers and trainees interviewed expressed some form of dislike, mistrust or fear of the evaluation/feedback system. The nature of the criticism usually revolved around a negative assessment of the methods used by, and the performance of, the staff member directing the sessions. An often repeated complaint alluded to the staff member acting like an "amateur psychologist." This was a common theme running through the negative assessments -- a feeling that the personality characteristics and skills background (insufficient or no training in counseling techniques) of the staff member were inappropriate to the feedback relationship.

Although the system was designed to provide both a counseling and an evaluation mechanism, the counseling was effectively rejected by many when the evaluation process and agent became perceived as inadequate and/or threatening. This resulted in a reduced level of trainee-staff interaction, incomplete processing of trainee adaptation problems, and the creation of an atmosphere not conducive to the growth of trainee self-esteem or of an attitude of professional competency for the job assignment.

Interestingly, a rather large group (34 percent) of these CAT-trained volunteers and trainees had diametrically opposed feelings about this process and tended to compliment some of the staff on its sensitivity and abilities. This suggests that the problem is related to individual capabilities of various staff members and is not systemic in nature.

This finding was borne out in the interviews when the distinction between evaluation/feedback and qualification as a general process, and as it was applied in training, was explored. There is considerable support for, and understanding of, the necessity for a process of selection. It is widely accepted that the process can be a learning experience useful for the trainee in assessing readiness for Peace Corps service. However, it is in "how the method was applied and by whom," that resides the heart of the negative criticism found during this study.

Qualification Process for Trainees

The final volunteer selection process is determined by a set of objective criteria set forth in the Memo of Understanding between the CAT and the Peace Corps in-country staffs. These objectives must be achieved by the trainees during training. Achievement is monitored and assessed through a system of "check-offs" (a list of objectives to be accomplished by the end of training). Each component of training comprises a different mix of these measures. They are discussed below.

Technical Training Qualification

Trainee qualification in the technical domain is evaluated through the accomplishment of predetermined tasks (the check-off system), exams, and feedback sessions. The system includes a mixture of written tests and practical exercises tending to emphasize memorization rather than problem-solving skills. Trainees and in-service volunteers generally felt that the system of check-offs and exams was appropriate, though the quantity of tasks was sometimes perceived as unrealistic. There has been a change since the team's first visit, in that the number of check-offs has been reduced.

Language Training Qualification

Language skills are monitored and evaluated by weekly progress reports and periodic testing. Progress reports are completed by the appropriate language trainers and then retained in the trainee's file. In addition to formal FSI exams administered by examiners trained by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) upon the trainee's entry to and exit from the center, informal FSI-like exams are performed during training by the center's language staff. These exams, particularly the final FSI exam, form the basis for ultimate recommendations in trainee language qualification. The system for language qualification is straightforward to the trainees and well understood and accepted by them.

Although the FSI criteria for language ability levels are standard, some evidence exists that regular variation in FSI

level assessment occurs between that performed at the CAT and that of in-country testing (FSI levels given at termination of CAT training often tend to be lower than those performed immediately afterwards in-country). The only explanation that presents itself for such regular variation in one direction is that the FSI testers are unevenly applying FSI criteria around the region.

Cross-Cultural Training Qualification

The cross-cultural element of training has employed a check-off and bi-weekly feedback system similar to that used in technical training. However, in contrast to technical training, the criteria used in the check-off system seem to reflect the general ineffectiveness of cross-cultural training by being difficult to measure, vague, and perceived as being of dubious value by the trainees. It is sometimes enforced perfunctorily and, in general, lacks credibility.

Use of Qualification Assessments by the Peace Corps Country Staffs

The confidence placed in the qualification assessments and periodic trainee progress reports by the respective Peace Corps country staffs appears to vary widely. In Ecuador, the data and recommendations are accepted and firmly carried out with implicit trust in the findings of the CAT. In Costa Rica and Honduras, perhaps reflecting a feeling of greater contact with the trainees at the center, less strict attention is paid to the periodic and terminal reports.

The fact that inter-country variation occurs in use of the data is perhaps not functionally significant. However, when trainee qualification or disqualification recommendations (based on the Memo of Understanding) are made and then not accepted by Peace Corps staffs, CAT credibility suffers with all concerned parties, including trainees. This loss of credibility may have some small but significant negative impact on trainee confidence in the training received, and thereby diminishes their perception of their own competency. Similarly, when negative interim reports are sent to the Peace Corps country staffs and are not followed by CAT support for deselection, the same problem arises. The incidence of both these cases has been limited, but the damage incurred by even one case is appreciable.

Internal Staff Evaluation and Communication Process

There is no institutionalized system for the evaluation of CAT staff. Staff appraisals conducted by the CAT director and coordinators tend to be ad-hoc and unsystematic. Though the procedures have apparently changed between the first team visit and the second, there were (in the past) no regular staff meetings nor any other types of formal intra-staff communication in operation.

Recommendations

- Increase the level of staff competency in the evaluation/feedback procedure. The CAT should insist upon prior experience and skills preparation in the choice and assignment of personnel performing evaluation/feedback. Sensitivity and a Peace Corps background, although extremely useful characteristics for the agent of this procedure to have, are not alone sufficient to perform to the level necessary. As not all members of the staff could perform the duties of the technical trainer, not all can effectively counsel, and should therefore not be allowed to do so.
- Encourage regular opportunities for staff skills improvement/training. Formal courses, seminars, internal staff exchanges, and consultant visits are among the methods that help to sharpen staff expertise and permit a wider exposure to new and promising techniques as they arise in the art.
- Negotiate the choice of cross-cultural behavioral objectives with the Peace Corps in-country staff, and adhere strictly to them. Particularly for the assessment of appropriate trainee behavior (motivation, adaptation and attitudes where the issue is less objectively measurable than technical or language) the choice and pertinence of surrogate objective measures of these conditions will be crucial if the in-country staff and CAT are to arrive at common agreement on trainee qualification for service. The most appropriate and effective means for producing consensus is to mirror the procedure used in setting technical training objectives, by negotiating these criteria and standards during pre-training research. Adherence to these should be enforceable.
- Trainees should be shown CAT evaluation reports for their information and signature. This procedure has apparently been instituted recently at the CAT. It should help to maintain an open, frank evaluative atmosphere.

V. PROGRAMMING AND TRAINING: ADMINISTRATION

Effective and timely communication between the CAT, Peace Corps/Washington and the in-country staffs is vital to good training and programming and, ultimately, to volunteer performance. The importance of this communication process needs to be emphasized.

The present sequence and content of the administrative steps and documents used in this process were described in "Chapter One: An Overview," and will not be reiterated here. Rather, this section points out the team's findings in terms of breakdowns and inconsistencies in the communication process. A sequential delineation of guidelines for this process is then included in the list of recommendations.

As was described in the overview, situations in the past have existed which have compromised the effectiveness of the programming and training communication process. Examples of this are that the parameters for training have been poorly defined, untimely in their preparation and transmittal, or have been designed by parties not fully informed as to the necessary country-specific information. Apparent causes of these breakdowns appear to stem from several sources including a lack of an enforced delineation of responsibilities within the communication process, a lack of standardized formats and transmittal dates, and a lack of in-country staff training in both of the above. The findings and recommendations for these causes follow.

An Enforced Delineation of Responsibilities

A formal delineation of task responsibilities for the communication process has been designed by the CAT staff and has been tentatively approved by Peace Corps in-country and Washington LAC region staffs.* Likewise, the CAT staff has designed and sent to the in-country staffs a delineation of responsibilities concerning the execution of the pre-training research activities.** Both of these documents and the processes described in them, with certain modifications detailed in the recommendations section below, are thought to be rational, workable and necessary by the in-country staffs and the evaluation team. Nevertheless, in practice these guidelines are often not followed. Consequently:

1. There is incomplete preparation of the documents which define the training objectives. This applies mainly to the Description of Work (DOW) which is to be prepared by the appropriate Program Manager and the Programming and Training Officer. The DOW is to be based on prior site surveys conducted by the Program Manager, as well as on discussions with appropriate host-country officials. It incorporates the information

* The document referred to here is entitled Draft Guidelines for Peace Corps/Ag. Contractor Cooperation, written by the CAT staff and transmitted to the in-country staffs as part of a memorandum from Steve Smith, ex-director of the LAC region.

** This document and examples of its implementation appear in the current CHP International Proposal to the Peace Corps, Annex B, Appendix A.

stated in the TAC sheets and provides a general overview of the types of training to be performed. The preparation of this document is then to be followed by the pre-training research activities and a negotiation process between the research team and the in-country staff as to what can and will become the terminal objectives of the training program. The results of this negotiation process are then jointly written up as a Memo of Understanding -- in essence, a contract between the CAT and the in-country staff.

In practice, the DOWs are often not written (or are written in a very cursory and undetailed way), but are deferred until the arrival of the pre-training research team and the design of the Memo of Understanding. In effect, the memo becomes the DOW. In other instances, the DOWs are merely copies of past DOWs with the dates changed. This results in the pre-training research team having to interview the host-country agency officials and current volunteers, as well as having to perform the individual site surveys. This not only severely overloads the team's work schedule to the detriment of its other required activities, but it greatly diminishes in-country staff input into the formulation of the training objectives.

2. There are delays in the timely execution of documents essential to the communication process. Similar to the problem discussed above, in the relatively few cases where the DOWs are prepared they are often completed as a result of the pre-training

research visit and therefore do not serve as a support document for the team's visit. Additionally, the Memo of Understanding is often prepared after the pre-training research team has returned to the center. Delays in the joint approval of this document have led in some instances to the training objectives remaining undefined until after the start of a training cycle.

3. The documents are often prepared by inappropriate parties lacking prerequisite expertise. This problem occurs at two levels: Programming and Training Officers at times are involved in the preparation of the documents to the exclusion of the Program Managers who, ideally, have made the site surveys; and, the pre-training research team often prepares the Memo of Understanding based on their short visits to potential sites and brief discussions with host government officials to the exclusion of in-country staffs. The results of this are that the information used is often incomplete or irrelevant.

Standardized Formats

From the documents seen by the evaluation team and from interviews with the training and in-country staffs, it appears that there are no Peace Corps-wide standard formats or guidelines for the preparation of either the DOW or the Memo of Understanding. (The exception to this is Honduras whose DOW format is currently being adopted by Costa Rica.) On the other hand, the pre-training research teams use a standardized format

for their task analysis activities. This format is well designed and effectively employed.

The problems engendered by a lack of uniform formats or guidelines, as described by the various staffs interviewed, include a lack of comparability among countries and among cycles within a country, a lack of continuity in what and how training objectives are formulated, and a failure to cover uniformly all necessary details.

In-Country Staff Training in Programming

There appears to be a general lack of emphasis on staff training for Programming and Training Officers and Program Managers in both the administrative communication process (requirements and guidelines; as specified in the two documents cited above) and in the necessary development orientation which should embody program design. This latter point will be discussed in detail in the following section.

Recommendations

The team recommends the institution and monitoring of the following administrative communication process. This process draws heavily on the CAT-designed guidelines cited above.

Activities Prior to the Pre-Training Research Visit

1. The Description of Work -- A detailed, updated DOW for each program should be prepared in consultation with all appropriate parties. The

DOW should contain general Terminal Training Objectives for the technical, language and cross-cultural components. These Terminal Training Objectives, while of a general nature, should be based on TAC sheet and Task Analysis data in sufficient detail to permit the CAT staff to identify the general operational emphasis of the program; i.e., the particular crop categories, research systems, program strategies and host-agencies involved. The DOW should be sent to the CAT no less than ten weeks prior to the arrival of the training group.

2. The CAT staff should review the DOW, make a preliminary analysis and submit a set of tentative dates for the pre-training research visit. In-country staffs would then select the most convenient dates and schedule the visit. The request from the CAT staff for visit dates should include: the names of the researchers, a statement of the specific activities which the researchers will perform, the number of days planned for completion of the research, and a list of materials, interviews, supplies and arrangements which will be required.
3. The in-country staffs should, based on the request made above, prepare a schedule and itinerary for the pre-training researchers. The schedule should include preliminary and debriefing meetings with Peace Corps staff, meetings with host-agency personnel, and volunteers, as well as visits to potential sites.
4. In-country staffs should identify at least five candidates for the Training Assistant positions.
5. In-country staffs should prepare copies of current site surveys for the researchers.
6. In-country staffs should maintain an updated list of any modifications which should be made in the DOW.

The Pre-Training Research Visit

1. In-country staffs should assume responsibility for logistical arrangements during the research activities. (If the necessary Peace Corps vehicles are not available monies should be made available through the CAT budget for vehicle rental.) An appropriate in-country staff member

should accompany the researchers in order to participate in the interviews, clarify information, facilitate the acquisition of required materials, and in general represent the views of the in-country staff.

2. In-country staffs, together with the researchers, should further specify the Terminal Training Objectives, establish the trainee qualification criteria, and design a draft Training Plan. Primary responsibility for writing the above should be with the researchers. In-country staff should have the responsibility for consulting with the researchers on content and for approving and signing off on the final draft. The Terminal Training Objectives, the Trainee Qualification Criteria, and the draft Training Plan (syllabus) should then become the elements of the Memo of Understanding to be prepared before the departure of the research team.
3. The researchers, in collaboration with the in-country staffs, should discuss the relative merits of the candidates for Training Assistants, and mutually select those with the best qualifications.
4. The researchers and in-country staffs should establish a scope of work for the training assistants based on their skills and experience. In-country staffs should provide whatever support is necessary and feasible for the training assistants to prepare themselves to perform their roles.

The Interim and Training Periods

1. In-country staffs should inform the CAT staff of any necessary changes in the Memo of Understanding.
 2. The CAT staff should keep the in-country staffs informed of its progress in preparing for training and executing the Memorandum of Understanding.
- The formats for Site Surveys, Task Analysis, the Descriptions of Work and the Memo of Understanding, should be standardized for all countries which deal with the CAT. The DOW should include:

1. Site Surveys
 - General:
 - Socio-economic data for the area
 - Geo-political data for the area
 - Infrastructure in the area
 - Agricultural data -- crops, seasons and methods
 - Other volunteers in the area
 - Local Agency Data:
 - Size, area, number of staff
 - Volunteer counterparts or supervisors
 - Resources available to the agency

2. TAC Sheets and Task Analyses
 - Work to be Performed:
 - General scope of work
 - Resources available to the volunteer
 - Secondary activities which might be undertaken

 - Volunteer Type:
 - Motivation/personality required
 - Education
 - Prior work experience

 - Description of Work
 - Description of activities to be performed by volunteers
 - Description of the mutual responsibilities between the volunteers and the host-country agencies
 - Description of the technical areas in which a volunteer should be expected to be proficient

3. Task Analysis (as per the CHP International Proposal)
 - Identification of the skills to be required
 - Identification of the materials needed
 - Identification of trainee performance criteria

4. Memorandum of Understanding
 - Training methodology to be used, generic or specific
 - Specific areas of competency to be taught in the technical, language and cross-cultural components
 - Qualitative criteria to be used in the trainee selection process based on Terminal Training Objectives

5. Project Plans

6. Host Country Agreement and Information

Programming and Training Officers and Program Managers should be given regular updated training in the administrative, programming, and training process. Likewise, they should be given training in the general orientation of Peace Corps as a development agency in order that programs be designed in a way that volunteers will be not only able to perform adequately but be effective as well. This latter issue is discussed in detail in the following section.

VI. PROGRAMMING AND TRAINING: EFFECTIVENESS

In selecting this issue area for treatment under the present evaluation, the team emphasizes that it is not solely a training issue but is also one which involves -- and is affected by -- all aspects of the Peace Corps process: recruitment, staging, training, volunteer support, volunteer service, and the overall objectives and programming guidelines established by Peace Corps. Although programming was originally considered by the team to be beyond its mandate, programming is inseparable from training issues, especially as it affects volunteer effectiveness; therefore, it has been included here.

For the purposes of this discussion, the team has chosen to present the findings and recommendations together as a general statement and definition of the issue area. This choice was based on the relatively high degree of subjectivity of this issue.

Throughout the design and implementation of the methodology used in the evaluation, the concepts of volunteer "performance" and volunteer "effectiveness" have been used as yardsticks in an attempt to answer the singularly crucial question of "training for what purpose?" Depending on the answer to this question, both the role and importance of training can then be defined and evaluated in a more appropriate context.

For the purpose of the evaluation, the term "performance" has been selected to express the adequacy with which a volunteer carries out the job for which he or she was trained. This concept measures essential skill utilization and competence in the technical, language and cross-cultural areas. The concept of volunteer "effectiveness," building on the criterion of "performance," addresses a far more comprehensive subject best described as the intended impact of Peace Corps service.

In considering the three goals of the 1961 Peace Corps Act in addition to current basic human needs programming criteria,* the evaluation team has chosen to address two key elements essential to effective volunteer service: an orientation to socio-economic development in the selection and design of volunteer activities (programming), and a professional attitude towards carrying out these activities.

Development Orientation

The term, "development orientation," is used to mean the placement of volunteers in jobs, or sites, which will lead to an impact on the socio-economic conditions of the people of the Third World countries in which Peace Corps is involved.

* Here, the term has referred to an excerpt from a document entitled FY 1980 CMP, B. Peace Corps Programming Criteria, pages 10-15.

In this respect, the team feels that the Peace Corps programming process and, therefore, the corresponding training process, should concern itself primarily with volunteers as agents of change and address basic human needs which have been identified by the local people who are to be aided. Activities must be directed toward the poorer elements of society to create in them a self-sufficient capacity in order that projects be self-sustaining when the volunteer leaves. Volunteer programs should also receive sufficient Peace Corps staff and host country support and resources. The team feels strongly that deviation from these basic guidelines represents a vastly diminished potential to meet both the spirit and letter of the original intent of the Peace Corps which is, in essence, a volunteer contribution to development.

After interviewing over 100 volunteers and Peace Corps staff members, the team believes that the volunteer is (in general) effectively using the skills that he or she possesses. On the other hand, the volunteers' impact on development has been frequently compromised by programming procedures which emphasize a rise in the number of volunteers at the expense of well conceived development-oriented programs.

In interview after interview the team talked with volunteers who were attempting to perform jobs which had not been desired or requested by the local inhabitants and which had little or no support from supervisors or the host government

agency. Even when the volunteer was demonstrating a high degree of "performance," the socio-economic conditions of the intended populations were very little affected.

Specific examples of this were found in the School Gardens programs of Costa Rica and Honduras and the Seed Multiplication program of Costa Rica which did not appear to have been requested by the local populations, were not self-sustainable and would not raise the socio-economic level of the beneficiaries except in a very marginal way over an exceedingly long timeframe. In another example, that of the Ecuadorian Extension Agent program, all but one of the guidelines had been adequately fulfilled. Nevertheless, the criterion specifying adequate host-agency resource support was not being met because the Ministry of Agriculture did not have sufficient resources. This shortage of resources almost completely undermines the effectiveness of most volunteers working in the program.

A similar problem existed in the Dominican Republic among the volunteers assigned to the extension programs. The Peace Corps agriculture Program Manager was assigned to supervise 40 to 60 volunteers which thereby precluded adequate Peace Corps support. In addition, the Secretary of Agriculture did not have the resources to support the volunteers assigned to it. Both of these factors greatly diminished volunteer effectiveness.

In contrast to these projects, the team believes that the Guatemalan Forestries project is a good example of a program meeting the basic human needs guidelines. Other examples of effective volunteers were found scattered throughout the countries visited where volunteers on their own had found secondary activities into which they had been able to integrate themselves -- a volunteer who had worked himself into an advisory role with a peasant union movement in Honduras; a woman in Ecuador who had helped set up a marmalade producing cooperative; and a volunteer in the Dominican Republic who was an advisor to a successful input supply cooperative are examples of this.

Fully realizing that the team's input into altering this present situation involves policy considerations beyond its mandate to evaluate Central Agricultural Training, the team feels that without a reexamination and refocusing of Peace Corps goals, guidelines, and procedures which deal with this issue, any recommendation made would be in vain.

"Professionalism"

Closely related to the element of development orientation is a combination of attitudinal and behavioral characteristics which are included here under the term of "professionalism." As with the issue of development orientation, "professionalism" is not the specific domain of training but rather concerns all phases of Peace Corps activity. Furthermore,

although not simply a training issue, it is crucial to the "training for what" question posed above and has, therefore, been included here. Germane to this element are such factors as volunteer motivation, personal behavior and appearance, interpersonal skills and cross-cultural adaptation as evidenced through relations with and among host-country agencies and officials, and the attainment, maintenance and support of skill levels which will lead to improved performance.

"Professionalism" is a logical adjunct to a proper and well defined development orientation. As such, the orientation describes the environment in which Peace Corps activities should take place, whereas "professionalism" describes and considers how the orientation should be implemented so as to maximize the effectiveness of volunteers.

In considering this issue, the findings of the evaluation team are generally disappointing. It must be stated, however, that this overall observation was not articulated by volunteers themselves but rather is a combination of the team's observations and its interpretation of actual volunteer statements concerning dissatisfaction and frustration with their jobs.

It could be posited, however, that this issue was, in fact, not raised by the volunteers simply because it appears never to have been treated during any of the phases of Peace Corps activity through which a volunteer passes. Although

some of the issues included here under "professionalism," especially personal appearance and behavior, and relations with host government agencies are often addressed in training and during service they do not seem to be treated in an integrated way nor within the overall focus of the professionalism issue. Particularly significant in this aspect is the frustration expressed by both training and in-country staffs concerning their failure to institute change in trainee and volunteer attitudes pertaining to these issues.

The manifestations of a lack of a professional attitude are many and varied and are summarized below.

Volunteer Motivation

Motivation is a factor which can be both selected for and trained for. In terms of the former, it does not appear that trainees are being selected or even screened for a professional attitude. While it could be argued that motivational reasons such as, "I wanted to learn a language," or "I heard that two years in the Peace Corps would get me a federal job," do not necessarily rule out a person from becoming an effective volunteer, the team feels that some reforms need to be instituted in the selection process to identify personal characteristics which would lead to professional behavior. These characteristics might include: achievement orientation, pride in one's accomplishments and a problem-solving perspective.

Assuming that a professional attitude will be aided by an improved recruitment and pre-invitational selection process, the focus on professionalism should be carried on in training. Throughout the training process, trainees should be treated as, expected to act as and, finally, selected on the grounds of being, young but mature professionals. In essence, they should be made to feel good about themselves, be confident in the knowledge of what they will be doing, and have the purpose of their next two years well in mind. In this context, a change in the training methodology that was suggested in the section of this report that recommends a shift from specific skill training to a more generic problem-solving focus would be more appropriate. This type of training, supported by access to good resource materials and technical support, provided either by the Peace Corps or a host government agency, would serve to make the volunteer feel more competent in his or her knowledge of a discipline rather than possess knowledge of a relatively few memorized facts within a discipline.

Any new emphasis by the training center on this issue must be continued and supported by the in-country staffs during volunteer service. As was stated in the discussion of a development orientation, volunteers must be programmed into jobs which they perceive as being meaningful. Nothing has the potential for destroying professional motivation more than a meaningless job.

In addition, certain dynamics should be instituted during service to support and foster professional motivation such as an informal reward system and an accountability system. At present, the only real reward system for good work is a personal one in which the volunteer feels good about his or her activities. Stated differently, there is no encouragement or "pull" side to performing as a competent professional. On the other "push" side of encouragement, there is no operative accountability system concerning volunteers if they deviate from sincere attempts to carry out their jobs professionally.

An informal reward system need be nothing more than the provision of positive feedback to volunteers by in-country staffs. However, other techniques such as publishing stories concerning effective volunteers in the various in-country volunteer newsletters might also be used. In regards to an accountability system, the in-country staffs -- in coordination with Peace Corps/Washington -- could establish guidelines for effective volunteer behavior similar to the dress norms which have recently been established at the CAT and for volunteers in Costa Rica and Chile.

Of crucial importance in the case of these guidelines is that they be clearly explained -- including the rationale behind them -- to potential recruits, trainees and volunteers alike so that they know precisely what is expected of them. These guidelines must then be strictly adhered to and enforced by in-country staffs.

Personal Behavior and Appearance

This is the area of the "professionalism" issue which is at the same time the most obvious and the most discouraging. Put succinctly, the evaluation team was embarrassed on several occasions by culturally insensitive dress and hygiene, as well as personal behavior not in the best interest of the goals of Peace Corps. In a culture which places a far higher value on these factors of human activity than does ours, these negative manifestations can go a long way toward nullifying or diminishing whatever success a volunteer might have.

During the field trips of the evaluation, the team attempted to interview host-country counterparts, supervisors or other officials who could offer insights or suggestions on the training of volunteers. Almost universally, these respondents expressed their lack of knowledge or recommendations for such things as training methodology, technical content, materials or staff. Rather, these people chose (quite emphatically, in some cases) to express their views on two subjects: volunteer appearance and inter-personal relations with host-country officials. Concerning the first, they generally felt that the physical appearance of many volunteers was extremely undesirable and culturally insensitive. They also felt that it was the responsibility of the Peace Corps to teach volunteers the proper modes of appearance and to enforce whatever guidelines might exist. The second subject was stressed as being even more important than the first and will be dealt with below.

In an attempt to resolve this problem, and in accord with the recommendations made in the prior section concerning volunteer motivation towards professional behavior, Peace Corps must establish strict guidelines for volunteer behavior and appearance for all phases of training and service. More important, however -- since it is not felt that the Peace Corps should assume the role of either "mom" or "drill instructor" -- is that applicants, trainees and volunteers should be made to understand the precise role of a volunteer and why these guidelines are so important within another culture. Enforcement without understanding would be as bad as the present situation.

Aside from the above, the team would like to make observations on two issues specifically related to the training center. The first is that staff, including the Training Assistants sent by the countries, should serve as models for professional appearance and behavior. This has not always been the case in the past and should be stressed in the future. Secondly, the overall appearance of the training center in the past was not conducive to fostering an attitude towards "professionalism." While the team agrees that a certain balance must be struck between familiarizing trainees with the conditions of poverty and in promoting an attitude of "professionalism," it felt that the former was being over-stressed at the expense of the latter. During the team's second field visit it felt that the environment of the new training facility had

been substantially improved in this regard and that the training staff was making a sincere attempt to serve as positive models.

Relations Between Volunteers and Host-Country Officials

Under normal circumstances, volunteers are placed in positions involving either direct or indirect relationships with host-country agencies and ministries. As such, and within the cultural setting of a Latin American bureaucracy, the form and protocol of doing business often becomes an extremely important issue. This was brought out very clearly by almost every host-country national interviewed. Specific examples of breakdowns in relationships between volunteers and host-country officials ranged from volunteers unilaterally pulling out of their assigned agencies and involving themselves in secondary activities to open hostilities between co-workers and volunteers.

The causes of these breakdowns are almost as diverse as the numbers of breakdowns themselves and are not always within the realm of responsibility of the volunteers or of training. Nevertheless, several specific themes which could be addressed in training were identified, including: the form and methods of operation of government agencies in general and Latin American agencies in particular (how work does or does not get done); inter-personal relations (the necessary skills required to influence and get along with people in a Latin American context); and problem-solving skills in terms of obtaining scarce

resources to achieve desirable goals (how to "hustle" in the Third World).

By understanding these issues and by putting the information learned into practice, the volunteers would not only be acting as Latin professionals but would also be more effective.

Attainment, Maintenance and Support of Skill Levels

A crucial part of a person's ability to feel and act as a professional involves satisfaction in knowing that his or her professional knowledge is current, correct, and adequate in terms of performing a job. At present, trainees are given classes in specific skill areas, tested for competence and then sent off for two years. Technical in-service training to maintain volunteer skill levels is not provided systematically but haphazardly when it occurs at all. (For example, a course on cocoa for volunteers transferred to cocoa regions in Costa Rica, or a volunteer-sponsored and taught introductory course on small animals in the Dominican Republic.) For additional comments on in-service training and its relation to pre-service training, see Section Three of this chapter, entitled "Training Components."

With the possible exception of volunteers in Ecuador and Honduras, volunteers generally felt a need for additional in-service technical advice and monitoring of their activities. In the team's view, this lack of support did not stem from a lack of knowledge or experience on the part of Program Managers

but rather from a lack of time to provide the support due to the often tremendous administrative and personal support workload of the managers. In an attempt to overcome this problem, the country staff in Ecuador is currently in the process of identifying a volunteer leader who would perform some of the technical support activities of the Program Manager, thereby freeing him to spend more time on administrative and volunteer personnel support matters. The team suggests that the other in-country staffs consider this approach to solving this important problem.

In conclusion, this team wishes to emphasize to the reader that the issue of volunteer effectiveness, while the most difficult to address and make concrete recommendations for, is -- at the same time -- the most critical in assessing the adequacy and the needs of Peace Corps training in general, and the Centralized Agricultural Training facility in particular. Without the definition and focus provided by the treatment of this issue, all other considerations and recommendations are virtually meaningless.

CHAPTER THREE

MODEL JUSTIFICATION

An evaluation of the performance and effectiveness of the centralized agricultural training model at the CAT in Costa Rica will, of necessity, make certain implicit judgments about the appropriateness of the model itself. Rather than have these judgments unspecifically affirmed, and be relatively unresponsive to the wider issues of Peace Corps training policies, an attempt is made here to be more explicit concerning the relative merits of that model.

Ideally, an evaluation of any one of the training models currently used by Peace Corps would aim at relating the training given to an empirically verifiable measurement of volunteer effectiveness (impact) in the work performed based on some predetermined standard or criteria. As described in the methodological appendix of this paper, such a direct relationship can not be completely established due to: a lack of these established criteria; the difficulty in identifying the causal effects of training versus motivational or programming considerations; and the constraints of time which limited the necessary indepth observation of volunteers at work. Therefore the present evaluation has instead dealt largely with performance issues (how well was the training performed), rather than exploring the full impact of the training.

Beyond the observations of the team itself, considerable time was spent with the Peace Corps in-country staffs of the five countries, discussing the relative merits of various training models. It is on this basis that a cautious assessment of the CAT model versus others will be conducted. To this end, it is necessary to clarify exactly what the structural components of the CAT model are and how they compare with other models in this sense.

THE TRAINING MODELS

The three key structural elements that comprise a training model might be briefly distinguished as the agent, the content and the place of the training model. The agent may be either an outside contractor or an in-house Peace Corps body. The place of training will be in-country, in a third country, or in the United States. The training content will either be comprehensive (including all elements to be trained), or selectively specialized (technical training only, language only, cross-cultural only, or a mix of two). Each of the alternatives of each element, and the various possible permutations of these will normally be more or less advantageous and more or less appropriate for a given Peace Corps training program.

Referring to this rather basic classification of training model elements, the essential differences between the CAT center in Costa Rica and other pre-service training in Latin America can be seen as ones of place and content -- the CAT being third country and comprehensive and the other being largely in-country and selectively specialized. The common element between them in most cases in Latin America is that the contracts are usually awarded to independent contractors. However, great variation exists in the training procedures employed by these contractors.

Agent of Training

The term "institutionalized training facility" is used here to denote a permanent training site with specialized instructor and administrative staffs dealing full time with training issues and performance. On the other hand, "part-time training facility" is used to denote an impermanent site and a staff assembled for the performance of one or a few discontinuous training cycles. It is the team's opinion that the institutionalized facility presents significant advantages over irregularly generated and part-time training programs. Because most training in Latin America occurs in "institutionalized" settings, this issue is less relevant to a CAT non-CAT comparative assessment than others that follow. It is, however, particularly relevant to a decentralized Peace Corps training policy which allows wide variation in conditions under which

training occurs, especially among Peace Corps regions.

A permanent center has particular advantages for skills training; in this case agricultural skills training. If carefully chosen for land and climate, and well prepared before the arrival of trainees, a microcosm of the agricultural sector may be presented to trainees in a relatively restricted area: crops may be at different stages of their growth cycle, tree crops can be planted in proximity, and farm animal facilities and populations can be profitably sustained as additional training resources. An impermanent site allows very little of these preparations and over the short run cannot profitably support investment in many of these resources.

An impermanent staff is probably less experienced a priori in training skills, will have less opportunity to benefit from increased training skills gained from experience, and be less able to evolve and refine training curricula outside of training periods because of divided attention to other functions. In summary then, permanence and specialization of function have a very direct positive impact on training quality.

Content of Training

The issue here is largely one of the value of integration of training components, particularly for generalist programs. A divergence between the CAT model and other training models in the LAC region was found in this respect. All three training

components are addressed at the CAT (technical, language and cross-culture), while this is not the case with the majority of other models considered by the team. For example, the centralized facility in Fogmoore, South Carolina, mainly addresses the technical component with the language and cross-cultural components later addressed by various in-country facilities. The in-country facilities, such as Asdela in Ecuador and ERS in the Dominican Republic, predominantly address the cross-cultural and language components to the exclusion of the technical, as is specified in their respective contracts.

The team believes that the more integration between the individual training components, the better the training. For example, technical training, when separated in time and place from the cultural context and dynamics (the substance of cross-cultural training) in which it will occur, blurs the picture of reality as it is found in the volunteer's work. Similarly, to separate language training from technical training is to create an artificial division that does little to reinforce the crucial interrelationship of communication skills and technical data used in extension work. On the other hand, by being able to address the three components concurrently at the same facility, a high degree of integration can be achieved. Technical classes can benefit from being taught in a cultural context, language classes can be oriented to discuss technical and cross-cultural issues, and the cross-cultural classes can fully benefit from organized presentations

dealing with live-in and field trip experiences.

This discussion, however, does not imply that the integration of training components cannot be achieved by in-country training facilities, but rather that due to cost and quality considerations (it is relatively cheaper to provide the high quality of training attained at the CAT), it is, for the most part, not done.

Place of Training

The economies of scale have a very direct impact on training quality. A relatively large number of trainees passing through a training site on a year-round basis permits the acquisition and maintenance of a larger and better equipped training facility, the retention and development of a body of highly qualified and experienced instructors, and a continuous refinement and development of the training curricula.

Though the ultimate cost per trainee may not be any lower than it is for in-country training, the quality (because of these advantages of scale) will be better. Particularly for generalist agricultural programs, in-country technical training, requiring the rental of land and the permanent maintenance of training resources (presence of crops, trees and other living resources) cannot compete on this basis for quality of training. For impermanent in-country training facilities to rent land, acquire the necessary infrastructure and hire

competent training staff would be costly, and these costs would not be able to be spread out over the year or over a larger number of trainees. In addition, a smaller center would tend to be forced to hire a minimal number of technical trainers which would have to spread themselves thinly over the gamut of technical subjects to be taught.

It might be argued that an in-country model could compete very favorably in terms of relevance of the technical training received to country specific conditions. However, as has been shown several times in the body of this paper, this conclusion is not easily supported. Relevance of country specific technical information will always be imperfect in any training center because of the diversity of volunteer sites and work conditions that is found within even one sub-region of a host-country. A generic approach to training, as discussed earlier, would address the issue of relevance in the most efficient manner possible, given this great diversity of sites to be trained for. A generic training process, however, requires more preparation, continuity, and resources to be effectively implemented. In this respect, a large permanent center with a constant flow of trainees and consequently greater financial and staff resources can respond more efficiently to what is needed and can permit more eventual relevance in training. In-country training does not dispose of the resources to be able to perform as well in this sense.

There is also an advantage for trainee credibility in the eyes of some host-country agency supervisors and co-workers in having attended an external center dedicated to skills training. The assumption they make is that a foreign institutional skills training center, as opposed to an in-country training facility, is more professional and, therefore, credible.

A final point considering the advantages of "place" addresses the cultural adaptation of trainees. If the process of adaptation is considered to be the acquisition of sensitivities and analytic skills, the wider the variety of experiences, the greater the chance to develop and refine them. As several volunteers pointed out, and with whom the team agrees, a third-country site can provide a convenient starting point in the adaptive process between the United States and the country of eventual destination. It is a chance to be guided through an introduction to adaptive skills where the normal adjustment problems encountered have little immediate impact on the trainee's future in-country service. It also exposes the trainee to an additional pattern of cultural behavior and thereby highlights the role of cultural dynamics rather than specifics.

Additional Considerations for the Improvement of the CAT Model

Though the CAT model, as presently conceived and implemented, is relatively efficient and appropriate in preparing the trainee for an effective period of service, it still may

be, and is being, improved by changes in its structure. Recent variants in the usual model procedures have included the following:

1. A pre-training visit by Dominican Republic trainees to the Dominican Republic before continuing on to the CAT. According to the volunteers interviewed, this increased their sensitivities to the actual conditions of the Dominican Republic and made training somewhat more relevant. Essentially, the trainees were better able to relate training to what they had observed during the visit;
2. A mid-training field trip to Honduras by Honduran trainees. Instead of partaking in field trip activities in Costa Rica, these trainees were able to visit their potential future sites. This experience not only increased the relevance of the second half of their training but heightened their enthusiasm and dedication for service in Honduras;
3. The introduction of the "core curriculum." The new core curriculum which has recently been introduced at the CAT should be a distinct improvement, especially in the cross-cultural component, over what was being done before. The generic approach to cultural adaptation embodied in the core curriculum is in complete agreement with the overall generic approach which the team is recommending for the CAT;

4. The Peace Corps might consider a certain amount of flexibility between CAT and in-country pre-service training programs. For example, trainees could be sent to Costa Rica for a specified number of weeks to be trained in the technical, language and cross-cultural components. This would then be followed by further, but more specific, in-country training at the facility in the country of destination. Variations on this theme have been experimented with by Ecuador and Chile.

APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGY

APPENDIX A

METHODOLOGY

THE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Based on discussions with OPP/E and LAC staff, the purpose of the evaluation was defined differently than in the original statement of work. The team began with the assumption (reflecting policy decisions taken in Peace Corps/Washington) that the LAC region will continue to utilize a central (third country) model for pre-service agricultural training. Not only is Peace Corps committed to recruitment policies which anticipate that intensive skill training will be needed, but there has also been general satisfaction with the operations of the Central Agricultural Training (CAT) facility over the past several years.

From the team's perspective, the basic questions that the evaluation seeks to answer can be stated as follows:

- How successful is CAT training in preparing Peace Corps volunteers with the skills needed for their field assignments (performance);
- Are there problems with either the content or the methods of CAT pre-service training that influence eventual PCV performance; and
- In what ways can the overall Peace Corps training program be modified to enhance the probability that trainees will perform effectively in their roles as PCVs (effectiveness)?

Keeping these questions in mind, the team sought to allow the evaluation methodology to evolve during the first field visit. This option (rather than beginning the evaluation with a preconceived methodology) was selected in order that the team observe, first hand, the level, depth and comparability of the data available from the many and varied sources. This also allowed the team to identify and select the issue areas affecting training which could be addressed by practical and achievable recommendations.

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The original statement of work set forth a fairly elaborate design attempting to confirm the efficacy of centralized agricultural training versus individual in-country training. The statement of work then proceeded to outline how this would be done utilizing both a formative and a comparative study. The formative study was to have incorporated data collected at the training center in La Guacima, Costa Rica, from trainees, the training staff, records and archives of the center and interviews with the families with whom trainees live. The purpose of this segment of the evaluation was to have provided insights into improving the day-to-day operations of the center in order to better the skill attainment level of trainees. Additionally, during the formative study phase, data collection documents for the following comparative study were to have been tested and modified, using a sample of Costa Rican volunteers.

The comparative study, on the other hand, envisioned a data collection effort involving both CAT- and non-CAT-trained agricultural volunteers in Honduras, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic. The purpose of this effort was to have identified possible differences in volunteer performance which could be traced back to the training programs experienced by both groups. In addition to the volunteers interviewed, it was contemplated that the evaluation team would contact and interview host-country supervisors and/or co-workers and Peace Corps in-country program managers, as well as consulting records and files.

In further discussions between the DAI and OPP/E staffs involved in the methodological design, several alterations in the original scope of work were agreed upon based on the experience gained during the preliminary field visit. The first of these is that the opinions of both in-country staffs and volunteers have been fully incorporated into the formative recommendations for improving the central training model. This is a natural and logical outcome of the decision to de-emphasize the comparison of the central versus in-country models described above.

The second involves an attempt by the evaluation team to measure qualitatively the output of training and the general Peace Corps experience in terms of each volunteer's service. To this end the use of the terms volunteer performance and volunteer effectiveness were selected as theoretical constructs to be pursued. In the discussion prior to the first field visit it was decided that performance -- as determined by volunteer skill utilization, skill acquisition and relevant skill content -- would be a far more obtainable measure than effectiveness. The use of this latter measure would require a far more lengthy observational period of each volunteer's activities than could be afforded within the contract and would

be far more dependent on volunteer background, motivation, and Peace Corps programming than performance. Nevertheless, during the preliminary field visit, a feeling evolved that if the additional variables of motivation and programming were considered, the effectiveness issue could then be addressed. This was done during the second field trip and has been detailed as a separate issue area in the report.

A third insight which was brought out during the first field visit was that the original premise allowing for a comparison between CAT-trained agricultural volunteers and those not trained at the CAT was proven invalid. This was due to a lack of a comparable base in the areas of volunteer background, and the way in which specialists and generalists are treated by the Peace Corps in terms of training programs and job assignments. Non-CAT-trained volunteers working in agriculture have tended to be specialists in terms of their academic background and have been, for the most part, assumed competent in their skill areas. As such, their Peace Corps training has tended to include only the language and cross-cultural components and to be provided in-country. For programming purposes, the specialists also have tended to be placed in jobs far more narrowly defined and structured according to specific abilities of the volunteers. This, then, results in the effectiveness of these volunteers being far more dependent on programming than training.

As a fourth point, the original scope of work contemplated a far more quantitative approach to the evaluation than was found to be practical during the field visits. This is not to say that the data collected was not quantifiable, but rather that the amount is far less than that anticipated in the original Request for Proposals (RFP). The bulk of the data collected contains information related to respondent perceptions, opinions and recommendations which are far more appropriate in a narrative context than in a quantifiable one. Nevertheless, quantifiable data was collected and analyzed for 20 variables encompassing volunteer background, impressions of technical, language and cross-cultural training components, staging, evaluation/feedback process, training staff and job programs.

Finally, the original statement of work identified host-country nationals, counterparts, supervisors, agency personnel and the families with whom trainees live during training at the center as data sources for the purposes of the evaluation. During both the first and second field visits it was found that no volunteers had been assigned to work with counterparts in the strict sense of the word. Nevertheless, in a limited number of cases, volunteers did work under the supervision or with the guidance of either host-government supervisors or representatives. In these cases, an attempt was made by the team

to conduct interviews with these people. In the majority of cases they expressed a complete lack of knowledge as to the methodology, content, staff or materials used in training but rather preferred to comment on what they perceived to be the issues of effectiveness of the volunteers. These areas almost always included factors relating to human relations with supervisors and agency personnel and volunteer dress and personal behavior. The comments from these people have been integrated into the overall articulation of the team's findings and recommendations.

Concerning the families with whom the trainees are lodged, the team was unable to make contact. During the first field visit, preparations were being made to close down the center in La Guacima prior to its transfer to its present location in La Garita. Since the families stood to lose a significant portion of their incomes due to this move, it was decided by the team that it would not be the most appropriate time to conduct the interviews. By the time of the second field visit, the new training center had only been in operation for two weeks. It was decided at that time that the new families with whom the trainees were then living did not have the sufficient depth of information required to be useful. The decision was made to rule out their use as an information source.

THE DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY

For the evaluation, the team used a data collection methodology developed by DAI termed the "Process Collection Approach." For descriptive purposes, this approach can be looked at from its two component parts: The individual interviewing technique and the overall iterative method.

In preparing for the preliminary field visit, data collection guides were prepared for each of the designated data sources. Those guides list the areas for which it was believed that the sources would have responses including specific questions which were hoped would be answered. In practice, however, these guides were not filled out but rather the evaluators used them to form the framework for an informal, though structured, conversation with each respondent. This procedure gave the interviewer the flexibility to pursue those points not anticipated in the data guide and permitted the respondents to indicate their priorities by spending more or less time on a

particular subject. Throughout this discussion process the interviewer played the role of stimulator, director and guide in an attempt to get the richest data possible while making sure that all points on the data guide were covered.

Ideally, this process is carried out by two people (as was the case in almost all of the interviews during the first and second field trips), a primary interviewer who used the guide to ask the majority of the questions, and a recorder who wrote down the answers of the respondent. This second person not only allowed for an accurate transcription of the information, but also allowed for the recorder to pick up additional points that the primary interviewer might have overlooked, as well as providing time for the formulation of additional appropriate questions.

Two remaining aspects of the approach remain to be mentioned in order that its potential be maximized: the development of rapport with the respondent and the multi-disciplinary composition of team members. The first is necessary for the extraction of truthful and reliable data. It was achieved through the interviewers instilling in the respondent a feeling that they both understood and empathized with his or her situation. The interview environment was also often aided by a necessary level of informality throughout the interview process.

The multi-disciplinary composition of team members was important for both the collection and analytical aspects of the evaluation. By incorporating the skills and experience of two (or more) disciplines into the team structure the overall perspective of the evaluation was enhanced and broadened.

This interviewing technique formed the foundation of the overall process collection approach in an on-going effort to constantly enrich and sharpen the evaluation findings. In an iterative way, as the evaluation progressed, ideas and recommendations were formulated by the evaluation team. At the same time, these ideas were tested by re-interviewing (one or more times) key respondents (in the case of this evaluation, key people identified included the Training Center Director and Deputy, the five Country Directors, and their PTOs) as to the appropriateness of initial recommendations. Concurrently, the data collection guides were constantly revised to reflect the evolving and emerging recommendations.

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APPENDIX B

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

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The two following tables present, by country, (a) some of the background information on the volunteers and trainees who were interviewed by the team, and (b) volunteer and trainee perceptions of the various components of the training process.

The information is given in both number of respondents and in the percentage that those respondents formed of the whole group who responded to that question. Not all interviewees responded to all questions and, therefore, the totals for each question or country may not equal the total number of people interviewed.

The two questions labelled "Correspond" refer, in the first case, to the two preceding questions labelled "Training" and "Present Program," where it measures whether the training received corresponds to the present program in which the volunteer serves, and in the second case to "Training" and "Present Activity" and measures whether the training received corresponds to the volunteer's present principal activity whether program related or not.

APPENDIX B

Table 1

CAT VOLUNTEERS AND TRAINEES INTERVIEWED

	Costa Rica		Dominican Republic		Honduras		Guatemala		Ecuador		Total	
	Number of Responses	Pct.										
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND												
Non-Agricultural	6	50	18	66	12	75	3	27	21	84	60	68
Some Agricultural	5	41	6	33	3	19	8	73	4	16	26	29
High Agricultural	1	9	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	0	2	3
PRIOR AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE												
Much and Relevant	3	23	5	25	4	25	7	64	2	8	21	25
Some	3	23	3	15	5	31	2	18	0	0	13	15
Not Much Relevant	6	46	7	35	4	25	1	9	2	8	20	24
None	1	8	5	25	3	19	1	9	21	84	31	36
SPANISH												
Speaking Ability	2	18	7	32	4	27	2	18	6	24	21	25
Some (College)	1	10	3	14	5	33	0	0	8	32	17	20
Little (High School)	3	27	1	4	1	7	4	36	6	24	15	18
None	5	45	11	50	5	33	5	46	5	20	31	37
TRAINING												
Agricultural Research	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
School Gardens	7	54	5	21	13	76	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agricultural Extension - Crops	5	38	14	58	4	24	1	9	0	0	25	28
Agricultural Extension - Animals	1	8	5	21	0	0	3	27	25	100	49	54
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	64	0	0	9	10
PRESENT PROGRAM												
Agricultural Research	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
School Gardens	7	54	0	0	9	82	0	0	0	0	16	22
Agricultural Extension - Crops	5	38	5	36	2	18	0	0	22	96	34	47
Agricultural Extension - Animals	1	8	7	50	0	0	4	36	0	0	12	17
Miscellaneous	0	0	2	14	0	0	7	64	1	4	10	14
CORRESPOND												
Yes	13	100	9	64	10	91	8	73	21	100	61	85
No	0	0	5	36	1	9	3	27	1	0	10	15
PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY *												
Agricultural Research	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
School Gardens	7	54	0	0	8	73	0	0	0	0	15	21
Agricultural Extension - Crops	4	31	4	29	2	18	0	0	19	90	29	41
Agricultural Extension - Animals	1	7	8	57	0	0	4	36	0	0	13	19
Miscellaneous	1	8	2	14	1	9	7	64	2	10	13	19
CORRESPOND												
Yes	12	92	8	57	10	91	7	64	19	86	56	79
No	1	8	6	43	1	9	4	36	3	14	15	21

Table 1 (Continued)

	Costa Rica		Dominican Republic		Honduras		Guatemala		Ecuador		Total	
	Number of Responses	Pct.										
STAGING												
Comprehensive 2-3 days	5	100	14	100	6	100	7	88	20	95	52	96
Medical Administrative 1-2 days	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	12	1	5	2	4
CAST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Positive	0	0	5	38	3	60	3	38	7	35	18	35
Mixed	4	80	6	46	2	40	2	25	9	45	23	45
Negative	1	20	2	15	0	0	3	37	4	20	10	20
TECHNICAL METHODOLOGY AND CONTENT												
Positive	3	23	12	50	8	47	6	50	15	60	44	48
Mixed	6	46	9	38	6	35	4	33	10	40	35	38
Negative	4	31	3	12	3	18	2	17	0	0	12	14
LANGUAGE METHODOLOGY AND CONTENT												
Positive	7	54	8	36	12	71	8	73	16	66	51	59
Mixed	5	38	10	45	1	6	2	18	7	29	25	29
Negative	1	8	4	19	4	23	1	9	1	5	11	12
LIVE-IN												
Positive	5	56	18	86	10	77	6	67	20	87	31	66
Mixed	3	33	2	10	3	23	3	33	2	9	13	28
Negative	1	11	1	4	0	0	0	0	1	4	3	6
FIELD TRIPS												
Positive	9	75	12	86	6	43	5	45	8	35	40	54
Mixed	2	17	2	14	4	29	5	45	7	30	20	27
Negative	1	8	0	0	4	28	7	10	8	35	14	19
TRAINING ASSISTANTS												
Positive	1	100	14	100	4	100	9	100	5	42	33	83
Mixed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	8	1	3
Negative	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	50	6	14
CROSS-CULTURAL CLASSES												
Positive	2	18	1	6	2	18	1	9	4	13	10	13
Mixed	2	18	2	11	2	18	2	18	6	21	14	18
Negative	7	64	15	83	7	64	8	73	19	66	56	69
TECHNICAL STAFF												
Positive	5	45	12	52	12	75	8	73	15	79	52	65
Mixed	0	0	8	35	3	19	3	27	4	21	18	23
Negative	6	55	3	13	1	6	0	0	0	0	10	12
LANGUAGE STAFF												
Positive	9	82	10	50	6	38	6	55	19	90	50	63
Mixed	0	0	9	45	5	31	4	36	2	10	20	25
Negative	2	18	1	5	5	31	1	9	0	0	9	12

Table 1 (Continued)

	Costa Rica		Dominican Republic		Honduras		Guatemala		Ecuador		Total	
	Number of Responses	Pct.										
CROSS-CULTURAL STAFF												
Positive	4	40	1	7	3	25	4	44	8	40	20	30
Mixed	4	40	2	13	2	17	2	22	3	15	13	20
Negative	2	20	12	80	7	58	3	34	9	45	33	50
EVALUATION/FEEDBACK METHOD USED												
Positive	0	0	3	18	6	43	4	40	14	56	27	34
Mixed	3	23	2	17	2	14	2	20	7	28	16	20
Negative	10	77	12	71	6	43	4	40	4	16	36	46
EVALUATION/FEEDBACK PROCESS												
Positive	0	0	7	41	5	63	7	70	14	78	33	49
Mixed	3	37	1	6	3	37	2	20	3	17	12	20
Negative	5	63	9	53	0	0	1	10	1	5	16	31

Note: Total CAT volunteers interviewed was 73. Individual categories often do not sum to this number due to no opinion expressed on the issue. Percentages therefore reflect the number of responses and not the total sample.

APPENDIX B

Table 2

NON-CAT VOLUNTEERS AND TRAINEES INTERVIEWED

	Costa Rica		Dominican Republic		Honduras		Guatemala		Ecuador		Total	
	Number of Responses	Pct.										
EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND												
Non-Agricultural			1	100	3	100	5	36	2	29		
Some Agricultural			0	0	0	0	9	64	4	57		
High Agricultural			0	0	0	0	0	0	1	14		
PRIOR AGRICULTURAL EXPERIENCE												
Much and Relevant			0	0	0	0	6	48	2	29		
Less So			0	0	0	0	5	36	2	29		
Not Much Relevant			0	0	0	0	1	7	1	14		
None			1	100	3	100	2	15	2	29		
PRIOR SPANISH												
Much			0	0	2	67	0	0	3	43		
Some			0	0	0	0	3	21	0	0		
Little			0	0	0	0	4	28	1	14		
None			1	100	1	33	7	50	3	43		
TRAINED AS												
Agricultural Research			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
School Gardens			0	0	0	0	2	15	0	0		
Agricultural Extension - Crops			0	0	0	0	0	0	2	29		
Agricultural Extension - Animals			0	0	0	0	4	29	0	0		
Miscellaneous			1	100	3	100	8	56	5	71		
PRESENT PROGRAM												
Agricultural Research			0	0	0	0	2	25	0	0		
School Gardens			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Agricultural Extension - Crops			0	0	0	0	0	0	3	43		
Agricultural Extension - Animals			0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0		
Miscellaneous			1	100	2	67	6	75	4	57		
CORRESPOND												
Yes			1	100	1	33	4	50	5	71		
No			0	0	2	66	4	50	1	14		
PRINCIPAL ACTIVITY												
Agricultural Research			0	0	0	0	2	25	0	0		
School Gardens			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Agricultural Extension - Crops			0	0	0	0	0	0	3	43		
Agricultural Extension - Animals			0	0	1	33	0	0	0	0		
Miscellaneous			1	100	2	67	6	75	4	57		
CORRESPOND												
Yes			1	100	2	66	6	75	5	71		
No			0	0	1	33	2	25	1	14		

Table 2 (Continued)

	<u>Costa Rica</u>		<u>Dominican Republic</u>		<u>Honduras</u>		<u>Guatemala</u>		<u>Ecuador</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Pct.</u>										
STAGING												
Comprehensive			0	0	0	0	12	86	3	43		
Medical/Administrative			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
CAST			0	0	0	0	2	14	0	0		
Positive			0	0	0	0	3	21	1	14		
Mixed			0	0	0	0	6	43	1	14		
Negative			0	0	0	0	4	29	1	14		
TECHNICAL METHODOLOGY/CONTENT												
Positive							6	43				
Mixed							4	29				
Negative							3	21				
LANGUAGE METHODOLOGY/CONTENT												
Positive							10	72				
Mixed							3	21				
Negative							0	0				
CROSS-CULTURAL LIVE-IN												
Positive							8	57				
Mixed							5	36				
Negative							0	0				
CROSS-CULTURAL FIELD TRIPS												
Positive							5	36				
Mixed							6	43				
Negative							1	7				
CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING ASSISTANTS												
Positive							2	14				
Mixed							0	0				
Negative							0	0				
CROSS-CULTURAL CLASSES												
Positive							3	21				
Mixed							4	29				
Negative							4	29				
TECHNICAL TRAINING STAFF												
Positive							7	50				
Mixed							0	0				
Negative							5	36				
LANGUAGE TRAINING STAFF												
Positive							7	50				
Mixed							4	29				
Negative							0	0				

Table 2 (Continued)

	<u>Costa Rica</u>		<u>Dominican Republic</u>		<u>Honduras</u>		<u>Guatemala</u>		<u>Ecuador</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Pct.</u>										
CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING STAFF												
Positive												
Mixed							2	14				
Negative							5	36				
							3	21				
EVALUATION/FEEDBACK METHOD USED												
Positive												
Mixed							6	43				
Negative							1	7				
							4	29				
EVALUATION/FEEDBACK PROCESS												
Positive												
Mixed												
Negative							6	43				
							0	0				
							2	14				

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APPENDIX C

THE PEOPLE CONTACTED: NUMBERS AND DISTRIBUTION

APPENDIX C

THE PEOPLE CONTACTED: NUMBERS AND DISTRIBUTION

In addition to the methodological changes to the original scope of work, changes were also made in the number and sequence of countries visited and people interviewed.

During the first field visit to the training center, an attempt was made to interview all trainees and training staff members. This involved 27 trainees in four cycles (including trainees who have since arrived in the Dominican Republic and who were re-interviewed during the second field visit to ascertain changed perceptions), four administrative staff members, six technical staff members, and six language instructors.

Interviewed in Costa Rica were four in-country staff members, 13 agricultural volunteers (all trained at CAT), and one host-government official. In Honduras, five in-country staff members were interviewed, 14 agricultural volunteers (11 CAT, three non-CAT), and two host country representatives.

During the second field trip, the countries of Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Guatemala were visited. The team also returned to Costa Rica to continue the iterative process of the evaluation with the training staff. In Ecuador, 27 volunteers were interviewed (20 CAT and seven non-CAT), four country staff members, and two host-country officials. In the Dominican Republic, the following people were interviewed: 21 volunteers (18 CAT and three non-CAT), and three country staff members. In Guatemala, the numbers were 19 volunteers (11 CAT and eight non-CAT), six trainees at the Guatemalan Training Center, five country staff, and four host-country officials.

Additionally, throughout the development of the methodology, and the write-up of the preliminary and final reports, both Peace Corps/Washington and CHP/Elgin staffs were interviewed and briefed on several occasions.

Following is a country-by-country and category-by-category list of the people interviewed.

CAT TRAINED VOLUNTEERS AND TRAINEES

Ecuador

Jim Boone
 John Abramowitz
 Mildred Warner
 Steve Bloomfield
 Keith Pervatt*
 Martin Swartz*
 Lawrence Ley*
 John Sebo
 Michelle Macomber
 Tom Eberhart
 Bill Schroeder
 Jonathan Wyland
 Alan Reed
 Scott Wilson
 Donna Madonna
 Megan Hughes
 Jim Fisher
 Margaret Vamosy
 Randy Hasterberg
 Robert Dewaelsche

Honduras

Barbara Blackstone
 David Blackstone
 Steve Hoffman
 Joseph Arcoles
 Charles Rose
 Brian Lee
 Philip Scholz
 Douglas Metz
 Raymond Prado
 Neal Fredericks
 Wilbur Wertz
 Madlyn Wholman
 Scott Hipp
 Martha Little
 Craig Kallsen
 Matthew Miller

Costa Rica

Carlos Hill
 Keith Smith
 Keith Murray
 Matt Romanelli
 Kristen Johnsrud
 Frederick Sassone
 Debra Lefferts
 James Clements
 Dana Hamm
 Gary Wessel
 Felipe Faucett III
 Tim Duppler
 Nancy Concklin

Dominican Republic

Shushan Vetzmadian
 David Winter*
 Jennifer Allen
 Milton Ashby
 Paul Alfieri*
 David Jaeger*
 Robert Condry
 Leslie Jordan
 Miranda Sanborn
 Aaron Backman*
 Joseph Hunnings
 Lynn Myers
 Anthony Falcone
 David Wilmott
 Lauren Goertz
 James Schmelzer
 John Curtis
 John Graham
 Linda Toso
 Alan Rees
 Ginette Gillis
 Judie Jardine
 Richard Smith
 Wanda Hunnings

Guatemala

Susan Watt
 Dennis Bobilya
 Mark Newbrough
 Raul Tuazon
 Carl Shattenberg
 Chris Nill
 Cindy Dixon
 Chris Nurre
 Marcello Martinez
 Ronny Diaz
 Jeff Philpott

Chile

Herbert Power
 John Kennedy
 Ruth Beckett
 Barbara Fisher
 Denise Wescott
 Brian Wescott
 Brian Richmond
 Richard Shaw
 Terry Hannigan

* Interviewed while in training in Costa Rica and as volunteers in-country.

NON-CAT VOLUNTEERS AND TRAINEES

Ecuador

Sean O'Brien
Jeff Kent
Charlie Putnam
Leon Weber
Louisa Weber
Billy O'Keefe
David Hornberger

Honduras

Mickey Marcos
Paul White
Katherine White

Guatemala

Tom Dykes
Cynthia Dykes
Roger Coupal
Tony Moore
Jeff Ward
Gene Barickman
Bill Buchin
Matthew Perl
Dale Rutts
Ed Laurich
Alfred Abbott
Mitch Auerbach
John Burke
Dana Toussant

Dominican Republic

Arden Anderson
Brent Mitchell
Jeffrey Kutler

PEACE CORPS STAFFS

Costa Rica

Guido del Prado
Karen Mitchell
Juan Coward
Eduardo Zuniga

Honduras

John Salazar
Marcas Fonseca
Sara Goodwyn
Nick Metes
Douglas Metz

Peace Corps/Washington

Bill Reese
Whett Reed

Guatemala

Magdaleno Rose-Avilas
Carolyn Rose-Avilas
David Coronado
Bob Crites
Jose Albizurez

Ecuador

Dave Joslyn
Jim Graham
Tomas Guerreo
Jorge Landivar

Dominican Republic

Steve Honore
Dean Putnam
Angel Ripol

HOST COUNTRY AGENCY INTERVIEWS

Ecuador

Pedro Carrillo
Lucio Cadena
Two informal interviews

Honduras

Dorotea Peralta
Neto Mendoza

Costa Rica

Jose Luis Campo

Guatemala

Rodolfo Guzman
Hector Garcia
John Mosher
Ricardo del Valle

TRAINING STAFF INTERVIEWS

CAT Training Staff

Neal Dingott
Tom Gardiner
Marcos Rojas
John Osborne
Diane Apel
Kate Raftery
Dean Armstrong
Jorge Obando
Jose Maria Gomez
Alfonso Tujah
Mario Flores
Elisa Piedra
Rita Salas
Bertalia Castro
Nuria Zumbo
Rosemary Valentine

CHP Guatemala Training Staff

Terry Osborne
Luis Amitia
Dennis Wheeler
Francisco de Leon Avila
Delfino Reimer

Dominican Republic Training Staff

John Seibel

INTERVIEWS COMPLETED*

	CAT Volunteers	CAT Trainees	Non-CAT Volunteers	Non-CAT Trainees	P. C. Country Staff	Host-Country Agency	Training Staff	TOTAL
COSTA RICA	13	0	0	0	4	1	16	34
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	18	10	3	0	3	0	1	35
ECUADOR	20	3	7	0	4	4	0	38
GUATEMALA	11	0	8	6	5	4	5	39
HONDURAS	11	5	3	3	5	2	0	29
TOTAL	73	18	21	9	21	11	22	175

* Some respondents were interviewed once as a trainee early in the evaluation and later as volunteers.

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