

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

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Batch #22

1. SUBJECT
CLASSI-
FICATION

A. PRIMARY

Serials

Y-AC00-0000-0000

B. SECONDARY

Agriculture--Education, extension, and advisory work

2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

The research and training network; annual progress rpt., 1972/1973

3. AUTHOR(S)

(101) Agr. Development Council, New York

4. DOCUMENT DATE

1973

5. NUMBER OF PAGES

16p.

6. ARC NUMBER

ARC

7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS

ADC

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

(Activity summary)

9. ABSTRACT

10. CONTROL NUMBER

PN-RAB-301

11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT

12. DESCRIPTORS

Education
Networks
Research

13. PROJECT NUMBER

14. CONTRACT NUMBER

CSD-2813 GTS

15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

THE RESEARCH AND TRAINING NETWORK

211(d)

Contract No. AID/cad 2813

Annual Progress Report

July 1, 1972 - June 30, 1973

The Agricultural Development Council
630 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y.

THE RESEARCH AND TRAINING NETWORK

1972/73 Annual Report

The Research and Training Network of The Agricultural Development Council is a program to facilitate interaction and cooperation among professors of U.S. and foreign university professors and between university personnel and the professional personnel of public and private technical aid agencies focusing on urgent problems in agricultural development. The specific goals of the RTN are the improvement of both theory and research with respect to agricultural development, and of U.S. graduate training in the rural social sciences for students from developing areas. The major vehicles for achieving these objectives are seminars and workshops directed at major teaching and research problems in the area of agricultural development.

Fourteen seminars and workshops involving 201 people were sponsored by the RTN in the FY 1972-73. These included 178 individuals who had not previously participated in the RTN program; 127 university professors and 41 officials from A.I.D. and other technical assistance agencies were also involved. This year saw an increase of participants from developing areas: 33 from countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Agency for International Development with a report of activities carried on during FY 1972-73 under the Research and Training Network. The report is divided into three major sections. The first two review seminar and workshop activities under both the Teaching-Training and the Research-Oriented dimensions of the program. The final indicates program changes, policy questions considered during the year, and the impact of the program on research in the general area of international agricultural development.

RTN Teaching-Training Oriented Activities

The first phase of the RTN Teaching-Training oriented activities focused on a review of coursework available in U.S. universities in the general area of land policy, the administration of agricultural development programs, production incentives for farmers and demographic economics. This review was completed in FY 1971-72. As a result of the earlier workshops and seminars a Land Policy prototype course was given last summer and a Production Incentives course is to be tried out this Fall. Below are reports on RTN Teaching-Training Oriented Activities.

Land Policy Course

In the summer of 1972 the RTN sponsored a new course in land policy for developing nations. The course was offered in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin and developed through the RTN Land Policy Work Group. Most of the thirty enrolled students came from developing countries and instruction was provided by six visiting professors.

All the instructors agreed that the experience in the preparation and teaching of the course had been of great value to them professionally. Several have indicated that they are already beginning to use some of the new material and insights gained out of the experience in their present university courses.

Critical comments from both students and teachers provided useful insights for future prototype courses. Six instructors in a four-week course created real problems for students and staff. The students had great difficulty adjusting to the personalities and teaching style of various men. The staff found it equally hard to follow one another. There was a felt need for many more case studies from developing countries and less reliance on Western examples. A number of suggestions for improving the mechanics of future

courses were also made: 1) that the teaching staff get together three or four days prior to the opening day to review their preparation and materials, 2) that lecture hours be set to maximize the effective use of available time and 3) that the required reading materials be provided for all the students instead of only a few copies available for reference. Everyone agreed that the course materials should be reproduced and distributed as quickly as possible to persons working in this area in the U.S. and in developing countries for review and criticism. An initial printing has been completed and distributed and a further editing of the materials is planned once the comments and suggestions have been received. Meanwhile the work group hopes to turn to questions of research in land policy, and will be again meeting this Fall.

Production Incentives Course

The Research and Training Network sponsored a series of workshops, beginning in 1971, aimed at designing a course on production incentives for farmers in developing countries, said course to be used by U.S. universities and by development planners and administrators in developing nations. The planning workshops included economists, sociologists and technical agriculturists.

A course outline was prepared as were reading lists and case study materials to be used in conjunction with classroom presentations. The course outline includes discussion of different types of incentives, a review of the social and economic environment in which a farm operates, and a review of policy instruments for inducing changes in production.

The prototype course will be offered this summer at Ohio State University and the lecturers will be members of the RTN group who developed the course.

This Fall, the course will be reviewed by 10 to 15 professionals from developing nations concerned with the problem of production incentives.

II. RTN Research Oriented Activities

In the FY 1972-73, the Research and Training Network sponsored 14 research oriented seminars and workshops. These included seminars on Agricultural Sector Analysis and Planning; The Management of Irrigation Systems for the Farm Level; Socio-Economic Research Issues in Fisheries Development; The Management of Irrigation Systems for Small Farms; Two Seminars on Trade, Agricultural and Economic Development; Economics of Nutrition; Economics of Farm Mechanization and Processing in Developing Countries. In cooperation with IICA the RTN assisted in holding a marketing workshop at San Jose, Costa Rica. Workshops were held to discuss Research Priorities and Methodology on Nutrition and Innovations in Agrarian Structure.

Application of Recursive Decision Systems in Agricultural Sector Analysis

Last November, a conference on the Application of Recursive Decision Systems in Agricultural Sector Analysis was held at the Economic Development Institute of the World Bank in Washington, D.C. This was the fourth in a series of RTN conferences on agricultural sector analysis and focused on a broad class of models called recursive decision models. Case studies on the application of these models were presented for West Germany, Northeast Italy, Korea, Southern Brazil and the Indian Punjab. Participants included visitors from abroad, professional economists in the U.S. currently involved with sector work and personnel from institutions like the World Bank, USAID, USDA and other agencies interested in sector analysis.

The Management of Irrigation Systems for Small Farms

This seminar was an outgrowth of a series of previous workshops on water resource development. The major focus of discussion was on a series of case studies concerning on-farm water management aspects of irrigation projects in

the U.S., Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. Case studies in these areas were presented within the following framework: sources of water, basic functions of irrigation systems design, salient features of engineering design of water delivery to the farm, engineering design of on-farm utilization, farm management and application of irrigation practices, arrangements for water use and control, and individual farmer's pattern of use and relationship to irrigation.

Trade, Agricultural and Economic Development

In the past six months, two conferences were held in the RTN's continuing series on Trade, Agricultural and Economic Development. The meetings were concerned with the implications of emerging changes in agricultural trade for developing areas. In the first session held in February, a series of studies were presented reviewing the trade situation in a number of developing countries, rice production and trade in Asia, international trade and the distribution of gains and losses for agricultural technology and trade patterns and agricultural research.

The theme of the Spring conference was "Issues in Trade and Development, Outlook and Research Needs for the 1970's." Implications for trade relations between developed and developing countries were critically examined and particular emphasis was placed on the effects of the EEC enlargement and changes in U.S. trade policy.

This was followed by an examination of the reactions and options available to the developing countries. Among the possibilities discussed were: joint action by the developing countries, potential for free trade areas and common markets, and national policies and options for expansion of exports by developing countries. Finally, there was a review of research needs in trade and development.

Socio-Economic Research in Fisheries Development

Participants at this workshop worked on identifying researchable issues in fisheries development within the context of national development. Discussion centered on national development objectives and their relevance to fisheries development, the potential for development based on resource assessment and technology, and conflicts of interest between developed and developing nations. Specific topics covered were socio-economic research issues in factor supplies, production and marketing; the development of fisheries models and their importance for national development; and the relationship between agriculture and fisheries development.

Economics of Nutrition

The aim of this workshop was to discover areas in the field of nutrition important to developing countries. Although the group did not arrive at any specific recommendations, some general conclusions did emerge. We still need to know more about the effect of malnutrition on adults for one thing. Most of the available information relates to small children and pregnant women but the effects on other adults is not clear.

Another area that needs clarification includes measures to promote nutrition improvement. That nutritional status improves with increased income has been accepted but there has not been enough empirical testing of this view. Cultural factors may be just as important as purchasing power in exploring malnutrition. Is there a separate protein problem or is the problem one of raising caloric intake? It is not clear whether it is more important to raise purchasing power or to concentrate on lowering the cost of production of protein sources.

Economics of Farm Mechanization and Processing in Developing Countries

The objectives of the seminar were to compare methodology used in

research on the economics of mechanization in developing areas; to discuss needed policy oriented research in the areas of the economics of farm mechanization; and to discuss a conceptual framework for analyzing the economics of farm mechanization in developing areas.

A review of the literature on farm mechanization led to the conclusion that researchers tend to draw general conclusions from studies of single mechanization schemes on limited geographical areas. Economic studies of single mechanization were usually the product of lone economists who did not have the resources to analyze a number of alternative technologies or to examine the interactions between technology and the labor input (capital) and product markets. Few studies looked at the influence of time and uncertainty on key parameters such as product price and labor supply. Research must answer short, intermediate and long-run policy questions which government has on mechanization. In the short run a wider range of alternative technologies should be considered in the static state. In the intermediate term, analysis of alternative rates of mechanization in whole regions was needed in order to find policies which will induce selective mechanization of key operations.

In the long run mechanization should be placed in a context of social and political research concerning a country's development.

Current research on farm mechanization in developing areas and methodologies used were presented. These included work on Pakistan, India, Colombia, Brazil and Indonesia.

Political Economy of Agricultural Development

In recent years there has been great discussion of the characteristics of successful rural development and its employment effects, but clearly we need development models which reflect more fully the social and political aspects of development. Two meetings were held to discuss the possibility

of a seminar on the Political Economy of Agricultural Development to deal with this issue.

The need to have development models reflect more fully the social and political aspects of development was reviewed by two separate groups. The first working group was primarily from American universities. The second group of participants represented donor agencies or advisors to donor agencies. Professor Carl Gotsch, Harvard University, presented some work he has been carrying out in this area. Basic to his analysis is the need to look at the general decision-making environment and see how the national region, government bureaucracy, and the local power structure each influence the choice of technology and interest with each other. A number of the participants reviewed what other organizations are doing to get at the problem.

Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agricolas de la OEA Hemispheric
Marketing Workshop

Under the aegis of the IICA, the RTN assisted in holding a marketing workshop at San Jose, Costa Rica. This joint effort -- the first RTN seminar held outside the United States and the first in which the majority of participants included highly trained technicians of fifteen hemispheric countries as well as representatives of international agencies and universities.

There has been a considerable increase in the need for technical cooperation to further agricultural development in the IICA countries. This seminar was held to present strategies and to analyze needs and possibilities for international cooperation in the marketing of agricultural products. The main objective of the seminar was to identify some of the most important needs for technical cooperation in the marketing field. Major consideration was given to the following issues: means of getting acquainted with the principal problems of institutions and their cooperation within the sub-system of commercialization in the different countries; identification of the critical areas in the marketing systems from the viewpoint of technical cooperation; the analysis of possible actions in these crucial areas; identification of patterns of participation that would best suit the Hemispheric Marketing Program to enable it to achieve a greater impact.

The workshop made possible a fruitful dialogue among officials and technicians of public organizations with a close tie to the marketing activities of fifteen Latin American countries, U.S. professors with experience in the problems of Latin America, officials of international organizations, and IICA's marketing program technicians.

Innovations in Agrarian Structure

Under the chairmanship of Professor Peter Dorner of the University of Wisconsin, a small group concerned with the question of agrarian structure has held three planning sessions. This group is trying to develop a seminar that would systematically examine innovations in agrarian structure, especially the cooperative - collective farming experience, in various regions of the world. At present there is a scattering of published material in this general topic, but there is no single book or collection of articles treating this subject. Such a seminar would provide an opportunity for discussing these experiences within a common analytical framework.

Agricultural Development and Nutrition

This Spring, a group of nutritionists, economists, and physicians who work in public health met to discuss the resource investment needed to deal with problems of nutrition, family planning and health in developing areas. Among the questions discussed were: present knowledge of these problems, the questions and issues most in need of systematic research, and policy strategy for the development of the resources "package" needed for developing countries.

III. Utilization of Research

Utilization of Research

The Research and Training Network does not support field research activities. The basic premise underlying the RTN is that the quality of research in the area of international agricultural development will be enhanced through the seminar-workshop activities of the program. The impact of the program comes about, as a result of the interaction of the participants in the RTN session, and through their subsequent cooperation and interaction. Therefore, the critical need is to look at ways and means of increasing interaction and communication among scholars concerned with problems of international agricultural development.

The past year's experience provided some insight on how to meet this objective better:

Involvement of Foreign Participants

Greater emphasis has been given to the involvement of foreign participants, reflecting the need to provide greater interaction between Western and nonWestern scholars concerned with agricultural development. In the coming year nonWestern scholars will be involved wherever possible, in the planning stages of seminars and prototype courses as well as through critical response to the programs.

Increased RTN Activities Abroad

It now seems desirable to expand RTN activities abroad. The IICA Workshop was the first such expansion. This and workshops like it should lead to research collaboration and cooperation between U.S. and foreign scholars. It may also provide an opportunity for more critical evaluation by foreign scholars. It is hoped that the coming year will see at least

two RTN prototype training courses -- one at CIMMYT and one in Asia. The participants will be mostly from the region where the activity is held with a few participants from the United States. The A/D/C Interregional Program is the logical link for such interaction in Asia. Other cooperative partners for Africa and Latin America need to be developed.

Increased Interdisciplinary Participation

From the beginning an attempt has been made to secure interdisciplinary participation in all RTN programs. This has proved most productive in seminars and workshops having a specific problem focus. Furthermore, the longer the working relationship between the members, the more fruitful the exchange.

Interaction Between Social Scientists and Agricultural Scientists

There is a need to improve communication between these two groups of scientists. Each has a lot to offer the other, but the question is how to achieve interaction. In the coming year two prototype training courses will be developed to deal with this problem. A course in production economics for non-economists will be given at CIMMYT and a course in agro-production for social scientists will be developed by the CIMMYT staff for social scientists.

RTN Publication Program

The RTN publication program is another vehicle for facilitating communication among scholars. The Newsletter is the major vehicle for describing the RTN program and reviewing its activities. The Newsletter reports on the progress of workshop groups, summarizes seminars and provides information regarding materials generated through RTN activities.

Many foreign scholars serve as visiting professors in U.S. colleges and universities or on short-term assignments with an international agency located in the U.S. However, many of these visitors do not interact with members of the academic community beyond their host institution. A semi-annual listing of these visiting scholars now appears in the RTN Newsletter so that other universities and government agencies know of their presence and their major areas of interest. The Council also includes these scholars in its Research and Training Network activities.

Similarly there is a lack of communication regarding thesis research on problems of international agricultural development. The Newsletter now provides a semi-annual listing of current thesis research on problems of agricultural development. This will enable students to identify other researchers with similar interests and will facilitate interaction and cooperation between scholars.

A seminar and workshop report series is also available to promote a wider distribution of the discussions at RTN meeting. The Seminar Reports summarize the discussions and findings of each seminar and list papers presented. The Workshop Reports serve a more limited clientele: the participants and a few outsiders. Reports include: Small Farmer Development Strategies; Small Farmer Credit; Interrelationships Between Population, Employment and Economic Development: A Bibliography. The Land Policy Course Outline has also been completed and distributed. Additional reports will be available in the next few months.

Two additional publication series are being considered -- RTN Reprints and RTN Papers. The Reprint Series is to provide previously published papers whose distribution would advance RTN objectives. The RTN Papers would be those presented at conferences which deserve wider distribution, but which because of length or focus are not suitable for publication through existing channels.

Research and Training Priorities in 1972-73-74

The RTN program began with ten designated topics for attention, five research and five teaching. They were:

Research

1. Theoretical and empirical application of agricultural sector analysis and planning.
2. Rural employment, income distribution and institutions to deliver essential service.
3. Water resource development.
4. Rural marketing and trade.
5. Allocation of resources to accelerate technological change (research).

Teaching

1. Production incentives for farmers.
2. Land policy for developing countries.
3. Interrelationships of population, employment, and economic development.
4. Administration.
5. Agricultural policy for developing countries.

Clearly a flexible policy should be maintained and areas added or deleted depending on interest.

Interrelationship between agricultural development and rural nutrition and the role of the public sector in agricultural development in LDC's has been added to the research agenda. On the Teaching side -- courses are being developed in Production Economics for Non-Economists and Agro-Production for Social Scientists.

Small Grants Research Program

The possibility of adding a small grants research program to RTN is worth considering. This would substantially increase the follow-up research activities of the RTN sessions and help move much of the discussion

of problems, research technique and methodology out of the academic phase.

Continuing Need for the RTN Program

All evidence indicates a continuing need for the RTN program. The sources of interaction between professionals concerned with rural development are very limited. RTN is the major source, particularly for the younger men who find themselves isolated from Western and nonWestern scholars and research. It also remains one of the few vehicles which provide interchange and interaction between the Western and nonWestern scholars and helps identify the new generation of professionals in the East and West.