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CLASSIFICATION

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART I

Report Symbol U-447

1. PROJECT TITLE Vocational Training in Building Trades	2. PROJECT NUMBER 268-0318	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE AID Rep/Lebanon
4. EVALUATION NUMBER (Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No. beginning with No. 1 each FY) 268-82-01 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR EVALUATION <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVALUATION		

5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES A. First PROG-AQ or Equivalent FY 81 B. Final Obligation Expected FY 82 C. Final Input Delivery FY 83	6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING A. Total \$ 2,040 B. U.S. \$ 1,590	7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION From (month/yr.) 8/80 To (month/yr.) 2/82 Date of Evaluation Review 3/82
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8. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR

A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mention decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., diagram, SPAR, PIO, which will prevent detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
No decisions or recommendations are made at this time as issues and comments made in the evaluation have been addressed in a Project Paper of March 1982 which requests continued funding for the project.		

9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVIEWED PER ABOVE DECISIONS

<input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) A request for a Grant extension incorporates changes.
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C	
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P	

10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT

A. Continue Project Without Change

B. Change Project Design and/or Change Implementation Plan

C. Discontinue Project

11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER BANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Name and Title)

Dr. Munir Khoury, Professor of Sociology, BUC
Mr. Ghassan Sayyah, YMCA/L General Executive
W. Ernest Popp, AID Rep/Lebanon/600

12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval

Signature: *[Signature]*
Typed Name: William R. McIntyre

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U S - A I D - YMCA LEBANON

VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

EVALUATION REPORT PREPARED BY

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BEIRUT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Beirut, Feb. 1982

A. INTRODUCTION

1. This is a follow-up evaluation of a previous one undertaken by the writer in the summer of 1960. Therefore, it is recommended that the present paper be read in conjunction with its predecessor, otherwise a number of important points presented in the 1960 evaluation might be completely, or partially missed. In this paper we shall dwell upon new developments that took place since the writing of the first evaluation, notwithstanding the gaps that might appear as a result of some omissions; this, we are forced to do, for the sake of brevity, and in order to avoid repetition and redundancy.

2. The first question that came to the writer's mind when asked to undertake this present task was: Why so soon? Why another evaluation after a lapse of hardly one and a half years? Is there really a need for another evaluation, while, to the writer's mind, most of the important points discussed and presented in the "yesteryear" are still valid? I am sure some readers, at least, are likely to respond the same way the writer did. It is with this skeptic and half-hearted attitude, however, that the writer started this work; it was believed that the undertaking of another study after such a relatively short interval of time would produce nothing new, nor anything of significance. Fortunately, and to the writer's surprise, his "hypothesis" was false, for the new developments that appeared during the last eighteen months were not simply mere "additions", but rather qualitatively significant and genuinely innovative.

3. Regarding the goals and objectives of the Vocational Training Program, these remain to be basically the same, i.e. to train young Lebanese, from both rural and urban sectors, in a variety of constructional skills that would hopefully lead toward the reconstruction of Lebanon which, as a result of the "civil war", has lost over a quarter of a million of its population through emigration (temporary or permanently). Half of this number, apparently, belongs to the skilled labor force - mostly from the construction sector. In the "Preliminary Assessment of Manpower and Labor Market Conditions in Lebanon", a study jointly conducted by Nadim Khalaf, Muhamed Manasfi and Nabil Nassif, of the American University of Beirut, and completed toward the very end of 1979 (Dec.5, 1979), it was confirmed that "the construction sector showed the largest and a substantial decrease (around 60 percent), transportation and communications (46 percent), industry (39 percent), and commerce (32 percent)"; (pp 16 & 17 table 17).

In another supplementary and recent study titled "Projections of Manpower Requirements of Lebanon's Reconstruction Plan" (December 1981) the same authors mentioned above, while discussing the magnitude of labor requirements, especially for construction, estimated the number of "active labor force employed in the construction sector to be in the neighborhood of 18,942 in 1979". The authors' extrapolation of the size of the construction labor force, "had the 'war' not taken place" to have reached 62,311 in 1979 (pp 32, 33 & 34). Manpower requirements of the Reconstruction Plan (six years), according to the same study, are as follows: first year, 45,312; second year, 44,152;

and a sixth year, 13,321; (table (13) p.33). The loss of, and consequently the urgent need for, construction skills in Lebanon need no further reiteration. One further additional and rather important point should be mentioned, and that is the largest share in the loss of, and consequently the need for, construction skills seems to be in the semi-skilled and unskilled categories. Table (14) in the same study shows the following figures regarding the requirements for semi-skilled and unskilled laborers throughout the Six Year Plan: first year, 18,497 (48 $\frac{1}{2}$); second year, 17,373 (47.6 $\frac{1}{2}$); third year, 16,286 (48 $\frac{1}{2}$); fourth year, 8,311 (43.4 $\frac{1}{2}$); fifth year, 8,190 (44.9 $\frac{1}{2}$); and the sixth year, 5,274 (44.9 $\frac{1}{2}$). It is very clear that almost fifty percent of the total manpower requirements in the field of reconstruction are in the semi-skilled and unskilled categories. However, "if both the supervision staff and professional categories are classified with skilled labor, and the draftsmen with unskilled and semi-skilled, then the relative share of the skilled category will vary between 30 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 38 $\frac{1}{2}$, and the share of the semi-skilled and skilled between 64 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 70 $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total manpower requirements during the Plan period". (p.34).

In conclusion, it should be remarked that the two above-mentioned studies, and the figures presented in them regarding manpower needs, have their focal point on Lebanon's Reconstruction Plan; this is essentially the public sector, which means that the figures depicting the manpower needs in construction would probably be greatly altered had the private sector been taken also into consideration.

4. A final word about the method followed in this present evaluation is now in order. For verification purposes, and for

were taken in the first study; these are the following:

- a) YMCA statistical records;
- b) field trips and visits to operational centers;
- and
- c) interviews covering a cross-sectional example of trainees, trainers, construction contractors, and non-official concerned citizens of Lebanon.

B. WORK PROGRESS

1. Time Schedule

The first thing that strikes a person studying the YMCA statistical record, regarding the time schedule of the Vocational Training Program, is the speed with which this Program is proceeding. The work is not only "on time" but seems to be always ahead of time-schedule. In our 1980 evaluation report we observed that the program, which was originally planned to terminate by the end of August 1979, was actually completed before the target-date, (p.3). Similarly today we find that the 19 training sessions envisioned in the new agreement between the US-AID and YMCA, were completed with two additional ones - a total of 21 training sessions. Not only that, there are five ones already in operation, and plans for six more are being prepared. This means that, most likely, by the time this report reaches the hands of its readers, some 32 training sessions will have been completed. As the regular number of trainees in each session is usually 80, it follows that around 2500 trainees will have graduated by then - a number far exceeding what was anticipated by the parties concerned.

2. Trainees

An important, if not most important, question in this evaluation should be directed toward the trainee himself - a question that seeks to find out not only the quantity but the quality of trainees that go through this Training Program. Two surveys have been undertaken by the YMCA during the 1980 and 1981 years consecutively. The 1980 survey was a comprehensive one covering 29 training sessions and uncovering the number of graduates, their age categories, number of villages and towns covered or affected by these Programs, the number of graduates who received a "Master's" or "Assistant Master's" certificates, and the scale of popularity of vocations among the trainees.

The 1981 study was a sample survey of five training sessions covering five different areas of rural Lebanon. The survey aimed at finding out the quality of trainees, i.e. the rate of successes and failures, the educational background, the number of graduates working in and outside Lebanon, and those who remained without work. Below is a summary of the most important findings of these surveys with our interpretation of some of the figures presented.

a) Graduates & Drop-outs and/or Failures

Out of the total number of young Lebanese that received vocational training in the 29 training sessions conducted in 1980, 2086 trainees graduated. The average number of graduates in each session was around 72. (Actually $2086 \div 29 = 71.93$). Since normally each session enrolls 80 trainees, the average number of failures and/or drop-outs was 8 only. This was validated by the second survey conducted in 1981 (mentioned above) which showed that out of the 420 sampled

participants, 335 graduated - an average of 91.56%. There seems to be a marked drop in failures and drop-outs since our first evaluation in which we discovered that "around 70% of those who have registered so far have successfully completed their training, while roughly half of the remaining 30% dropped because they found other jobs. Those who failed to graduate or who dropped half way through, were forced to do so on account of certain pressures put on them by their families, such as seasonal field work, family duties and other similar activities". (See our first evaluation p.4).

The drop of the average of failures and drop-outs from 30% in 1979 and early 1980 to around 3.3% in the latter part of 1980 and 1981 should not pass unnoticed. This must be an index of the more serious attitude taken by the Lebanese young adults and their parents toward such a program. Our interpretation of this is attested by a number of interviews with different people, as we shall see later.

b) Age, and the Appeals of Vocational Training

There are two types of certificates or "diplomas" granted to graduating trainees after three months of intensive training: "Master" or an "Assistant Master". The three basic criteria followed by the Examining Committee at the end of each training session, and according to which the graduate is granted the title of "Master" or "Assistant Master" are the following: skill, responsibility and age.

The 1980 survey showed that out of the 2086 graduates 945 graduated with a "Master" (degree), and 1141 with an

"Assistant Master" (degree). The percentages of graduates with the first and the second are approximately 45% and 55% consecutively.

Regarding age distribution the same study shows also that there were 1680, out of 2086 graduates, whose ages were 16 years and above. The other 406 graduates were below 16 years of age. The mean or average rate of graduates with 16 years and above was around 80%, while graduates with less than 16 years constituted the other remaining 20%.

One final remark seems to be in order here - this has to do with the relationship between the age of the trainee and the type of "degree" he receives. The writer was told that many of those who graduated with an "Assistant Master" might have deserved a "Master's", had the factor of age not interfered in their final evaluation. The excitement on the part of youngsters to join the Training Program, and their voracious attitude to master certain skills poses a serious problem, at least to the writer's mind. It is a double-edged sword: on the one hand while it is a blessing to see so many youngsters developing such a great interest in vocational training, yet, on the other hand, it is pityfull to see some of them at least, drop their schools at such an early age. The question that poses itself immediately here is the following: Suppose we confine vocational training to those who are 16 years of age and over, will that encourage the younger kids to go to school, and to what extent? Of course, there are many such kids who go to school and join the vocational training sessions

places; but the question mark will nevertheless remain, for we are not sure which one really takes preponderance over the other in the mind of these kids and their parents: formal schooling or vocational training.

c) Vocational Skills and Work Opportunities

Apparently not all vocations receive equal attention from the trainees; whether this is due to market demands, to personal tastes of trainees, to cultural and social factors, or to a combination of all these, we cannot tell. All we can say at this stage of development is that the distribution of trainees according to the vocational skills they selected showed the following scale of preference:

<u>Type of Vocation</u>	<u>Number of Trainees</u>
Tiling	560
Electricity	449
Plumbing	406
Brick-laying	271
Bar-bending & shuttering carpentry	152
Plastering	147
Decoration (painting, false ceiling, wall to wall carpetting)	65
Carpentry	<u>36</u>
TOTAL:-	2086
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As mentioned above one cannot tell why certain vocational skills such as tiling, electric wiring and plumbing receive such a high popularity as compared with the other remaining skills which are not necessarily tougher nor less rewarding. In fact, decoration which is

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university education who enroll in the Training Program in order to supplement their limited salaries by learning skills which they can use during their spare time and during vacations.

C. NEW DEVELOPMENTS

So far we have discussed the work progress with regard to the time schedule and more specifically to the trainee -- the core of the Vocational Training Program. We have not touched, however, upon some of the peripheral, but very important developments which, along with the VTP, are gradually taking roots in Lebanon. The following, we believe, are the most outstanding:

1. The first is related to the value or status of work in Lebanon, and more particularly in Rural Lebanon. In the previous evaluation, the writer observed that this Program "... seems to have broken the ice with regard to the traditional outlook on work". The traditional outlook being that "work, particularly manual work, has been considered to be beneath the dignity of a gentleman". Now, after a lapse of one and a half years since the writing of the first evaluation, there seems to be more than "breaking the ice"; actual "melting of the ice" seems to be in process. The best example of this is the rapid expansion of this Training Program, not only to most areas in Lebanon, but to areas that seemed to be, truly or falsely, somewhat sophisticated. Such areas as "Eastern Beirut" for example, have finally opened their gates to the VTP; the opening of these gates, which is long overdue, was not caused by any political considerations, but rather by a slow and gradual change of attitude toward manual work. The undue sophistication, on the part of the

inhabitants of Eastern Beirut, with regard to their outlook on manual work, is changing into a more pragmatic and realistic attitude. For the first time since the VTP was introduced to Lebanon, the "Eastern" side of Beirut has welcomed four training sessions, in Ashrafieh, Judaideh, Sin el Fil and Mudawar, with a product of approximately 350 graduates. One must underline the significance of such a development with two meaningful interpretations: a change in the value system pertaining to the concept of "work", and consequently a gradual increase in the interactive process necessary to bring together the two sectors of Beirut City.

2. The second development that is just beginning to appear on the surface is the participation of women in these training sessions. So far it has been almost impossible for women to join such vocational training sessions for obvious reasons: social and cultural pressures. In Hsarat, however, a village near Jubail (Byblos) a training session was conducted in which 20 women received training in one single skill: electricity. The ages of these women trainees ranged from 16 to 20. Here the writer would like to warn against taking this phenomenon too seriously; vocational training for women, especially in vocational skills such as the ones offered by the VTP, remains to be very far-fetched in Lebanon. The Lebanese culture is not yet open for such radical innovations; the approach to this should be through the opening up of other types of vocational training that seem to be more culturally acceptable and, at the same time, more feminine

3. A third development that is worth mentioning is what has been known as the "split sessions"; this is necessitated sometimes when a certain village requesting a training session is not

able to provide the session with the necessary "quorum" of trainees, which is normally 30. In order not to prevent such eager villages or towns from the advantages of this Training Program and the consequent benefits accrued to their communities through these training sessions, the idea of splitting the session was presented as a solution. This means that instead of having concentrated sessions in one village or one town with 30 trainees distributed among eight different skills, two neighbouring villages or towns will concurrently share the benefits of one session by having in each of these two villages or towns forty trainees trained in four different skills. This way a larger area will be sharing the benefits of the training sessions without necessarily going into extra expenses, for the "economic" unity of the session will thus be retained. The idea of "split sessions" seems to be gradually gaining grounds since it has the potentials for further innovative developments.

4. The fourth major development is the starting of "Entrepreneurial Seminars". The first (out of three envisaged Seminars) was held in Baalbeck for one full week (January 8, 1982 to January 15, 1982) at the Evangelical School. The idea of such seminars is to follow up the working graduates with further, but rather intensive training in the following areas: contracting and negotiation skills; human relations; management; marketing & purchasing procedures; quantity and quality surveying; employment regulations and other. Some fifty working graduates from the Bekaa region joined the Baalbeck Seminar and the results realized according to a very brief, but unsigned report, dug from the YMCA files, "were beyond our expectations".

5. The fifth and probably the most important peripheral development is the rise of a "community development" spirit in many of the areas where training sessions have taken place. When we talk about the "spirit of community development" we have in mind that kind of genuine type of initiative, cooperation and voluntary help undertaken by the local communities themselves. Examples of such a spirit are manifested in a number of areas the writer visited. In Tibnine, for example, a large town in South Lebanon, five training sessions were consumed. As a result of these sessions a sizable high school was built (not finished yet) by voluntary work from the several trainees (around 460) who before and after graduation applied their skills in the building of this school. The land was offered by the town of Tibnine, and many of the inhabitants participated, each in his/her own way in this common project.

Another example of this "community development" spirit can be clearly seen in Baalbeck where a large piece of land was offered to the "Arrisalah Club" to be converted into an athletics field. Through active participation of a number of trainees in the development of this project, a number of citizens became excitedly involved, and the end-product was the completion of a beautiful athletics field, a stadium that has a capacity of holding at least 300 viewers, plus a small functional building: office, bathrooms, conference hall, etc.

A third project that came out as a result of the "community development" spirit is in Howsh Rafka, a village in the midst of the Bekaa plain, and not very far from Baalbeck. There, as a result of the training sessions, a Husseinieh (social, cultural & religious meeting place) is almost completed. Trainees, through their participation in applying their skills - tiling, plastering

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electric wiring, etc., into this project, many villagers automatically found themselves involved in this socio-religious common cause. The writer was deeply impressed as he observed the trainees and villagers working together as busily as a bee-hive. When asked by the writer "what are your plans after you finish this Huseinieh?" - the answer was "we have other village projects in mind".

In conclusion, the writer is convinced that the greatest contribution the Vocational Training Program is making, is the enhancement of this "Community Development" spirit which is the seed for any real national development in the future.

D. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Conclusions

In the evaluation of any action program, such as the Vocational Training Program under study, the index of success or failure is the degree of acceptance or rejection of the program by the people concerned. Factors that lie behind acceptance or rejection may be categorized into three major categories: the innovator, the innovation and the recipient culture. These three variables quite often work independently, and unless a certain degree of compatibility exists within them we cannot expect a high degree of success.

Luckily with regard to the VTP the inter-relationship among the three above-mentioned variables seems to be a congenial one - a condition responsible for the great success of this Program. In fact, it is one of the rare cases whereby the innovation, the innovator and the recipient culture have come very close to perfect

synchronization. The YMCA, as the innovator, seems to be accepted without reservation in practically every single area it entered. The VTP, as the innovation, seems to have been whole-heartedly welcomed everywhere; and finally, the Lebanese society, especially the rural sector, as a recipient culture did not show any sensitivity to, or incompatibility with, the VTP as a whole, nor with any of its constituent elements. This is indeed a rare case.

Normally, while introducing a change, any change, it has been observed and validated that such an innovation, be it spontaneous or carefully planned, from within the community or from without, will be, to a greater or lesser extent, a disturbing element to the already existing status quos and vested interests. As a result of such inevitable disturbance, the creation and development of a negative attitude on the part of those who are negatively affected becomes consequently inescapable. Such a hypothesis has been tested and retested hundreds of times by sociologists, social workers, community developers, and other interested social experts; everytime the validity of the hypothesis seems to be reconfirmed. In Lebanon, however, the validity of this hypothesis seems to be challenged under the Vocational Training Program. Throughout practically all the interviews the writer had with trainees, trainers, villagers, Government officials, contractors, and others, the attitude was always & definitely favorable to the Program. This was despite the discrete effort made by the writer to pull out certain negative feelings, in case of their existence in the interviewees. The answers and responses seemed to be all genuinely revolving around the same idea: "this is an excellent program; we want more of it; we are grateful to the YMCA".

The only criticism, if one may call it a criticism, which was voiced by a number of people interviewed, was that the YMCA should introduce additional skills to, but different from the eight ones already offered in the field of construction. When asked "what, for example"? The answers were somewhat vague but concentrated around agriculture. Some wanted skills in agricultural mechanics to be introduced; others asked for auto-mechanics; still others asked for more sophisticated types of skills such as radio, television and other similar electronic skills. Such responses, whether rational or irrational, reflect a very positive and progressive move away from rural resignation and apathy. Very few asked for the inclusion of women in vocational skills. It was only when the writer probed for such an answer, the responses were practically identical: "Yes women ought to master vocational skills, but not these ones offered". When asked: "what, for example"? The answers revolved around "home skills" such as sewing, knitting, needlework and such similar handicrafts. Aside from these requests, just mentioned, the Vocational Training Program seems to be accepted in its totality.

In concluding, the question as to why this unanimous and rather phenomenal acceptance of the VTP, remains to be answered. After pondering over this "abnormal" exception to the rule, the author came to the conclusion which may throw light on this problem. This may be analogous to a hungry person who speaks of a banquet while eating an ordinary meal. Lebanese who are eagerly rushing to get some vocational training seem to be also hungry for such skills. In fact, one of the writer's colleagues - a university professor - expressed the feelings that he also would like to take a three-months training course in such practical skills.

II. Recommendations

The following recommendations are partly products of the writer's own manipulation of the Program, and partly from discussions, talks and interviews with a variety of concerned people.

- a) First, the Training Program has not covered all Lebanon yet; there is a definite need to expand such training in order to cover North Lebanon, to go more in depth into the Mount Lebanon and the far end of South Lebanon.
- b) Since the idea of incorporating women into such vocational training has begun to take some roots in certain areas, it becomes imperative that other skills, which meet women's needs and are compatible with people's norms and values, be introduced.
- c) Since the "Entrepreneurial Seminars" have had a relatively successful beginning, they ought to be encouraged to wider geographic areas where graduate trainees seem to cluster.
- d) "Other skills" that were recommended by the writer in the first evaluation report (see p.11) remain to be valid, especially that most of the villagers interviewed lately have reiterated the need for those skills that cluster around "machinery maintenance" and "agriculture mechanics".

e) Since the Vocational Training Program has "instigated" the spirit of community development, the YMCA Administration ought to give special attention to this developing phenomenon and encourage more participatory and voluntary work and services on the part of community people. The VTP may very well be the best tool used for the enhancement of community development spirit.

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EVALUATION OF THE AID-YMCA

VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

August 1980

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EVALUATION OF THE AID-YMCA
VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

I. FOREWORD

It should be stated at the very outset of this paper that this evaluation is not based on statistical or mathematical manipulation which tries to measure inputs against outputs as such. The nature and objectives of the Vocational Training Program under study do not fully yield themselves to such statistical scrutiny.

The program is not a commercial enterprise which necessarily evaluates its work by means of a "cost-benefit" yardstick; while the input into the Vocational Training Program can be measured in terms of dollars and cents, the output clearly cannot. The present program, despite its manifest and pronounced goals and objectives which may be summed up in two or three words, namely the reconstruction of Lebanon, goes far beyond these empirically stated objectives; it has far more reaching effects on the development of the human elements than it does on the physical construction of Lebanon or the development of other material aspects. Some of these important, though consequential, developments will be presented and discussed later on in this paper.

II. METHOD OF EVALUATION

Since the program under evaluation is still a going concern and has not terminated yet, we feel that any attempt to evaluate the final product now cannot be met with complete success. It is evident that final evaluation should not precede the termination of the project, on the contrary, enough time must be given after termination so that the end products may be seen clearly and evaluated objectively.

However, evaluation of this program or any other program in motion, despite the risks involved, remains to be a necessity, especially

if prolongation or extension of the program is in mind. The present evaluators of the Vocational Training Program are not unaware of the pitfalls and shortcomings of this type of undertaking, and despite these limitations they are confident that the present evaluation has disclosed a number of facts, the knowledge of which is indispensable to the future progress of the program. The disclosure of these facts has come about through the following steps:

First, a study of the YMCA statistical records and progress reports constituted a major base line for evaluation.

Second, observation of the program in operation was another important base line for evaluation; this was accomplished through limited field trips and visits to operational centers.

Third, informal talks and interviews that covered samples of trainees, trainers, villagers and government and non-government officials.

III. MANIFEST GOALS and OBJECTIVES of the VTP

Both the original agreement and its subsequent amendment state manifestly that the purpose of the project is to train some 2000 young Lebanese (original agreement) and another group of 1600 young men (amendment No. I) from rural and urban neighborhoods that have high concentrations of unemployed youth. The training of such a number is assumed to contribute toward the attainment of the main goal, namely the physical reconstruction of Lebanon. As a result of the civil war, it was estimated that approximately a quarter of a million left the country, while only half of these seem to have returned. Within the labor sector alone some 200,000 skilled laborers (half of which were in construction and related fields) are gone.

The need to fill in this serious construction gap becomes obviously urgent. However, peripheral to the main aim of reconstructing Lebanon, a number of major benefits were directly or indirectly construed; these can be summed up and summarized in the following:

- a) contribution toward the skilled labor force in Lebanon;
- b) ultimate rise in income of the trainees and their families;
- c) combatting unemployment;
- d) benefits accruing to communities where training centers have been, or will be, located, resulting from repairs and construction done as a part of the training program.

IV. GOALS and ACHIEVEMENTS

1. Time target

While discussing goals and achievements we might as well start with the basic question, and that is: has work in the program been going on according to schedule, and according to the time table set? When in November 1978 the YMCA received a grant of \$800,000 from U.S. AID to implement a vocational training program, the timing of the program was originally planned to terminate by the end of August 1979. Progress toward this time target, apparently, was successfully met; in fact, the task was actually completed before the target date. Similarly, under the present program (amendment No. 1) training in the different skills seems to be running relatively smoothly and according to the time table set which states that "...it is expected that by March 31, 1981, approximately 3,200 young unemployed Lebanese will be trained in construction activity". The feeling of most of the program's administrators today is that the training of the second batch of trainees will also be ahead of schedule.

2. The trainees

The second basic question that poses itself in this evaluation revolves around the trainees themselves, the core of the program.

Several questions might be raised in this context: number of trainees, success and failure in the learning of skills, age level, educational, social and economic background, etc... Fortunately, answers to most of these questions are revealed directly through, or can be deduced from, the YMCA reports and records. The following is a profile of the trainees who have completed, or are still under, training.

a) Number of Trainees Trained, Under Training and to be Trained

Out of the anticipated 3,320 trainees who presumably will have completed their training by March 31, 1981, there are (up to 5/5/1980) around 2059 graduates out of 2926 who registered and joined the training programs. This means that this shortage of around 1300 trainees will have to be covered during the ten months period beginning with 6/5/1980 and ending on 31/3/1981. Progress in work at all levels seems to indicate that this goal will be easily achieved.

b) Dropouts

The question that poses itself here is the following: what are the reasons behind dropouts and discontinuity in attendance? The answer to this question is not one and therefore it is not easy. However, we can say that around 70% of those who have registered so far have successfully completed their training, while roughly half of the remaining 30% dropped because they found other jobs. Those who failed to graduate or who dropped half way through, were forced to do so on account of certain pressures put on them by their families such as seasonal field work, family duties and other similar activities. It was indeed surprising to find out that the number of those who could not continue their training because of their inability to meet the skill requirements is negligibly insignificant. For example, the YMCA statistics on the 1980 program show, as of 5/5/1980, that out of the 737 applicants 558 successfully graduated, 82 left because they found other jobs, and only 97 dropped out. Unfortunately, there are no statistics to show reasons behind these dropouts. Our remark about the "negligibly insignificant" number of dropouts on account of their inability to meet skill requirements was based on sample interviews

with trainees, trainers and villagers who all seem to blame the "social and economic pressures" put on these young men and prevent them from successfully completing their training.

c) Age

Regarding the age level of the trainees, they all fall within one broad category ranging from 12 years of age and to 51 years. Unfortunately again, the YMCA records do not show any kind of age distribution according to type of skill, graduation, failures, dropouts, etc. All that can be deduced from the YMCA statistical record is that all training centers have been receiving applicants whose ages ranged from 12 to 51 years; there were two exceptions only: the Baisour and Salhia centers where the age of the trainees ranged between 12 and 25 only, an exceptional phenomenon that cannot be explained at the moment. Since our statistics do not show the age distribution of trainees according to any of the above-mentioned categories, we had to depend again on field observation. All we can say here is that from our observation we noticed that the great majority of trainees belonged to the teen-age and early twenty category.

d) Education

As to the educational level of the trainees, the same shortcomings we mentioned about the age level and age distribution are found here also. All that statistics show, in all of the 27 training centers, starting with Beer Hassan Center on the 29/11/78 and ending with the Chobeiry center on 5/5/80, is a broad category of educational background ranging from elementary to university education. We do not know how many trainees belong to what level of education, nor do we know the correlations between the educational level of trainees on the one hand, and the type of skill chosen by, successes and failures of, these trainees. However, we can somewhat deduce from such a broad classification that education, whether formal or informal, has not been, as usually is considered by the Lebanese, a barrier against the learning of vocational skills. The distribution of trainees over such

a wide educational range (although we don't know the frequency of distribution) is indeed a positive sign at least on the part of those trainees with secondary and university education who ventured into vocational training.

e) Employment Status Before and After Training

The great majority of trainees in both the 1979 and 1980 programs were without any kind of employment prior to training. The YMCA statistical record shows clearly that 73.5% and 78.5% of the trainees during 1979 and 1980 respectively were unemployed. Only 26.5% and 21.5% of the trainees during these respective years were either attending schools and/or employed or semi-employed. It is extremely significant, however, to note that, after training, the situation was totally reversed: 80.5% and 84.25% of the trainees who graduated in 1979 and 1980 respectively found jobs, most of which were, at least money-wise, beyond the dreams of these young people.

Another significant index revealed through the statistical record is that most of the graduating trainees are finding jobs in Lebanon, which is a stabilizing sign. Those who found jobs in Lebanon during the year 1979 constituted around 69.5% while only 30.5% had to work outside Lebanon. From the 1980 batch, 73.5% of those who found jobs are now working in Lebanon and only 26.5% are earning their living outside Lebanon.

f) Wages

There are no statistical records that show the exact earning of trainees either in Lebanon or outside. However, through limited sample surveys we have discovered that the wage earnings of these trainees range from L.L. 40 to L.L. 120 which is roughly equivalent to \$12 and \$35 respectively, depending upon the individual abilities and skills. These wages seem to be starting wages and the doors seem to be wide open, at least for a number of years to come, for potential increase

before they come close to what we call wage ceiling. A final, but rather important, remark in this context must be made. The average cost per trainee during the three months training period is around \$500, while the minimum average wage of the trainee after graduation seems to be over \$500 per month. This means that the trainee is able to earn all his training expenses in one month -- a point of great economic significance.

3. Social, Economic and Technical Benefits Accruing to Communities

Some of the striking outcomes of the Vocational Training Program are the peripheral benefits that accrue to communities where training centers are established. Socially, the most significant and striking accomplishment is the social bond that such training centers are developing. This remarkable development becomes especially appreciated when it comes at a point when the social bonds in Lebanon are on the verge of dismemberment, dissolution and disintegration. Lebanon, historically and culturally, is known to be dominated by extreme individualism. Learning how to work together and for a common cause has always been foreign to the Lebanese mentality. The need to cooperatively reconstruct Lebanon after the war seems to be seriously creeping into the minds of people. Examples of such a feeling have been clearly manifested in a number of training centers where people, old and young, and from different neighbouring areas, enthusiastically join not only in common training, but in common projects. These common projects cover a wide range of community interests: schools, clubs of all sorts, orphanages, clinics and a number of other community interests. The social effects of these different activities on the development of social bonds, social coherence and civic responsibilities cannot be under-estimated, nor do they yield themselves to economic evaluation and assessment.

Aside from the development of the spirit of social cohesion among the peoples where training centers are located, the number of skills and skillful persons created in these centers constitute great

working capital and important assets to these different Lebanese communities, and hence, to the Lebanese national development as a whole. Probably for the first time in the history of these Lebanese communities one finds such a number of "masters" with semi-skilled professions who are able to plan, develop, execute and supervise with relative efficiency and exactness, a number of tasks. The feeling of pride in one's own vocation, on the part of these young "masters", is indeed the corner stone for any genuine social and cultural change hoped for in Lebanon.

Regarding the economic benefits that have accrued to these communities, we need no proof. Tens of thousands of Lebanese Pounds are spent on trainees, bids, equipment, store keeping and the like in each and every community where training centers have been located.

V. OBSERVATIONS, INTERVIEWS AND IMPRESSIONS

We have tried in the previous section titled "Goals and Achievements" to base our evaluation on facts and figures most of which came from the YMCA reports and records. However, as mentioned in the "Foreword", we do not feel that this type of program fully yields itself to the so-called empirical and statistical evaluation; its outcomes go beyond mere numbers found in business balance sheets. It is precisely for this reason, and in order to give the Vocational Training Program due evaluation, we shall present in this section our impressions, some of which are based on observations and/or interviews.

The first impression, which yet cannot be validly tested, is related to the value or status of work in this part of the world. In Western standards, especially U.S. standards, work is located on the top of the value scale; in Lebanon as well as in a number of the Middle Eastern cultures, work has been considered rather a disvalue. Work, particularly manual work, has been considered to be beneath the dignity of a "gentleman". There are a number of socio-economic reasons behind the low status of work in this part of the world, a phenomenon that need

not be discussed here. What ought to be registered here, while evaluating this Vocational Program, is that it seems to have broken the ice with regard to the traditional outlook on work. The number and type of people rushing to be trained in the different vocations, and the pride these people are showing in these different vocations, is unprecedented in the history of Lebanon. This may be considered as a turning point in the attitudes of the Lebanese toward the value of work as such.

The second impression the Program has made upon us is the great contribution it is making, though not manifestly, toward the abolishment of the dominating traditional concepts of "charity" and "mercy". Again, like the concept of "work", these concepts have developed as a result of a number of economic and political factors, and despite their undisputed functions, they have had a number of adversaries; giving and helping on the basis of pure mercy and charity burns at both ends: it crushes the personality of the recipient and inflates the ego of the donor. It seems that the rapid growth and spread of vocational training in Lebanon will counteract the forces that gave rise to the development of such concepts as charity and mercy.

The third impression the Program made upon us was that the development of a skill, any skill, will enable the person concerned to shift with relative ease to other skills, which in turn may produce a kind of mental dexterity as well; this will ultimately help in the economic and technological development of Lebanon.

The fourth striking impression one gets from this Program is the kind of self-respect and self-esteem that are developing in the personalities of the trainees. One cannot help but see the pride that is developing in these youngsters as they graduate and become their own "master"; in fact, being called a "master" constitutes in itself a revolutionary jump from practically a "nobody" state, or from being "just another number", to a "master" and "somebody" who has a recognizable status in his society.

An important contribution ought to be underlined in the context of developing a mastery in a certain skill; the prolonged period of apprenticeship that "masters" of skills, ordinarily, had to go through, and which used to be counted in terms of years not of months, is now cut short to a period of three months. When in three months time a skill can be learned, the previously prolonged period of apprenticeship becomes an unnecessary waste of time, money and energy.

One can keep mentioning the chain of effects produced by the Vocational Training Program on the Lebanese, whether individually or collectively, economically or socially. However, we feel that what we mentioned is enough in the way of sampling out the most important, though latent and indirect, outcomes of this innovative Vocational Training Program.

The above mentioned impressions, as mentioned earlier, are based on field-trip observations and on interviews with a number of participant and non-participant people cutting across the Lebanese social strata. Few examples will illustrate this.

Dr. Sabbah Al Haj, a top Lebanese official, reports that the Golf Club in Beirut has lost, as a result of the Vocational Training Program, practically all its caddies. After investigation, the Club discovered that these caddies left their jobs to joining the Training Program.

Hajj Rifaat Sharara relates several similar stories. An old man who was receiving training was so involved in his work in one of the training centers that he was not willing to waste one minute in order to answer a question posed by an interviewer. A teen-ager who was refused to join the training center, on account of shortage of tools, came back after few days with his own kit and forced himself into the Training Program.

These and a number of other similar incidences and stories are but indices to the voracious attitude the Lebanese youths have shown toward such an innovation.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

There is no doubt that the AID-YMCA Vocational Training Program has been a success. But success is a relative term, and therefore it can easily end up in a failure if success is taken as absolute and lead us to sleep on our oars. The Program is still at its very beginning and is far from achieving what is really aspired for.

First, the Program has so far touched a fraction of Lebanon; there are many areas and communities that have not heard of such a program yet.

Second, although the number and type of skills learned at some of the training centers have been greedily grabbed by ambitious young Lebanese, we feel that the program should aim at training other equally needed skills and professions. Examples of these could be in the following areas:

a) Skills related to machinery maintenance:

- 1- auto-mechanics
- 2- tractor-mechanics
- 3- household and other domestic repairs, electric, plumbing,..... etc.
- 4- sewing, canning, cooking,..... etc.

b) Skills related to agriculture:

- 1- poultry
- 2- simple food processing

- 3- grafting and pruning
- 4- bee-keeping
- 5- rabbit-raising
- 6- mink farming
- 7- others

Third, we feel that the female sector, within the Vocational Training Program, has been completely neglected; this is not justifiable on a number of grounds which need not be reiterated in this brief evaluation.