

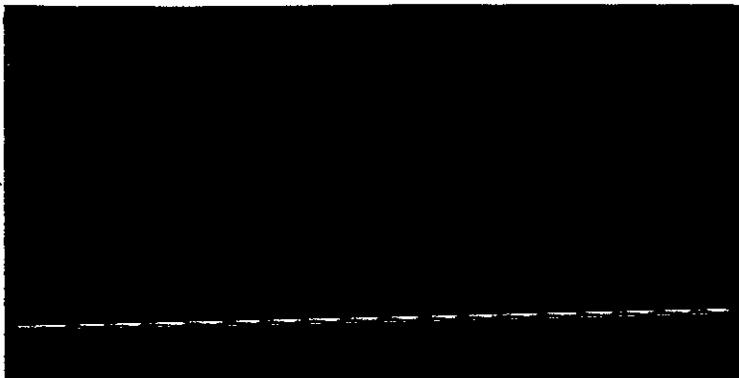
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NUTRITION ECONOMICS GROUP

The Nutrition Economics Group was created in 1977 with funding from AID under Project 931 "Nutrition: Economic Analysis of Agricultural Policies". The Group's full-time staff of economists and other social scientists is available to assist AID and developing country agricultural planners and analysts develop, implement and evaluate their food and nutrition programs and to evaluate the impacts of their agricultural policies and programs on people's food consumption and nutrition. With its location within the Technical Assistance Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Group is able to draw upon a wide variety of other agricultural specialists to complement its work.

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AID AGRICULTURE AND NUTRITION POLICY:
INTEGRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE POLICY
AT THE AGRICULTURAL PROJECT LEVEL

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SUMMARY

The Agency for International Development (AID) has translated U.S. foreign assistance policy into action through its own policy guidelines based on changing foreign policy. Current foreign policy guidelines have been integrated into a new series of sectoral policy papers for guidance of AID entities worldwide. Two policy papers entitled "Nutrition" and "Food and Agricultural Development" were among the first of these papers to be released in 1982 by the Bureau for Policy and Program Coordination (PPC) in AID. To provide a methodology for implementing policy the Bureau of Science and Technology, Office of Nutrition (S & T/N) subsequently produced a draft paper on "Nutrition Strategies."

The policy in the policy papers, prepared with input from throughout AID/Washington, is AID policy articulated in the ideal mode. Actual policy is the result of how functioning entities including the missions perceive and implement policy goals. There is a widely-recognized lack of spirit of common endeavor between AID/Washington and the missions which exaggerates constraints between ideal and actual policies. In order of function more efficiently, missions attempt to anticipate and propose programs which implement the tacit priorities of AID/W. In so doing, a mission must interpret Washington policy and implement its own program in the light of that interpretation.

The Nutrition policy paper proposes an integrated and ambitious approach to development in line with foreign assistance policy. The four major elements are:

- 1) The development of human resources and institutional capabilities to carry on development including training, research, planning and analysis.
- 2) The improvement of host country policies by using AID resources for leverage in a policy dialogue remove constraints on productivity and the free functioning of market economies.
- 3) The employment of an integrated approach to development using all assistance, including food aid.
- 4) The expansion of the use of the LDC private sector in development activities and the U.S. private sector in technical assistance.

The Nutrition and the Food and Agriculture Development papers plus the draft paper on Nutrition Strategies provide field officers with a comprehensive overview of the linkages between nutrition and development as well as policy guidelines. However, due to the lack of familiarity with these issues of most field officers, this package of policy and methodology does not provide sufficient guidelines for an agency-wide systematic approach to integrating nutrition concerns into agricultural projects. In addition, both policy papers must be read in order to obtain a complete overview of how Nutrition policy applies to agricultural projects.

This paper recommends the development of a series of workshops to train mission personnel in incorporating nutrition concerns into their sectoral projects. These workshops should not be limited to agriculture and rural development officers but should include health, population,

nutrition, and education officers as well to ensure an integrated mission strategy. As part of the workshop effort AID should prepare two papers. The first would incorporate the contents of the Nutrition and Food and Agriculture policy paper (or other sectoral policy paper) into a concise statement of the role of nutrition policies in the design, implementation and evaluation of agricultural projects. The second paper, would give step by step guidelines for nutrition-oriented project activities targeted at overcoming those constraints cited in each of the four models developed in the draft paper on nutrition strategies.

In the general category of overall AID policy implementation, this paper recommends strengthening AID/Washington-mission ties by involving the missions to a greater extent in policy development.

- o Policymakers should have mission experience.
- o As a matter of procedure, mission input on policy formulation should be solicited to ensure applicability and appropriateness.

Policy implementation is limited by staffing and budgeting constraints and by an incentive system which may be inconsistent with agency goals. It is important that missions' staff receive the necessary training to carry out AID policy. The paper recommends a serious review of the incentive system be undertaken with a view to adjusting mission evaluation criteria to emphasize project success.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AID	- -	Agency for International Development
ADO	- -	Agricultural Development Officer
CDSS	- -	Country Development Strategy Statement
FAA	- -	Foreign Assistance Act
LDC	- -	Less Developed Country
PL480	- -	Public Law 480: Food Aid Titles I, II, III
PPC	- -	Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination
PVO	- -	Private Voluntary Organization
RDO	- -	Rural Development Officer
S&T/N	- -	Bureau for Science and Technology, Office of Nutrition

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to briefly examine and analyze U.S. Foreign Assistance Policy as carried out by the Agency for International Development (AID) in integrating nutrition/food consumption concerns into agricultural projects. In particular the paper will examine the scope of attempts at such integration and review the strategic feasibility of AID policy statements in the AID Policy Paper: Nutrition (May, 1982), the AID Policy Paper: Food and Agriculture (May, 1982) and the methodologies suggested in the draft Nutrition Strategies (June, 1983). This paper sets the stage for a larger study which will examine AID's field record for integrating nutrition concerns into agricultural projects. An outcome of the overall study will be a list of strategies for future attempts to integrate nutrition concerns into project design, implementation and evaluation. Through an analysis of current AID policy put in its historic and dynamic context, this paper will serve as a springboard for the development of this list of strategies. At the same time, through policy analysis the soundness and applicability of current nutrition policy will be discussed.

The paper combined a literature search with a series of interviews conducted in the context of the larger study with current and former AID personnel. Interviewees included employees of central and regional bureaus, former mission directors and other current and former AID employees. In addition, informal conversations with AID and USDA personnel and the author's experience of working closely with, but not in, an AID mission, helped provide important insights and anecdotes. The

two most relevant AID policy papers, Nutrition and Food and Agriculture, (May, 1982), and the draft nutrition strategy paper provided both the policy statements and the methodology to carry out the policy. A literature search was conducted of AID documents, various books, and Congressional documents concerning AID's institutional history and track record.

2. The Historical Context

By examining the history of AID's policy since the inception of U.S. aid to developing countries, we can better understand how current AID policy is being formulated. Since the end of the Second World War, development theory, scope and methodology accepted by the U.S. Government has substantially changed. New approaches to how to create broader-based growth have been put forth periodically. Some of these ideas eventually have become a part of foreign assistance policy. A variety of factors played a role in such policy formulation, including the political perspective of the executive branch, American public opinion and Congressional attitudes on the world economic and political situation. A review of foreign aid policy in a historical context is helpful in understanding current directions of policy.

Thomas Loeber theorized that foreign aid "may not have been born if World War II had not taken place." (Loeber, 1961: 7) The need to rebuild a war-ravaged Europe and a severely depressed world economy combined with the threat of communist expansion spurred the United States to institute and carry through a massive foreign aid program. As Europe

was revitalized the international communist revolution sought to attract support in the less-developed countries through economic and military assistance. The U.S. also began giving assistance, although some analysts feel that it may have been given even without the communist threat on moral or economic grounds. American foreign assistance found its original justification in economic, altruistic and security terms. In 1959, Eisenhower supported the programs of the International Cooperation Administration, then the major arm of economic assistance by reasoning, "If we are wise we will consider it not as a cost but as an investment--an investment in our present safety, in our future strength and growth and in the growth of freedom throughout the world." (Loeber, 1961: 11) In 1961, under the Kennedy Administration, the legislation which established the Agency for International Development echoed this reasoning, stating "that economic growth and political democracy can go hand in hand to the end that an enlarged community of free, stable and self-reliant countries can reduce world tension and insecurity." (FAA, 1916: 470)

The Foreign Assistance Act (FAA) of 1961 specified the recipients of American aid would be free countries and peoples (e.g., non-communist and/or pro-democratic). (FAA, 1961: 471) The logic of the Act was that foreign assistance would lead to the "creation of an environment in which the energies of the peoples of the world can be devoted to constructive purposes, free from pressure and erosion by the adversaries of freedom." (FAA, 1961: 471) The security issue was a high priority in the justification of the Act, illustrated by specific mention of the

North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other regional protection groups as significant contributors to economic growth. (FAA, 1961: 483)

The FAA of 1961 specified the business-promotion and moral functions of foreign aid, making provisions to "facilitate and increase the participation of private enterprise in furthering the development of the economic resources and productive capacities of less-developed friendly countries . . ." (FAA, 1961: 475) Private enterprise was encouraged to play a role in the international growth process by a combination of provisions for investment guarantees provided by the U.S. government and other financial incentives. The FAA of 1961 articulated important altruistic goals to help "friendly countries . . . to improve their living standards, to realize their aspirations for justice, education, dignity and respect as individual human beings and to establish responsible governments." (FAA, 1961: 470) It also included provisions for military assistance to friendly countries for "internal security, (and) legitimate self-defense." (FAA, 1961: 483)

The FAA of 1961 reflects the post-World War II theory that economic improvement is "based on the principle that a high rate of investment would produce rapid growth." (Sewell, 1977: 5) These provisions tend to be infrastructural or loan-oriented. Specific provisions of the Act included establishment of a development loan fund for major investments as well as provision for development grants and technical assistance in education, health, agriculture and the development of programs promoting atomic energy (Atoms for Peace). The hope for rapid economic takeoff was implied. The overall emphasis of the Act was on assistance to the

LDC's on a large scale with the implicit assumption that economic benefits will accrue to the poor as the entire economy grows.

During the next decade it became apparent that the idea that well-being of target populations could be quickly and substantially improved by major investments, had to be seriously reconsidered. Allegations of fraud, waste and misuse of funds by recipient governments focused a great deal of public attention on developing legislative guidance to prevent recurrence. The well-publicized corruption of the Vietnamese and Cambodian governments put tremendous pressure on Congress to modify AID's program to eliminate such abuse. As a result, the Nixon Administration began looking for a new approach to development that would be more effective at reaching needs of LDCs and avoiding corruption, even after substantial budget cuts. Its proposals centered around linking assistance to host government counterpart investments and initiative in development areas, e.g., LDC initiative in agriculture would precede agriculture assistance. (Clark, 1972: 11) Therefore, U.S. foreign aid entered into a phase where activities were viewed as mutual responsibilities of the two governments.

The lack of public support for international activities meant that AID was required to perform its functions with reduced resources. Since graft and misuse had become a public issue, there was the need to develop programs and procedures which would insure the planning of projects and activities which had sound financial management and broad positive social impact, resulting in broad-based economic and social development in AID-assisted countries. The hope for overnight economic takeoff in

LDCs assisted by the U.S. was finally rejected and replaced with the hard reality that social and economic change would take time and mutual commitment.

At the same time, nations of the "Third World" bloc began to develop a sense of political unity and began to demand changes which they hoped would lead to new economic order in which they would be treated more fairly. (Sewell, 1977: 11) An OPEC-initiated oil embargo caused the world energy crises of 1973-74 and brought home to the American public and government that these formerly economically insignificant countries indeed had strong economic weapons. These actions served to intensify negative American public opinion on international assistance. The U.S. Government quickly cut assistance to boycotting countries.

The adversarial economic tactics spread to many friendly LDC's. To reduce the chance of additional boycotts, U.S. foreign assistance to friendly countries was regularly reviewed with the purpose of creating stronger economic ties between the U.S. and LDCs.

The New Directions of 1973 reflected this new strategy for dealing with LDCs. They represented a significant shift in AID's approach to development. This new methodology was not unique to AID. Holland, Sweden, and Great Britain developed similar programs at about the same time reflecting the donor community's concern. (Rothko, 1977: 81) AID's presentation to Congress "Implementation of the New Directions" (1975), by John E. Murphy, then Deputy Administrator of Aid, succinctly highlights the major thrust of the 1973 Foreign Assistance Act. AID proposed assistance in food (agriculture and rural development), nutrition,

population, health, education and human resource development. "Projects and programs are especially directed toward reaching the poor majority within the populations of these nations." (AID, 1975: 3) Private and voluntary organizations (PVOs) were singled out for recognition as "increasingly active . . . in planning, implementing and evaluating development programs . . ." Participation by women in development activities was identified as a condition leading to improved efficiency of assistance efforts in reaching the poor majority. Indeed, the New Directions programs emphasized involving the poor "as active participants in the development process itself, avoiding any suggestion of handout." (AID, 1975: 3)

The new program, conceived and put in place under the Nixon Administration, attempted to get at the LDCs' national economic problems by addressing acute economic problems of the "poorest of the poor," providing a more integrated, multisectoral and cooperative approach to improving economic conditions in friendly LDCs. On the surface the New Directions may seem to have stressed altruistic reasons for development. However, provisions were clearly made for benefits to American private enterprise, specifically requiring the use of PVOs and American-made goods and services. The rationale for foreign aid included the security issue. Its premise was that a healthy economy would provide a secure political system which, in turn, would provide the U.S. with an ally.

In the past eight years AID has continued to operate with reduced real resources, to maintain friendly relations with LDCs, and to come under attack from the American public. The Iranian hostage situation

added to the negative U.S. public opinion about foreign aid, bringing it to the attention of even the normally apathetic citizen. A series of domestic recessions reinforced doubts of Americans on the wisdom of spending their dollars on overseas programs when there were unresolved problems at home.

Justification of continued U.S. foreign assistance programs under the Carter Administration tended to stress America's obligation to assist the world toward fair treatment of all citizens, as manifest in Carter's human rights stand. The current administration has tended to stress assistance to and via the private sector, with the resulting business benefits and national security as principle justifications of continued foreign assistance. Current policy reasserts the principles of host government leadership and participation in development. It stresses institution-building and human resource development as a prerequisite to sustained growth without continued U.S. aid. It also demands ongoing discussion of economic and social policies between AID missions and the host governments, especially in matters where national interests diverge.

AID's current policy is exemplified by remarks made by M. Peter McPherson, AID Administrator, to the International Development Conference on May 18, 1983. "The bottleneck in the development is almost always the lack of trained people, good institutions and appropriate technology." The implication of this policy is that by improving human resources and institutional capabilities through AID assistance, a better trained administratively more efficient host

government can solve many of its own problems. McPherson's speech contains an implicit warning to LDCs to rely less on donors and more on their own resources. This sentiment can be traced back to the premise that the will of the host government is necessary to successful development articulated in the New Directions strategy. The concept of a policy dialogue is one means by which host governments can show AID their willingness to be committed to efforts with their own resources.

Current AID policy has stressed the importance of free enterprise and the private sector in development. In the speech cited above, McPherson referred to the lack of success of parastatal mechanisms for carrying out development, remarking, "how long can the poor of the world endure the inefficiency of statism?"

Another reason for stressing the private sector is that using it can convey economic benefits to the United States in the form of new markets for our products. This policy is very pragmatic for the U.S. from three standpoints: first, it brings the private sector into the development fold reducing pressure by American business to use development energies elsewhere; second, it can ultimately reduce the annual budget expenditure for AID if those expenditures are born by the business community; third, it builds LDC economies based on free market enterprise, supporting a world system of interdependent marketing practices.

3. Current Foreign Assistance Policy and Examples of AID Implementation

The U.S. Government foreign assistance policy as stated in current policy papers emphasizes four interrelated elements as points of

departure in achieving agriculture and food consumption goals. The following is a summary statement of these four elements with examples from those nutrition and agricultural strategies employed to carry them out.

1. The development of human resources and institutional capabilities to carry on development including training, research, planning and analysis. Agriculture and nutrition activities which are consistent with this policy include the training of AID rural development officers (RDOs) and agricultural development officers (ADOs) in techniques for incorporating nutritional goals into agricultural projects, building university curricula and staff in LDCs to promote a better understanding of food production, food consumption, nutrition and linkages among them, building government institutions in LDCs including ministries, to increase their capacities to successfully carry out nutritionally sound agricultural and rural development programs, as well as nutrition planning and projects in the health and nutrition areas, long-term training of LDC officials in various disciplines, and training in monitoring of nutritional status and other indicators through baseline and subsequent surveys of LDC officials.

2. The improvement of host country policies by using AID resources for leverage in a policy dialogue to remove constraints on productivity and the free functioning of market economies. In the agriculture and nutrition areas, this has included preparation of reviews and studies of LDC environmental, pricing and marketing

policies. See discussion of food aid's role in policy dialogue below.

3. The employment of an integrated approach to development using all assistance, including food aid. Food aid (P.L. 480) has been used in dialogue to encourage LDC governments to promote development goals with currencies generated by sale of commodities, to fund studies of food and agricultural policies and to encourage improvement of policy climates for development ends in LDCs. The integrated approach has included such activities as systematic analysis and forecasting in agricultural development projects.

4. The expansion of the use of the LDC private sector in development activities and the U.S. private sector in technical assistance. The LDCs private sectors can be better used as key mechanisms for development. The U.S. private sector, including large manufacturing and food processing corporations, have been occasionally assisting LDC counterparts and undertaking projects in their areas of expertise, although universities and consulting firms have for some time played an important role in project design, implementation and evaluation.

4. Agriculture and Nutrition Policy Responses to Current Foreign Assistance Policy

In 1982 a series of policy papers including those cited below were produced by AID's Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC). Following AID's usual procedures, PPC circulated the papers throughout

AID for comments: "The comments, both pro and con, are shared and presented to the AID Administrator and Senior Staff." (Hullander, 1983: 33) The policy papers are the articulation of AID/Washington policy, although de facto policy occurs at the implementation level: the AID mission. Two key policy papers, Nutrition and Food and Agricultural Development were among the first released in May 1982, as a part of an attempt to inform AID staff on the content and direction of current policies.

The four foreign assistance policy elements listed above are clearly reflected in the nutrition and food and agricultural development papers' articulation of the interface between agriculture and nutrition. The two papers cited above provide policy guidelines aimed at integrating nutrition/food consumption impacts in agriculture, rural development, education and health sector projects. The nutrition paper specifically identifies project-level interventions as the best strategy for achieving positive nutritional impacts. The two papers taken together provide AID's field officers with the basic policy emphasis that nutrition should be incorporated into agriculture projects. Although interviews with ADOs and RDOs suggested that the papers did not give them concrete marching orders for guidance in specific work-related tasks, the papers do stress the importance of cooperation between agriculture, health, education, and population officers working to design projects to maximize positive nutritional impacts. According to the papers, such project level intervention should reach those members of the population with the most acute nutritional problems. Moreover, the

policy argues, projects are better able to deal with diverse cultural norms and economic conditions than national level programs. Another reason for this approach is that it simplifies the targeting process since it is AID's "policy . . . to target sectoral projects whenever feasible to households and individuals at risk of developing nutritional problems." developing nutritional problems." (AID, 1982: 8)

4.1 Human Resource Development and Institution Building

In its discussion of human resource development and institution building, the nutrition paper emphasizes the importance of project monitoring and evaluation as a means of recording and responding to project impacts on nutrition. Monitoring and evaluation, as well as project analysis and agricultural research, require training at both the grass roots and technical levels. Promoting schooling as "an important avenue for improving nutrition" for school children, the paper also proposes that "efforts should be made to extend nutrition education to the rest of the family through non-formal education, mass media and community demonstrations." (p: 8)

In support of advanced training for LDC leaders, the paper reasons that: "If AID's efforts in nutrition are to become self-sustaining, the countries must have a local capacity to assume responsibility for problem analysis and program implementation." (p: 8)

Advanced training, especially using short courses highly focused on program-related issues in agriculture, nutrition and policy, is a current part of AID's approach to human resource development and

institution building. Professionals and government officials are usually selected to participate since they are the policy formulators in host countries. Therefore, AID policy supports training which targets government officials, development professionals, scientists and other recipients of economic assistance particularly at the project level.

4.2 Research

The policy paper on nutrition mentions that "agricultural research should address the food consumption patterns of risk groups and recognize their technological and capital constraints." (p: 6) It goes on to propose that greater nutritional benefits are more likely to accrue from research to improve productivity, reliability and food processing characteristics of crops than from genetic improvements of the nutritional content of crops. (p: 8) This policy reflects the fact that the record of high technology or high input crops in LDC's has often been poor due to the inappropriateness of the technology to local conditions and the lack of available inputs such as fertilizer, water, and insecticides at cost-effective prices. The research on genetic improvement has had mixed results as well. Some "improved" crops have had different taste or storage qualities causing consumers to be dissatisfied. Some genetic research, however, may be indicated, especially in "research on basic food crops like cassava and millet" . . . with the purpose of getting the most nutritional value out of familiar crops. Research such as that carried out by the University of Florida Farming Systems Research Project leading to more efficient multi-cropping of

basic food crops shows a great potential for accomplishing policy objectives articulated in the policy paper.

4.3 Institution Building

AID policy in food and agriculture is to give priority "to assisting countries to develop and/or strengthen private and public institutions dealing with the host of technical, administrative, economic and social problems constraining increased and more efficient food agricultural production, marketing and consumption." (AID, 1982b: 4) Although such assistance is usually long term and requires human development in the form of training, both in country and overseas, this approach has great potential for enduring impact. According to AID's food and agriculture policy paper, "Missions must provide a sufficiently long-term assessment of how AID and other resources will be utilized to improve institutional capacities . . ." (p: 4) In order to contribute to a growing agriculture sector improved institutions, "give a country the capacity (1) to generate and apply a continuing stream of innovations designed to increase agricultural productivity and incomes and (2) to evaluate and adapt technologies transferred from developed countries and international institutions." (p: 4)

The work of the LDC agricultural institutions, according to the paper, "should be guided by sound economic policy environment which reflects market forces." (pp: 4-5) The paper says that a healthy private sector is necessary for the ultimate success of agriculture institutions. The paper has skillfully brought together three of the four

elements of foreign assistance policy to accurately reflect that policy and provide clear guidelines to the field.

Institution building and human resource development includes agricultural research carried out by U.S. universities, other U.S. Government agencies, agribusinesses, cooperatives and PVOs. In compliance with the foreign assistance policy element of an integrated approach, the paper calls for an interdisciplinary research thrust including social scientists and physical and biological scientists from both the host government and the U.S. performing "applied research . . . to develop individual and institutional capabilities intended to increase the productivities and incomes of the broad majority of rural producers." (p: 5) Private sector research is specifically encouraged.

The food and agriculture policy paper stresses that "adequate human resources development is essential if food and agriculture institutions are to be effective." (p: 5) Training will take place both locally, in the United States and in third countries and will include scientists, extension agents, farmers, skilled agriculturalists and nutritionists. Of particular concern to the paper "is the special role of women, . . . as agriculture producers, workers and family food providers." (p: 5)

4.4 Policy Dialogue

AID's policy, according to the nutrition policy paper, is to incorporate nutrition in program and project design. (AID, 1982a: 4) To carry out this policy, the U.S. proposes to engage host governments in policy dialogue, even though nutrition may not be a high host government

priority. The nutrition policy paper says: "National agricultural planners and policymakers should consider the effects of food and agricultural policies on regional and local food supplies, producer price stability and food consumption, especially by at-risk food groups." (p: 10) Agriculture projects which integrate nutrition strategies can provide the mission and host government with the data needed to ensure efficient and equitable food policy. The mission's task is to convey the importance of food and agriculture policy reform for host country development. P.L. 480 Titles I and III are cited as leverage that "can be used to support and encourage good development policies." (p: 10)

According to the food and agricultural development paper the appropriate agriculture policy framework for developing countries is one that "relies largely on free market, the provision of adequate production incentives and the provision of equitable access to resources; and gives sufficient priority to complementary public sector investments . . . that . . . complement and encourage rather than compete with healthy private sector growth." (p: 3) Analysis of national policies that hamper agricultural growth will be concentrated "in those countries where an appropriate policy framework already exists or where there is commitment to improvement." (p:3) Policy dialogue with host governments will provide the forum for discussions aimed at overcoming policy constraints. The paper recognizes the need to train host country personnel in conducting policy analysis and planning.

The food and agriculture paper promotes policies for improving the quantity and quality of food consumption, by effectively integrating the

implications of nutritional problems and practices into design, implementation and evaluation of projects and programs. (AID, 1982b: 4) Project and program areas specifically mentioned for concentration by the paper include planning and policy analysis, research, training, marketing, food aid and food security. The strongest statement on nutrition in the project framework comes not from the nutrition paper but from the food and agriculture paper.

Implicit in the above discussion is the possible reluctance of host governments to include nutrition interventions in the projects of other sectors. Food aid projects under P.L. 480 can be the means of leverage to assist in swaying host governments to change poor policies or to institute needed policy reforms. In some countries these policies may be politically motivated, catering to urban elites (through food subsidies) and other political power sources (policies that favor specific regions). Other host governments may question the use of precious resources for interventions that have little visible results. Based on field observations and interviews with field personnel, it appears that the newness of integrating nutrition into sectoral projects may be questioned by even the most progressive of governments. It is very important that the missions fully understand the implications of integrating nutrition into projects in order to be convincing during policy dialogue with the host government.

4.5 Integrated Approach

Foreign assistance policy stresses the importance of an integrated approach to development specifically citing food aid as an important part of this diversified approach. Implementation of AID's nutrition policy, in itself, is a test of the foreign assistance policy of integration. The nutrition paper calls for reduction of undernutrition in target groups through project impacts in five distinct areas: health, education, population, rural development and agriculture. To facilitate nutrition policy implementation by non-nutritionist field staff, the paper asserts that "It is essential that missions make the best use of outside technical experts and improve their inherent field capacity through training and enhancing field staff with nutritional expertise." (AID, 1982a: 2)

The author understands that 1) it is difficult to integrate the economic sectors with their various methodologies and objectives, 2) each mission sectoral office needs to identify the type of technical assistance in nutrition it needs to ensure the success of a coordinated mission level nutrition policy, and 3) the ultimate success of the nutrition policy relies on integrating approaches to solve this multisectoral problem.

AID policy specifically suggests another use for food aid in development, "P.L. 480 food aid can be a valuable development resource for augmenting local production, enhancing short- and long-term food security and reducing malnutrition, providing it is made available under conditions that support rather than discourage domestic food and

agricultural production." (AID, 1982b: 7) The Food and Agriculture Development paper aspires to resolve the problem of temporary or negative impact by integrating P.L. 480 into bilateral financial and technical assistance. "P.L. 480 resources should support AID's strategic emphasis to improve country policies, develop human and institutional capacity and enhance the role of the private sector in food and agricultural development." (p: 7) It is the opinion of this study that, when P.L. 480 is used to establish a better policy dialogue and a more integrated approach to development, it more likely to have a long-term effect when there is strong host government commitment both at the national and local levels to carry out projects utilizing P.L. 480 food as a development tool.

4.6 Private Sector

The policy paper Nutrition asserts that "private sector initiatives can enhance public investments in the area of agribusiness, food processing and fortification." (AID, 1982a: 10) Moreover, the private sector may "hold the key to solving problems of urban malnutrition . . . due to inadequate food marketing and distribution systems. (p: 10) The nutrition paper is very careful to state precisely where the private sector belongs because its contribution specifically to nutrition concerns is limited. Private sector assistance in this area includes agricultural research and providing training assistance.

The food and agriculture development paper states that "AID will: identify private and public sector institutions . . . through which

. . . assistance can be effectively provided to private enterprise; engage in dialogue with governments on changes in policies . . . to encourage private sector development . . .; and . . . help countries improve the efficiency of public and parastatal enterprise engaged in food and agriculture-related activities." (AID, 1982b: 6) AID will encourage the U.S. private sector to assist in strengthening LDC agribusinesses and other agriculture sector endeavors through training, technical assistance, joint investment with AID, and direct private investment. (p: 6)

PVO's are specifically identified in the food and agriculture paper as cost-effective and efficient alternatives to public sector work in "institution building on the local level" . . . and in organizing "local energies to provide both development and social services . . ." (p: 6) AID will work to strengthen PVOs committed to food and agricultural development programs consistent with AID policy. This study agrees that there is a great deal of scope for PVOs in nutrition interventions because PVOs' work is at the grass roots level, and they are familiar with local cultures, economies and political structures. They have a good track record in their areas of expertise, including health care, disaster relief, and nutrition education for mothers and infants. The author offers the caveat that PVOs do not always reflect foreign assistance policy in project implementation as they follow their own organizations' philosophies of development.

Before moving onto a discussion of the draft nutrition strategy paper, it is important to make a few observations about the policy

paper, Nutrition. As stated above this paper calls for an integrated approach to resolving nutrition problems. Because of the general lack of familiarity of field officers with nutrition issues this paper contains a great deal of information. To the greatest extent possible, the paper needs to spell out a strategy for implementation of nutrition policy. The paper presents a skeletal nutrition strategy: Target nutrition programs at those most nutritionally at risk, utilize a multi-sectoral integrated approach making use of available nutrition/food consumption data and concentrate on reducing undernutrition. The information presented in the paper and the basic strategy it outlines may not provide sufficient guidelines for field implementation. The issues raised by the nutrition paper are very complex. The paper does well to identify many important issues that will arise during policy implementation. However, it is constrained in its discussion of these issues by the bureaucratic necessity of providing short policy papers.

5. The Draft Nutrition Strategy

The draft nutrition strategy paper was prepared by the Bureau for Science and Technology, Office of Nutrition (S & T/N). The paper is currently in its final draft, having been circulated through AID for comments. The purpose of a strategy paper is to provide field officers with a plan for policy implementation. It is important to note from an institutional point of view, that PPC has had a key role in translating foreign assistance policy into nutrition policy as articulated in the policy paper. The Nutrition Office has followed-up by generating a

methodology to implement established AID policy. Ultimately the missions must be convinced of the utility and practicality of the methods proposed.

The draft nutrition strategy paper establishes alleviating under-nutrition caused by inadequate food intake and poor utilization of nutrients as its highest priority. (AID, 1983a: 1) It identifies four models of malnutrition with each model representing a mix of the primary causes, traits and characteristics of malnutrition. The combination of factors may vary greatly from one country to another, requiring unique strategies be employed by different countries in dealing with each model. The four models are: (1) Inadequate availability of food, (2) Adequate availability of food, but inequitable distribution, (3) Adequate availability of food, adequate distribution and people have purchasing power, but do not consume proper diets and, (4) Adequate availability of food, people have purchasing power, the distribution is equitable, nutritional norms are sound, but nutrients are lost after ingestion. (pp: 1-4)

5.1 Model One: Food Shortages

Food shortages may be seasonal or long-term and may have a number of causes such as drought, rapid population growth, poor post-harvest technology and inefficient land tenure systems. Inadequate availability of food can be overcome in the short term by Title I and III food aid which may allow the time needed for long-term solutions. Short-term solutions that buy time for longer-run solutions are agricultural in

nature and include "a program to step up food production, create jobs and other income-generating activities, and improve post-harvest storage and handling so as to . . . improve food security." (p: 4) The agriculture and rural development programs in the mission must keep abreast of the nutrition situation through "careful monitoring . . . of gains in agricultural production and distribution on the urban poor, subsistence farmer and rural poor" Data generated by this monitoring provides information to program managers for evaluation. Where specific nutrients are deficient, fortification programs utilizing private sector assistance of other nutrient distribution mechanisms can be employed. (p: 5)

5.2 Model Two: Inequitable Food Distribution

The problem of inequitable distribution implies a regional or urban/rural imbalance in the food supply caused by such factors as poor transportation networks, inefficient marketing systems, poor logistics, national level policies, and unequal distribution of income and resources. The problem may also be an overall inequitable distribution of resources resulting in a segment of the population not having adequate purchasing power. To deal with the problem of effective demand, food consumption/nutrition data needs to be studied in order to design solutions that impact on those most nutritionally at risk. Strategies to improve the economic situation of those target groups include employment generation, cutting production costs of farmers, appropriate infrastructural assistance (silos etc.), strengthening marketing institutions and

food for work. Short-term solutions involve P.L. 480 Title II assisted supplemental food supplies. (pp: 5-6) As in the first model, agricultural interventions play a significant role.

5.3 Model Three: Food Habits

Model Three involves nutritionally undesirable food beliefs and habits which are manifest by poor food preparation, improper infant feedings practices and poor intrahousehold food distribution. The approaches suggested by the strategy paper for resolving the problem are education in better consumption patterns and infant care backed by social science research. Schools, maternal and child health clinics, growth monitoring of young children and the use of mass media are cited as effective strategies. (pp: 7-8)

5.4 Model Four: Sanitation and Health

Disease resulting from poor sanitation results in nutrient loss that can lead to malnutrition. The strategies to be employed in this model fall largely into the health sector, although significant gains can be made through timely infrastructural interventions by Rural Development Officers (RDOs)--clean water. AID missions are called upon to develop disease control programs, oral rehydration programs, immunization programs and improved infant care. (p: 9)

5.5 Mission Level Implementation

The strategy paper points out that each country requires the development of a different package of programs and projects to resolve its

nutritional problems. The mission needs to explore available data sources (nutrition surveys, health status reports, and food consumption, food price and income data) and to assist the host government in organizing and analyzing this data. Other donors may have important data sources of their own that should be explored. It may be necessary for the mission to conduct appropriate surveys with its own resources to ensure sufficient data is available for the project design exercise. (pp: 10-11)

The paper calls upon the mission to develop a plan of action for incorporation into the Country Development Strategy Statement (CDSS). It will contain discussion both of host country constraints and AID constraints including staffing and budgeting. The major components for AID's plan of action reflect the foreign assistance policy statements discussed above. They are:

- o Policy Dialogue
- o Training
- o Strengthening Institutional Capacity
- o Applied Research, Technology Development and Transfer
- o Strengthening Local Private Sector
- o Evaluation of Nutrition-Related Projects, Programs and Policies
- o Evaluation and Monitoring of Food Aid
- o Development of Intercountry Networks to Resolve Similar Regional Nutrition Problems
- o Working with Other Donors. (pp: 12-16)

These strategies taken with the policy directives are the field officers' guidelines in future project design and program.

6. Review of Strategy

Does the strategy paper provide agricultural development and rural development officers with a methodology for instituting nutrition policy? The paper definitely gives the ADO and the RDO a better understanding of nutrition issues, but whether it provides a workable strategy to officers unfamiliar with nutrition issues can be questioned. While brevity is bureaucratically expedient, it may preclude sufficiently clear guidance for effective field implementation assuming that most field officers are unfamiliar with the linkages between agriculture/rural development projects and consumption..

Both the two relevant policy papers and strategy paper employ the technique of briefly listing strategies, or solutions to problems with a minimal amount of detail. This method gives the ADO and RDO a good starting point for integrating nutrition concerns into sectoral projects. However, this leaves it largely up to the field officer to discover the linkages involved in a particular solution through trial and error over a period of time, or by bringing in outside technical assistance utilizing mission budgetary resources. In either of the above cases ADO and RDO action presupposes that the mission has placed a high priority on nutrition issues. Furthermore, interviewees identified time and budget limitations as major constraints in carrying out policy directives.

The complexity of the linkages between agricultural production and food consumption can be illustrated by examining the possible consequences of increasing income or, generating employment. The nutrition

policy paper says that "higher income does not automatically mean better nutrition especially in the short term" (AID, 1983a: 4) and that there is evidence which indicates that "who earns the income is almost as important as how much is earned." Women tend to spend a higher percentage of their income on food for family consumption than men do. (p: 5) Another issue that may arise is a larger overall caloric deficit resulting from the higher energy requirements of the new income-generating activities being greater than the relative caloric yield of food purchased with the new income. While generating employment and increasing income may be viable solutions to overcoming inequitable food distribution and food shortages, the field officers should be made aware of possible outcomes of these strategies in one paper.

7. Policy Implementation at the Country Level

It is the USAID field mission which applies AID/Washington policy and strategy in the field. According to interviewees, AID missions operate largely in a policy vacuum caused by delay time between policy formulation and project implementation. The projects currently underway may well have been designed in a different policy context. Evaluations of ongoing projects, however, are often based on current policy guidelines. This means that a new set of criteria which did not exist at the time of project design is being used to determine project success and the mission's performance. The mission's current expenditures then, are generally supporting old policies. But the criteria by which mission performance is judged is based on current policy.

Missions depend on evaluations of their performances conducted by Washington. Project success, and therefore mission performance, is determined by economic criteria such as rate of return, the ability to move money and compliance to AID and foreign assistance policy goals. Moving money through new projects requires implementation of current policy. However, the mission may perceive critical evaluations of older projects whose designs were based on past policy as unfair. To minimize conflict with Washington over policy, missions attempt to anticipate the tacit priorities behind headquarter's policy pronouncements, according to former AID field personnel. They go on to say that correct forecasting of those priorities enhances the prospects of obtaining resources for future activities, because future evaluation criteria have been anticipated.

An important criterion for mission success is how much money can be moved. Moving money does not guarantee the effectiveness of a project points out Judith Tendler in her book Inside Foreign AID (Tendler, 1975). Quite to the contrary, high cost but poorly designed projects move money but have little long-term development effect. Ironically, a well-designed and effective project could reduce the overall cash flow by solving a development problem and eliminating the need for future projects. At the mission level the process of "moving money" may cause implementation of projects that do not contribute significantly to long-term development.

The perception by the missions that AID/Washington is constantly changing the rules contributes to a lack of a spirit of common purpose

between the USAIDs and Washington. Author Judith Tandler says that this lack of common purpose "often stifled the exchange of information and help." (Tandler, 1975: 26) Moreover, mission staff often see Washington's policy as being a general framework applicable to all nations and not necessarily sensitive to the specific needs of the country where they are assigned. In interviews, AID field personnel mentioned a reason for sidestepping policy directives issued by headquarters: the belief that policy writers lacked mission experience, and that, therefore, they could not understand the realities of dealing with changing mandates while attempting to maintain viable programs.

Interviews revealed that there does not seem to be a great deal of incentive on the part of AID field personnel to carefully digest each policy paper, particularly those that are not viewed as high priority. This can be partly attributed to the quantities of paper, cables and instructions from Washington some of which are viewed as contradictory. However, USAID personnel do have a strong incentive to read or, at least look over, any policy paper helpful for submitting a project paper to Washington or in preparing a CDSS. One interviewee reported that even when preparing a project paper, the policy papers were used only to unearth key Washington "buzzwords". Using these buzzwords is viewed as helpful in reducing conflict.

From headquarter's perspective, the missions are often seen as acting primarily as advocates of the host countries' development objectives and secondarily as arms of the agency. This perception contributes to the lack of a sense of common purpose and contributes to a

feeling of a broken partnership. What may appear to be a rational or pragmatic decision in the field may be construed as favoritism in Washington. It should be noted that institutional problems such as those discussed in this paper are inherent in any agency as large and as geographically dispersed as AID.

Some interviewees considered the mission director to be the greatest single factor in determining how a specific policy would be carried out. One interviewee disagreed, reporting that the power of the mission director depends a great deal on his/her reputation in Washington. A mission director can have an impact on policy implementation by his/her forecasting tacit priorities, and by establishing his/her own areas of interest and carrying through programs to implement those interests. He/she may also lower the priorities of those areas he/she does not consider to be important. The mission director can ensure a better understanding of policy directives by holding in-house reviews of policy papers. He/she can also demand greater compliance with Washington directives in preparing project papers and CDSS.

In cases where there are discrepancies between U.S. and host government policy, policy dialogue can be an important tool for AID. For instance, nutrition issues are often given lip service by the host government for local propaganda but never become a high priority on their development agenda. The USAID is left with the task of convincing the host government that Washington-based policy initiatives have the host countries' best interests at heart and that agricultural projects which integrate nutrition strategies are worthy of host government

resources. Policy dialogue calls for the use of AID resources as leverage in such discussions.

Interviewees report that due to time pressure to commit funds and move money, analysis that may have a significant qualitative effective on the project cannot be undertaken. Integrating nutrition strategies into a development project requires carefully done prior analysis. Once the project is underway the nutritional impacts on project recipients should be monitored and the project evaluated to determine if it is having a positive effect on food consumption. The mission may not have a large enough budget or staff to perform these functions.

The design of new projects requires basic research, data gathering, and analysis to select project goals, target groups, and strategies that will ensure a viable project. Staffing of project design teams often involves the use of nonresident consultants and/or officials from AID/Washington. Mission budget and staffing constraints do not always allow for a great deal of staff participation in the project development exercise, although mission staffers are generally familiar with the local issues that will affect the project's success. The nonresident members of the project design team, on the other hand, are usually less familiar with the country and current AID policy. The quick, external nature of project design efforts sometimes raises serious questions in the minds of some interviewees about the quality and validity of projects. Missions often question the effectiveness of using solely outside assistance for this reason.

It is conceivable, given the above discussion, that implementation of nutrition policy may not be possible for a number of reasons. As expressed in the nutrition policy paper, missions do not have sufficient staff trained in nutrition. ADO's and RDO's generally are unfamiliar with integrating nutrition concerns into their projects. If they perceive nutrition policy to be of low priority they are even less likely to attempt to understand the key linkages between nutrition and agricultural production. The benefits of nutrition interventions have not been easily quantified. Therefore, missions may be leary of putting hard-earned funds into "new and unproven" interventions which are difficult to defend.

8. CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions and recommendations are the result of lengthy brainstorming sessions with current and former members of AID and USDA. They fall into two general categories, the first being food consumption/nutrition issues, and the second involving mission management and policy coordination. Although these conclusions may appear to be critical it is hoped that they will contribute to the development of practical suggestions for better projects.

Overall AID has been a leader in the donor community in incorporating nutrition/food consumption concerns into agricultural projects. The policy papers and draft nutrition strategy paper show a firm commitment by AID to developing an effective strategy for improving the agricultural project's nutritional impact. Throughout this study the

openness, helpfulness and critical insights of AID personnel has been extremely encouraging and impressive. This experience conveys AID's commitment to development and willingness to find innovative solutions to recurring problems. The policy and strategy papers are well-written, carefully thought out documents which represent a giant step toward integrating nutrition impacts in agriculture and other sectoral projects not only in AID but throughout the donor community.

Conclusion: Health, agriculture, rural development, education, population and nutrition officers are insufficiently aware of the linkages between agricultural production and food consumption. To provide an integrated approach to development, a holistic approach to resolving food consumption issues needs to be developed and applied in each mission in a manner suitable to that mission's constraints and objectives.

Recommendations

- o AID should fund a program of workshops on food production and consumption linkages for all project management and mission staff. This includes a program of workshops for health, education, population and nutrition officers as well as for agriculture and rural development officers. Due to the importance of nutrition to the development effort these programs should be given a high priority.
- o Mission directors and AID/W should encourage positive interaction between sectoral offices to ensure the development of multisectoral mission level strategy to improve host country nutritional status.

Conclusion: Written guidance to the field from AID/W is not always taken seriously. This is due in part to the volume of paperwork from headquarters which is often too great for missions to digest and therefore implement. Interviewees cited lack of coordination in communications and occasional contradictory information emanating from AID/W as a major problem in implementing policy. Both mission-based and Washington personnel doubt whether policy directives are to be taken literally, regarding many statements of ideals rather than as "marching orders." New policies, particularly, are viewed with guarded suspicion. The AID nutrition policy is constrained by its institutional newness, the complexity of its application, its multisectoral approach and perception by many that it is a low-priority area.

Recommendations

- o Washington must clearly establish that policy directives are to be followed. Policies should be clearly prioritized, contain explicit instructions, incentives for compliance and must fit logically into overall Agency policy. Policymakers should allow for flexibility in project implementation due to the different constraints faced by each mission. This can best be accomplished by suggesting varying methods of implementation. Incentives for compliance might include basing some budget allocation on a review of mission policy implementation.
- o Washington should encourage the implementation of the nutrition policy by funding the workshops discussed above and by providing

missions with incentives for implementation. Missions could be required to consider food consumption/nutrition data in project designs and monitoring as a part of social analysis or environmental impact.

- o Washington should review present communication procedures with the missions with the objective of coordinating directives and minimizing the flow of redundant, unnecessary and contradictory communications.

Conclusions: Field officers do not have enough time to thoroughly read each policy paper. Both the Nutrition and Food and Agriculture papers have to be read and digested in order to understand and fully appreciate nutrition policy implications for the agricultural sector. Therefore, one must question whether field officers are able to apply nutrition policy as Washington intends. Nevertheless, the papers reflect a growing awareness in AID of the important role played by nutrition in development. The articulation of these ideas in a policy statement show AID's commitment to an aggressive and dynamic approach to development.

Recommendations

- o Incorporate the relevant parts of the nutrition and the food and agriculture papers into a concise summation of nutrition policy as it relates to the design, implementation and monitoring of agriculture projects.

Conclusion: The nutrition strategy paper, and both policy papers, assume an audience familiar with nutrition issues and the integration of

nutrition concerns into development projects. It is doubtful that the papers' audience is sufficiently familiar with those areas to easily translate the current guidelines into practice.

Recommendations

- o AID should prepare an explicit step-by-step list of possible activities for each model in the nutrition strategy paper including a brief discussion of various options at each step and instructions on where to get more information or assistance. This list could be included as material in the above-mentioned workshop.

Conclusion: There is a lack of spirit of common purpose between AID/Washington and the missions.

Recommendations

- o Policymakers, except at the very junior level, should spend at least one tour of duty in AID mission. Other developing country experience, while helpful, is not adequate.
- o AID should explore efficient methods for receiving mission level feedback on new policies. This will be particularly useful in ensuring that policy is appropriate and applicable to field situations. Mission comments on policy should be solicited as a standard operational procedure. Among the questions that should be explored in implementing this recommendation are those of timing, representation (one mission per geographic subregion or more) and appropriateness of having a field representative present during

review discussions. It is felt that mission input would establish a better working relationship between AID/Washington and the field.

- o A review of interbureau and intrabureau communication and cooperation with AID/Washington should be conducted with the objectives of (A) facilitating the flow of information between bureaus, (B) reducing the number of conflicting instructions to the field, and (C) reducing interbureau suspicion.

Conclusion: Implementation of policy is limited by mission level staffing and budgeting constraints and by a questionable incentive system. The so-called "move money" criteria for evaluating mission performance judges mission success on the basis of dollars committed to projects rather than on effectiveness of projects. This evaluation criteria contributes to the lack of common spirit between AID/Washington and the missions.

Recommendations

- o In order to ensure that policy guidelines are followed, AID/Washington needs to provide the missions with staff members trained to perform those functions set down in policy directives and sufficient monetary resources.
- o AID should reconsider the "move money" criteria for mission evaluation. A logical alternative would be judging mission performance on the basis of project appropriateness, quality (fiscal, economic, social) and overall strategic effectiveness of ongoing and past projects.

Conclusion: Personnel report that time pressure to commit funds to a project reduces the time for all but the most critical analysis efforts. Project designers may not be able to follow all relevant policy guidelines in preparing project papers and comply with the U.S. Government's fiscal calendar.

Recommendations

- o Assure that mission staff is familiar with state-of-the-art techniques for analysis.
- o The design of projects should incorporate ongoing analysis in the project areas. Projects should be flexible in design and able to allow for changes necessitated the social and economic reality of the project. Effective project monitoring is crucial to ensuring project appropriateness.

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