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**USAID IMPACT ON COSTA RICA DEVELOPMENT
DURING THE LAST 50 YEARS**

THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this paper is to carry out a critical review and evaluation of the USAID's last 50 years impact on Costa Rican educational development. An analytical review of the historic evolution of education in the country establishes the following phases of its development: a) expansion of rural elementary education, b) increase and diversification of secondary education, that went from less than 12 (1945) to more than 300 high-school in 1995, c) a complete educational reform in 1970, d) a democratization of higher education in the 70's and 80's, and e) a diminution of the percentage of the national budget devoted to education from the end of the 70's until now.

More than 40 projects were funded by USAID in the educational sector. From these twenty one projects were analyzed in this paper gathered in ten cases. Four of those cases: Agriculture School for the Humid Tropical Region (EARTH), Textbooks for The General Basic Education, Central America Peace Scholarships (CAPS), and Science and Technology were pointed out as prominent by USAID. Six more cases were chosen according with four criteria: previous known impact, information available, amount of funds provided, and frequency of funding. These cases were: Vocational Education, Education and Prevention in the Use of Drugs, Fund for Women, Education Computer Science Program, Regional Technical Aid Center II (RTAC II), and Radio Learning. All ten cases were summarized, analyzed and evaluate.

Finally, a serie of major evaluative conclusions were drawn, as general statements that derived from the analyses and evaluation of the ten cases. The paper also, gives a final section on lessons learned for the USAID and for Costa Rica, as the paramount contribution of the analysis of the sector, that could serve for future intervention of USAID in other countries and for the development of Costa Rican education.

THE USAID AND THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

1. INTRODUCCION

This study is one of the group of studies developed for the evaluation of the impact of the USAID in Costa Rica, during the last 50 years. The objective of this paper is to evaluate the USAID impact on the development of the Costa Rican educational sector. In order to accomplish this task an analytical review of the historic evolution of education in the country, in the last 50 years, is established, as a framework to visualize the impact of the diverse projects sponsored by USAID.

Based on the information available from: the USAID files, obtained by the Academia de Centroamerica, interviews with persons that participated in the different projects, and documents of diverse sources, a review of ten cases is carried out. This review includes an evaluation of each one. Finally based on these critical reviews and evaluation, a global evaluation of USAID impact on Costa Rican education was carried out. The paper ends with a description of lessons learned from the experience of the several projects developed in Costa Rica by the USAID, that can be useful for USAID and for Costa Rica in the future.

2. ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

2.1 The educational sector development before the USAID projects

Between 1887¹⁸⁸⁷ and 1940, in the framework of a liberal state, the educational reform, promoted by Mr. Mauro Fernández, was implemented. Two basic laws supported the educational reform of 1987: The Fundamental Law of Public Instruction and The General Law of Common Education. The main content of the first law was the establishment of the centralization of education in the State. The second defined all the aspects of elementary education and the territorial division in educational districts (Dengo, 1995). The expansion and organization of public education, during this period, was one of the main factors that gave support to the development of Costa Rican democracy.

Nevertheless, the expansion was limited to elementary education by the government and some of the politicians of that period. They considered that the attention given to this level was enough for the development of the people in the country and gave less importance to the other levels of education. This is the reason for the poor growth of secondary education during these years.

In relationship to higher education, the University of Santo Tomás was closed in the first year of the reform, but some schools continued evolving as separated entities: the colleges of Law, Pharmacy and Fine Arts. This last fact, the positive impact on the cultural life of the country of the Escuela Normal de Costa Rica and the effect of the Chilean Misión of 1935 were factors that influenced and prepared the country for the establishment of the University of Costa Rica in 1940. According to Dengo (1995), the impact of this decision and the international movement to promote democracy by means of improvement of education was as important as the reform promoted by Mauro Fernández.

In table No. 1 it can be observed the expansion of elementary education from 1901 to 1993.

Table No. 1

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS BY YEAR

YEAR	SCHOOLS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS
1901	346 339	579 869	5515 22 388
1951	1175 2.93	5032 2.0	123 475 3.12
1993	3442	15 107	484 958

Source: (Dengo, 1995).

2.2. *Situation of the Educational Sector in 1945*

In 1945 Costa Rica's economic social and political situation was critical. The development of an exporting- dependent model, in the framework of a Liberal State, that the country had adopted since the XIX century, was arriving to its limits. The education sector was characterized by attempts to introduce structural reforms in the organization, administration and the philosophical and ideological conceptions of the Costa Rican education; in an attempt to take the education in correspondence with the changes in the economic and social structure of the country and with the ideal of widening educational opportunities for the young population. In terms of educational legislation, in 1945, the country was governed by the Law of Common Education of 1886 and by the recent Education Code, promulgated in 1944. The Law of 1886 was already obsolete; the Education Code systematized a wide variety of legislation relating to education, but it did not constitute an organic framework, that would have made possible to structure an educational system that answered to the new challenges that the country was facing. Primary education was free and obligatory since 1869, but still with coverage problems, above all in the rural area. Secondary education was conceived as an academic elitist model.

The public and private secondary schools were limited to the capital province cities of the Central Valley. Including public and private, the secondary schools were not more than a dozen. In the higher education level, the country had two institutions: the Normal School, founded in 1914 and the University of Costa Rica. The USA assistance to Costa Rica was initiated within the above context

2.3. *Evolution of Educational Policies between 1945 and 1970*

In 1945, after a year of the administration of Teodoro Picado, the educational policies maintained the principles set by the Chilean Mission of 1935. A first goal had already been achieved, the establishment of a public university, with autonomous character, for research and professional training. The structure of the secondary education and the diversification its options were outlined in order that it did not guide students, solely toward the university education. Furthermore, the creation of technical education was proposed and it was considered necessary to link education with the world of work.

A reconceptualization of primary education was proposed in accordance with scientific advances in education within the conceptions of the new school. In this aspect it had been advances from the policies emanated from the Normal School, but it was considered necessary to continue deepening the approaches of the active school in its democratic dimension. Those intentions were clear, but the economic and political crisis that the country was crossing, prevented these policies from

being implemented.

In 1948, the political legitimization crisis reached its climatic point and exploded in the country's civil war. After the war, the Government Board called to a Constituent Assembly in order to achieve a new political constitution for Costa Rica. From the educational point of view, the Political Constitution of the Republic of Costa Rica of 1949 is extremely important, since it included a section on Education and Culture which established the policies that have governed the national education until the present. To the judgement of Prof. Uladislao Gámez, Education Minister of the Board of Government of 1948-1949:

"The new constitution introduced transcendental concepts. Education was indicated as an integral process interrelated in its various cycles from pre - school to the university. That is to say, a live process, in development, dynamic and progressive. Reform was needed to adjust education to these concepts. We declared that secondary education or middle education and pre-school education should be free. We broke the dam that was preventing the growth and the development of our youth.

To avoid unnecessary and prejudicial unplanned innovations in education, we believed that the Superior Council of Education could, as a permanent institution, establish the appropriate bridges from one administration to the next, and to assure thus the continuity of the measures, on one hand and to avoid improvisation on the other.

"The University of Costa Rica took its real sense as a higher cultural institution when it was given autonomous status for the performance of its functions and full legal capacity to acquire rights and to contract obligations, as well as to set up its own organization and government" (Gámez 1970, p.27).

The administration of the Mr. Otilio Ulate began 1949 to 1953 with the return to democratic normality. Given the directions of the Constitution of 1949 and the belief in the need of external support to undertake the changes visualized in education, the technical advice of the UNESCO was sought for that purposes. In 1951, what has been designated as the first mission of UNESCO arrived. This mission structured a research, diagnostic and development program in the following areas of the national education: a) Basic Education, b) Primary Education, c) Secondary Education, d) Vocational Education, and e) Teacher Education (Monge and Rivas, 1978). In all these areas it work resulted in benefits for the country. Especially, with respect to vocational education and fundamental education (rural).

The studies and proposals of the Dr. Marvin Pittman of the United States, caused distress in our educational community. It showed the low achievement of the Costa Rican scholastic system. His report of 1953 revealed that from 42405 pupils registered in first grade only 6021 finished sixth grade, that is to say a mere 14%. The efficiency index in secondary was yet more dramatic, with only a 1% of the students that began the first year of high school graduated after five years. (Monge and Rivas 1978).

The political and demographic events implied a growth, in the 50's of the student population for the elementary and secondary levels. Thus, for example, in the elementary education the population increased from 149.979 students in 1956 to 159.694 in 1957 (6,48% in increase) (MEP 1957); in 1970 there were 337.100 students (MEP 1971). In the secondary level, the gross rate of schooling went from 11.5% in 1956 to 16.0% in 1960, to 32.1% in 1966 (Arguedas 1968). The situation in the secondary education was more explosive, since this level had been declared free in 1949. In relationship to vocational education, during the administration Figueres Ferrer (1953-1958), an agreement was signed with the Point Four (the USA Agency that preceded the AID), for the planning and development of that education modality (Gámez 1970, p.31).

In 1957 the Fundamental Law of Education was issued. This law collects and systematizes the concepts that in matter of principles, organization and administration of the educational system would be seen emerging from the decades of the 1930's and of the 1940's. This law indicates with clarity the objectives, goals, the structure, and the relations between levels it should exist in our educational system. Finally, in 1963 the reform of the Costa Rican secondary education was approved, conceived as a structure of two cycles: one basic, of common general education, other differentiated or diversified with options in liberal arts, sciences, arts and vocational studies (with industrial, commercial and agricultural choices).

The secondary education reform was given in the framework, already clear, of a new developmental model that was impelled in the country and, as in general, in all Latin America, within the developmental theory that impels the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA). In this context the Central American Common Market is formed to which Costa Rica was adhered since 1962. The United States launched its program of Alliance for Progress, giving rise to the Agency For International Development (USAID). The Central American Agreement on Unification of Basic Education was created, in June of 1962. This agreement made possible the development of a textbook program of ODECA-ROCAP, financed by the Alliance for Progress, for the teaching of spanish, mathematics, sciences and social studies in the Central American elementary schools.

With an increasing industrial development there was more demand for skilled labor. To fulfill this need the National Apprenticeship Institute (INA) was created in 1965. Since the student population was growing there was need for a greater number of educators and for centers of their training. The regional centers of the Normal School were opened in the decade of the 1950's in the north and the south regions of the country and the School of Education of the University of Costa Rica began preparing secondary education teachers. The Superior Normal School was founded in 1968, to prepare secondary education teachers. The decade of the 1960's ended with a clear concept of the relationship between education and development. Education is considered not only a social change factor but an economic investment, too.

The USAID assistance responded, during this period, to the educational needs established by the governments of Costa Rica (GCR). In the bilateral relationship between the GCR and USAID, the projects established were directed to give technical assistance to the University of Costa Rica (UCR) and the Ministry of Education (MOE). In the UCR the support was directed to the training of professors in the U.S.A. and the funding of visiting professors as an assistance in the creation of the School of Medicine, and in the establishment of the laboratory of Industrial Arts and of the Laboratory School of the School of Education. In the MOE there was support for Vocational Education, for the establishment of the laboratory schools at the normal schools, and for the writing and publishing of textbooks of elementary education (a Central America project).

2.4. Evolution of Educational Policies between 1970 and 1995

In the 1970's the country deepens the developmental scheme and the Welfare State, and developed social institution with the goal of producing social changes by means of non-formal education.

In education, the most ambitious and integral plan of reform, during the XX century in Costa Rican education, was launched. The principal objectives of this plan, conceived as a national plan of educational development for a 10 years term, were to widen the educational opportunities in all the levels of the education, from the preschool to higher education, and to make education into a key factor

for national development (MEP 1971). The reform encompassed the following aspects: 1) **Structural**: The articulation of a new structure of the Costa Rican educational system, integral and organizational was achieved, that structure is still governing the system (2) **Quantitative**: an impressive expansion in the number of pre-schools, secondary and higher education was achieved. (3) **Qualitative**: the traditional conception of the study plans and programs, of teaching methodologies and of the evaluation of students learning, was changed. Furthermore, the conception of the general basic education of 9 years, free and obligatory was introduced, with some weaknesses that remain to the present, diversified and adult education were structured. (4) **Administrative**: the functional sectors of the Ministry of Public Education were designed, (planning, technical advice, direction and control of the execution, support) within a disconcentrated vision of management. Those administrative sectors still govern the MEP, with the technical innovations of the case. (5) **Legal**: a new General Law of Education was proposed, but was not approved because of partisan political reasons. (6) **Financing and costs of the education**: the budget allotment system for public education was reorganized, and minimum funding levels were established with respect to gross domestic product (GDP) and the national budget.

Table No. 2 shows investment per capita in education from the beginning of the century to 1989. It can be observed that expenditure in education grew continuously from 1929 to 1980. That growth is more accelerated in the seventies, it was almost duplicated. In 1981 there was a strong decrease that can be attributed to the economic crisis that was suffered by the country. The lower investment was maintained during the eighties.

Table No. 2

PER CAPITA EXPENDITURE IN EDUCATION,
COSTA RICA (U.S.\$ 1970)

YEAR	EXPEDIT.	YEAR	EXPEDIT.	YEAR	EXPEDIT.
1929	6,5	1949	6,4	1969	31,6
1930	6,9	1950	6,3	1970	35,4
1931	6,2	1951	6,7	1971	41,8
1932	5,6	1952	8,1	1972	42,4
1933	6,0	1953	9,5	1973	44,1
1934	5,9	1954	10,4	1974	47,0
1935	5,2	1955	11,3	1975	49,3
1936	5,0	1956	12,7	1976	53,7
1937	5,4	1957	13,9	1977	53,8
1938	5,7	1958	17,4	1978	60,5
1939	6,0	1959	17,5	1979	62,1
1940	7,1	1960	19,3	1980	63,6
1941	6,6	1961	18,9	1981	45,8
1942	6,1	1962	19,9	1982	35,2
1943	6,5	1963	19,7	1983	37,8
1944	5,6	1964	21,5	1984	37,0
1945	5,3	1965	23,8	1985	35,7
1946	5,3	1966	27,3	1986	37,6
1947	6,2	1967	30,8	1987	36,7
1948	6,1	1968	34,7	1988	36,3
				1989	37,6

Source: Mata (1996).

In the decade of the 1970's Costa Rica carried out the huge task of "cantonización" (at least one high-school per county), of technical as well as academic secondary education. As designed and implemented, each area of population of more than 5,000 inhabitants would include a secondary educational center. This implied an increase in the student population of the secondary education that automatically created pressure on higher education. For this reason the state higher education system grew and the Costa Rica Institute of Technology, The State Open University, The National University and the first community colleges were created. The first private university, Autonomous Central America University was also created. Regional centers of the public universities were opened. There was a clear policy of democratization of the higher education.

The Carazo Odio administration (1978-1982) supported the right to education of all Costa Ricans and sought to widen the opportunities of an education qualitatively better, within the conception of an education for the human promotion, in the framework of the socio-economic regionalization of the country. For this reason, this government launched an educational regionalization, which implied an integral redefinition of the education from the philosophical, legal, administrative, qualitative and physical view point. After the integral reform of the education of the 1970's, this constituted also, an integral reform of the Costa Rican education. A different philosophical framework of greater socio-cultural orientation was intended. The regional redefinition was achieved and the administrative and the technical - pedagogic desconcentration began, but the new philosophical and qualitative-curricular framework could not be concretized. In general, during this period there was a greater impulse to the parauniversity education, as well as to the pre-school education, which began its growth in the private sector, too.

In the framework of the crisis lived by the country between 1980 and 1981 and the transition post - crisis period between 1982 and 1986, and in spite of the significant decrease in the budgets for education, the country had maintained educational system within acceptable indicators. In that transition period, the Ministry of Education maintained the rhetoric of improving the quality of the education, but without a viable organic plan. A textbook program was created (books "Hacia la Luz") as one of the means to improve the quality of the education.

From 1985, as it was noted before, a new capitalistic modernization approach was implemented, designated by some as the exports promotion model. This model would be based on the "agriculture of change" to diversify away from traditional crops and to insert the country in the technological revolution of data processing, computer science and bioengineering. Departing from these essential conceptions, they have reestablished the roles of Costa Rican education, in a framework which is bounded to the instrumental technical reasoning which binds efficiency with competitiveness.

Departing from those ideas, in the period 1986-90, a return to the classroom, to an essential instructional system and to the basics of education, was proclaimed, i.e., to the essential minimal contents. Computer science and data processing were introduced in a planned way in the Costa Rican educational system. To guarantee the essential minimal contents the administration of criterion - referenced tests in 3, 6 and 9 grades of the Basic General Education were approved and the baccalaureate comprehensive tests at the end of secondary education were re-established. This measurement system for student achievement is still in effect in 1996.

The improvement of the education offered in one-room schools (or one-teacher schools) was sought in the 1986-90 period. However, the positions followed in order to guide the organization of the curriculum in these institutions was removed from the general policy of the period and was based

not on minimal contents, but in the learning process itself. Precisely, this policy of an education based in processes of learning was the one which prevailed in the period 1990-94, when all the study programs for the Basic General Education and for the Academic Diversified Education were reformed. But, since 1994 the approach of the administration of 1986-90 is re-introduced and the study programs are restructured in the line of the basic or essential contents. The higher education of the 1980's is characterized, as most of the countries in Latin America, by the proliferation of private universities, many of those without adequate infrastructure and academic staff to be properly called a university. However, the Costa Rican population has accepted, in a clear way, the private universities. One must also have to note that during the 1980's and to the present time there has been a development of the private pre-school education and that there has been an increase also in private elementary and secondary institutions.

The Costa Rican Educational System, in the last 20 years, has suffered a qualitative damage, which is evident by several factors, among them, the following: a) knowledge level showed by the High School graduates; b) loss of values of Costa Rican cultural heritage; c) an increase in the proportion of drop-outs; d) lack of response to the students needs in the information age; e) lack of motivation from educators to learn for themselves and f) lack of a true national long term policy that guides the development of education in the country despite of partisan politics.

There were not identifiable projects from the USAID in support of the reform established by the MOE in the early 70's. Two projects were developed during the decade of the seventies: Fund for Women and Science and Technology. These two projects did not respond to MOE initiatives, the first one intended to offer educational and work possibilities to poor women of the urban areas. The objective of the second was the improvement of the country's scientific and technological base, through a loan to CONICIT. During the 1984 to 1995 period there was a huge increment in the assistance given by the USAID in the educational sector. The assistance during these years attempted to support: MOE programs, private initiatives, and U.S. political objectives. The following cases: General Basic Education (GBE) textbook program, the aid to the Omar Dengo Foundation's (FOD) computer education program and the radio learning project, are examples of support to MOE educational policies. One example of the second case was the establishment of the Agriculture School for the Humid Tropical Region (EARTH). Finally the Central American Peace Scholarships (CAPS) responded to an U.S. policy to Central America and is an example of various projects that were initiatives of the USAID.

2.5. Effects of Educational Development on Costa Rican welfare.

Since Costa Rica emerged as an independent republic in 1821, education has been seen as a means of development and as a way to form a national civil and democratic character. These are, also, the ideas that they have guided the evolution Costa Rican education since the decade of the 1940's to the present.

Table No. 3 contains some indicators of the evolution of Costa Rican education. It can be observed that illiteracy had decreased, while schooling and higher education graduation had increased.

Table No. 3

INDICATORS OF THE EVOLUTION OF COSTA RICAN EDUCATION: 1940-1990

INDICATOR	UNITS	40	50	60	70	80	90
Illiteracy for people over 12 years old	%	27	21	16	13	10	7
Schooling for people over 15 years old	years	N.D.*	4,1	4,4	5,5	6,7	6,5
Higther education graduation	number	107	138	167	831	4 048	7 158

*No data available.

Source: (Proyecto Estado de la Nación, 1995)

The Costa Rican population has today a life expectancy at birth of 73 years, one of the highest in the world. Education and health have been responsible for arriving at this situation. The illiteracy rate is one of the lowest in the developing countries. This fact impacts positively so that the bulk of the population is able to adapt to the dizzying changes, that the scientific - technological development is generating in production processes and in the ways of life. But, furthermore, an educational culture as ours puts us in guard against the negative aspects, that brings the use of the technical instrumental reasoning. Our education sponsors the solidarity in the framework of social justice.

The democratization of the secondary and the higher education, through the growth of the educational opportunities in the decades of the 1960's, of the 1970's and of the 1980's has contributed to a development of literature, the theatre, dance, music and scientific - technological research, unprecedented in the history of the country. The artistic and scientific community has grown thanks to the development of higher education. In spite of the severe economic crisis that the country suffered from the beginning of the decade of the 1980's, today the country enjoys one the highest quality of life indices of the world, according to the last United Nations data. Our education is one of the principal factors that determines the place Costa Rica occupies among the nations of the world.

3. ANALYZED PROJECTS

The economic assistance of U.S. AID to the educational sector of Costa Rica had been very varied in it approach and reflected the general phases established by Fox (1995) of US economic assistance to Costa Rica.

During the first period (1945-1961) the emphasis was on training of Ministry of Education personnel and University of Costa Rica academicians. Funds were also provided for technical assistance. Two projects are examples of this phase: Vocational Education, which led to the opening of the first four vocational high-schools in the country and funded the training of Costa Rican in this field. The second project was the assistance given to The University of Costa Rica for the creation of the College of Medicine. The U.S. A.I.D. provided funds for U.S professors to come to teach and for Costa Rican professors to get graduate degrees in Medicine and related basic sciences. Both projects are good examples of Costa Rican initiatives that receive a fundamental impulse by the USAID, that proved to be of great impact.

In the second phase (1961-1972), one of the goals of Alliance for Progress was mass education for primary-aged children AID, through its Central America office (ROCAP), funded a very important

project: The Central American Textbook Project produced elementary education textbooks and teacher's guide for the four basic subjects. These books were used in the five Central American countries. In Costa Rica they constituted a very important education element, primarily for the rural schools children and for all teachers in the country. It is clear that, education was not, even a middle rank priority of US assistance, because there were not other significant projects in that period.

This trend of considering education as a low priority for the USAID continued during the third phase (1973-1981). Only one project: "Overseas Education Fund" was funded during this period. This dealt with the education of women of poor urban areas through training for economic activity. At the end of this period (1979) an important project: "Science and Technology" received funds through a soft loan. Although this is not an specific educational project, it had elements by which it could be considered in the education sector: scholarships for graduate studies of scientific academicians from the universities and the technological extension components, which is mainly a form of education offered to small farmers and industrial entrepreneurs, as it tried to make technological advances comprehensible to these persons.

The last phase represented a huge increase in funding to education related activities from AID. One of the strategies of the Kissinger Plan was the sharing of benefits of future growth. This meant the "expansion of education, social and economic infrastructure". To reach this goal a broad number and types of projects were funded, among the more important: the CAPS scholarships, the textbooks series "Hacia la Luz", the EARTH and the partial funding of "Fundación Omar Dengo".

In this 50 years of USAID assistance to Costa Rica in education some 40 projects were funded, the vast majority with positive impact for the development of Costa Rica. Twenty one of these projects are analyzed in detail in this paper: twelve of them will be analyzed as four larger projects: Textbooks (four projects), Central American Peace Scholarship (two projects), Regional Agricultural School-EARTH (five projects) and Science and Technology (one project). These four larger projects were chosen by James Fox, one of the major researchers of the evaluation study: "USAID Impact on Costa Rica Development During the Last 50 Years", given their importance and the available information.

Other projects were chosen by: a) the previous known impact, b) the information available, c) the amount of funds provided, and d) frequency of funding, were analyzed. These nine projects will be analyzed as: Vocational Education (one project); Overseas Education Fund, (two project); Drug Awareness (one project); Radio Learning Project (one project); Fundación Omar Dengo (two projects), and Regional Technical Center II (one project).

Finally, it is important to establish that this evaluation was not a total study of the impact of the USAID in the educational sector of Costa Rica. Since not all the USAID projects, in this sector were analyzed, nor the educational components of projects in other sectors (training an scholarship programs) were taken into account in the analysis. In this sense this is a partial analysis of the USAID impact in the educational sector.

CASE No. 1
AGRICULTURE SCHOOL FOR THE HUMID TROPICAL REGION (EARTH)
PROJECT No. 596-0129, 515 0192, 515 0222

Objective of the project: To offer a base of professional human resources with the practical and educational experience that is needed to face the agricultural production problems of the humid tropical region of the Americas.

National context: Costa Rica, within the Central American political context, received economic aid from developed countries, to neutralize guerrilla groups and prevent the advance of ideologies opposed to the forms of government established in the region. Part of that resources flow was used for the creation of the Earth. This project, born of a national initiative, resulted from a coincidence of interest among Costa Rican entrepreneurs, the Government of Costa Rica and U.S. AID. Furthermore it required the support of the Kellogs Foundation, for the initial feasibility studies. The project is executed then with the decisive support of the Government of the United States, the Kellog Foundation and other international organizations.

Motivation of the project: To support an idea had not given the expected results when attempted by university institutions in the country. This idea is related to the sustainable managing problems of the humid tropics and could be summarized as: The challenge is to learn how these forces are to be met in ways which will allow millions of people to live in sustainable relationships with the land, without the wholesale destruction of the natural resource base, or the degradation of individual communities and indeed cultures (Bawden, Rigby, Warren, 1991).

Amount donated by USAID: \$103.000.000 (US dollars)

Counterpart: There was no counterpart

Characteristic of the execution and limitations: The initial feasibility studies for the creation of the Earth were elaborated by a special commission. By the Law No. 7044, the Earth was approved in September of 1986 by the Legislative Assembly. The campus was built on a property of 3,000 hectares in the Atlantic Zone of Costa Rica, which included a banana plantation, primary and secondary forest and zones of pasture. It has been preserved and improved and furthermore, it includes a working farm, so that the students can undertake projects and gain practical experience. EARTH began operation in March 1990, with the acceptance of 60 students. Fifty students entered in the second year. Since 1992, about 105 students have been accepted per year. The smaller students acceptance in the two first operational years was due to the fact that sufficient dormitories and teaching facilities were not yet available. Currently they have capacity for 400 students, approximately 100 for year. According to conversations with the Rector and the Academic Vicerector of the institution, the Earth is financed by means of an endowment. This does not fully cover expenses. The annual shortfall of about a million dollars is covered through a program of donations, gifts and special projects.

Expected results: Physical and academic consolidation of the school. To be accredited and to have a national and international standing and continuous relations with institutions and agencies of the field. As of 1993, 100 professional by year, at licentiate level, in the field of the agricultural sciences. These professionals will promote the sustainable development in the humid tropical regions of the American continent.

Actual results: The School has useful and efficient physical facilities. Its study program had been recognized by other academic institutions and it is developing important projects with national and international institutions (for example: convenants with Costa Rican and foreign universities. With NASA it has a research project). Currently, it is at full capacity, with 40 professors and an enrolment of 400 students. In 1993, the first 52 students graduated and in 1994 another 44 students graduated. The rate of graduation for these groups was 87.3%.

Evaluation: In 1991 the AID contracted an evaluation of the EARTH, which was accomplished by Bawden, Rigby and Warren. The evaluation results that have most relevance for this work are summarized by saying that the school has been an institution which has begun with well-aimed steps. Important successes include: a) The separation between the roles of the office of the General Directorate and the Administration and Finances Office. b) The increases in autonomy through institutional development. c) The relationships of respect gained among staff and the offices of the General Directorate, the Academic Directorate and the Administrative Directorate. d) The constant communication between the General Director and the Academic Director and with staff of the institution. e) The involvement of the educational staff in planning and curriculum changes. f) The academic policy of learning by doing and to make the students responsible of their own learning. g) The appropriate students and educators recruitment. h) The time granted to the educators for planing the curriculum and to have non-formal interaction with students. i) The scholarships assignment and financial aids to the students, according to their economic resources.

According to Fox, 1995, this project is localized in the period 82-93, in which the AID began its policy of macro-economic stabilization and restructuration, including the liberalization of the forces of the private sector. The previous period had given fundamental importance to basic needs and fighting poverty. In that context, the EARTH was an answer to this previous period, concerning the needs of the rural development, but also to the subsequent period concerning the strengthen of the private sector. Undoubtedly, without the help of the AID, the EARTH might not have been created in the conditions in which it was made. The moment was auspicious and the support of the AID contributed to the fact that the Kellogg Foundation, as well as the Government of Costa Rica and the foreign universities participated directly in it execution. It is possible that if the help of the AID had not been given, some other financial organization could have assumed it, because it was a Costa Rican idea.

The conditions of that historic moment, and the fact that it was a donation favored the results obtained in this successful institution. AID was a fundamental factor for the creation of the EARTH, consolidating the ideas of Mr. Rodolfo Cortés, a visionary man, who since the 1960's had been fighting for an institution with the characteristics of EARTH. The results obtained until this moment indicate that the EARTH has been achieving its purposes, and that has already a course that opens new developmental routes. Possible mistakes with respect to this institution were not evident in the analysis undertaken, perhaps because it is still in a consolidation stage.

Even though EARTH seems to be a very successful project for AID, it is also true, in our view of Costa Rican educational needs, that the money could have been spent in other areas of education such as: new equipment for vocational schools, additional funds for the PIE program of the Omar Dengo Foundation, or a normal school with the same organizational, political and economical characteristics of EARTH. Any of these projects would have a greater benefit for the education of the children and youngsters of the country

CASE No. 2
TEXTBOOKS FOR THE GENERAL BASIC EDUCATION (G.B.E.)
FIRST PROJECT, NO 515-0083, 515-0085
SECOND PROJECT NO 515-0192, 515-0194A

The textbooks for the G.B.E. were part of two USAID projects, within the Education Sector, developed in two different periods. The first was managed for all Central America, between 1964 and 1974, and the second only for Costa Rica twenty years later, between 1984 and 1986.

Objective of the projects: To collaborate with the Education Ministry to increase the quality and the productivity of the GBE. To offer a series of textbooks for the GBE, that would answer the needs of having a consistent series of texts, adapted to the different levels and related to the reality (Central American in the first project and national in the second).

National context: The first project was managed in the context of the Central American Common Market by initiative of the area governments, on account of the visit that made the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, in 1963. The second project was managed in other national context, but was answering to similar needs as the previous one, because the textbooks of 1960's had already fulfilled their useful life, from the viewpoint of the MOE authorities, because even today, old teachers still use them as auxiliary textbooks. They had been reprinted, but not improved, in spite of having been widely criticized for poor quality and lack of adaptation to Costa Rican culture. The second textbook initiative was Costa Rican and the textbooks were to be used in Costa Rica, but this national effort encouraged the other countries of Central America to make similar attempts, using the Costa Rican experience. Imported books from other countries had proliferated between the first and the second projects, but the public institutions had a need for a new series of low-cost textbooks.

Motivation of the projects: To support the development of textbooks quality of education and as an important instrument to guarantee a minimum educational contents for the GBE. A World Bank study to evaluate the textbooks of the Series "Hacia la Luz" Cycle I, asserts that data then available, the utilization of the texts seems be the factor that is most frequently associated positively to academic achievement (Paniagua, Fournier and Pernudi 1987).

Amount donated by USAID:	First project:	\$1.006 000 (US dollars)
	Second project:	¢ 142.590 000 (CR colones)

Counterpart:	First project:	There was no counterpart
	Second project:	¢ 115.043 000 (CR colones)

Execution characteristic and limitations: The Central American books of the Series ODECA-ROCAP were prepared by educators, not by specialized writers, in Guatemala City. These educators were chosen by the authorities of the MOEs of the Central America countries. "We were pioneers in a necessary and urgent activity, something which served so that others could improve on with future efforts" (Leal, personal interview, 1995). Furthermore, in 1967, the Central American Institute of the textbook was created, to preserve this initiative. In the case of the second book generation, the execution was carried out by the Costa Rican Chamber of the Book and the Public Education Ministry. US AID provided technical advice and financed training courses and travel expenses. The series included books for students, each with its corresponding guides for the teachers, in Spanish, Sciences, Social Studies and Mathematics, for the two first cycles of the G.B.E. They were well accepted by the teachers and the students, who considered them a great help for their education. They were used: a)

more as consultation books than as textbook; b) more in rural than urban areas and, c) more by the teacher than by the child. However, in both projects the books were criticized by specialists for weaknesses in the quality of the language used; the content: (sometimes with concept mistakes and topics superficially treated); methodological inflexibility that encouraged passivity; and unattractive design. Furthermore, the textbooks written for a Central American context, with U.S. influence, were considered poorly adapted, in many cases, to the particularities of the Costa Rican students. Even when the two projects were undertaken during different periods, the acceptance that educators and students gave them, and the criticisms on the part of specialists and the press, were quite similar in both cases. The booksellers also attacked them, perhaps because of the competition for their businesses. In spite of the criticisms the Costa Rican Government, during the time both series of textbooks had been in use, did not revise them. This could be explained by three reasons: one, it was a difficult and expensive task, second, to silence the criticisms it would have been more successful to write a new series, and third, it did not represent any political advantages to invest in arranging them. In both projects the fact that students could not take the books home or could not write on them was also criticized. This put a severe limitation on their use. It is not clear who took this decision, but with the third generation of textbooks that are being written now, within the project loan from the World Bank, the same decision has been taken.

Expected results: In both projects, the intention was to produce re-usable textbooks of low cost for the two first cycles of the GBE. General use of the textbooks was expected, and it was expected that their quality would improve the quality of education.

Actual results: In both projects, free textbooks were distributed to all public schools of the country, with a real utilization in more than 90% of the schools. They were used more by the teacher than by the students. The prevailing function of the book seemed to be centered as a complement of the subject matter program (Paniagua, Fournier and Pernudi 1987). The quality of the texts in both projects was questioned by specialists.

Evaluation: Both textbook elaboration projects were formally evaluated, and they were also exposed to public opinion and to the communication media. In relationship to the first project, there was a 1966 seminar of the National Educators Association, in which fundamental points were discussed about these textbooks, this allowed to generate a kind of diagnosis. In 1967 the USAID contracted an evaluation, which was accomplished by Donald A. Lemke (Castro Oscar 1972). In the 1970s the ODECA / ROCAP contracted another consultant: John E. Searles, who completed an evaluation at the Central American level (Castro Oscar 1972). The final report on the textbooks project ODECA / ROCAP (Castro Oscar 1972) included a contextualization that notes purposes and objectives, characteristic of the execution, lists of printed books (by AID, as the reprintings made by MEP), names of the books, costs and years in which they were printed. The most important conclusions from these evaluative reports were: in general the books were used and favorably accepted by educators and students, more in the rural than in the urban areas, where the criticism was greater. The educators considered that the books helped them with their educational task. The students showed interest in them, as a response to what the books provide to their learning. Children that have used the books learned faster in comparison with those who did not use them. For the second project, there is a 1987 evaluation with the sponsorship of the Organization of American States and the Multinational Center of Educational Research. (Paniagua, Fournier and Pernudi 1987). The analysis was made based on the objectives of the series, the pedagogic, psychological, sociological and philosophical characteristics of the books, its elaboration process, the opinion of pupils, educators and principals and the content in each of the subjects: Language, Mathematics, Sciences and Social Studies. The most relevant conclusions in this report were: there was a positive attitude of the educators toward the texts, although there was also

some criticism. The use of the books was practically universal for all subjects matters. The guide for the teacher was used more than the text of the children. The prevailing function of the books was as a complement to the school program and in classroom practices, in smaller proportion in the development of the lessons. The content of the texts was not perceived with the expected clarity. The teacher training offered had very small coverage. For the second projec, the distribution of the book was deficient, unsystematic and limited. For both proyects teachers took care of the books and in some schools they are still using them as auxiliary books.

The most important apropiateness of these two projects can be stated as: to develop an instrument of support for educators and students that could be used during the teaching and learning processes, and that was well accepted by the protagonists of these processes.

It is possible that AID's help the textbooks elaboration projects would have been accomplished in Costa Rica, because since the decade of the 1960's, it was already considered a need, but possibly it might not have been made when it was accomplished. But later, perhaps with the education reform of the 1970's and with the aid of some financial organization; because the country was not in the condition to assume an investment of such magnitude in the 1960's.

The writing of the textbooks meant, first for Central America and then for Costa Rica, the achievement of a task that was considered complex for our milieu, where there was a "notebook" tradition. On the other hand, according to newspapers sources, during the firs project, AID was interested in influencing the content of the books and the training of the educators that wrote them. One example in teacher training was the inclusion of an English course, that was not essential for writing the books, as it was pointed out in the communication media of the time. Only by content analysis studies of the books could this controversy be cleared.

However, reading the evaluation reports some questions arise that could be useful in future projects: Why were the authors chosen without considering the top-level specialists in each field? Why were persons trained to write the texts, when there was available trained specialists that could have done the job? Why were the texts not revised in depth, before being published, in order to settle the theoretical, epistemological and methodological weaknesses, that were noted earlier? Why were the textbook reprinted, but not revised? Why was it thought that the texts would be used by several student generations, regardless of an efficient administration? Why was the possibility that they could be bought at low cost by the students not considered, so they could be taken home and owned by the students? Answere to this questions were not available in the different evaluation.

Finally, it is proper to established that both textbook projects made an important contribution to Education in the country, because they filled a necessity felt by teachers, students and administrators. It positive impact on Education was reflected in the continuos use by teachers as a auxiliary book.

CASE No. 3
CENTRAL AMERICA PEACE SCHOLARSHIPS (CAPS)
PROJECT Nos. 515-0242, 515-0254

In 1952, USAID initiated its participant training program in Costa Rica. More than 5,400 Costa Rican benefitted with the different programs. From 1952 to 1973 around 2,000 person were funded in a wide variety of fields. There was a decline in training support in the 1970's. However, in the late 1970's and early 1980's USAID/Washington's LAC Bureau initiated a series of regional training-projects that trained some 400 Costa Ricans in the U.S. The new approaches used in these modest projects, were later expanded in the CLASP and the CAPS Central American projects.

Project objective: To equip a broad base of youth, women, teachers, and potential leaders in Costa Rica with technical skills, training and academic education as well as an appreciation and understanding of the workings of a free enterprise in a democratic society. This is the declared objective for CAPS programs.

National Context: In the mid 1980's Costa Rica was in a very serious situation. On one hand the economic problems derived from the severe crisis confronted by the Carazo Odio administration and on the other the Central America political reality of revolutions, counterrevolutions and civil wars, caused a climate of insecurity in Costa Rican society and serious limitations for the private and public sector development. One of the areas affected was the capacity of the country to finance the training of Costa Ricans abroad.

Project Motivation: The CAPS I, and CAPS II projects, have their origin in: a) The recommendations of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America (NBCCA); b) The Central America Initiative approved by the US Congress in 1985; and c) The need to offset the huge increment of Soviet and east-bloc countries scholarships for central americans between 1977 and 1982.

It is clear that these projects had specific political, economical and development goals, but also responded to a need of Costa Rica, given the political and economic situation of the country explained before. The program established showed a direction toward favoring the economic and socially disadvantaged, short terms technical training, program quality over costs considerations, and the identification of potential leaders.

Amount donated by USAID: \$ 42.63 millions (US dollars)
(for Central America)

Government of Costa Rica counterpart: ₡ 4.1 millions (CR colones)

Execution characteristics and limitations: These Central American programs were different from preceding programs both in concept and implementation. The programs included a combination of economic development and strategic objectives and tried to incorporate the lessons learned from previous programs: a) They had a primary emphasis on selection criteria of participants rather than on field of training. b) The guidelines required a careful recruitment and selection process to implement the requirements that at least a 70% of all selected scholars be disadvantaged socially or economically and 40% be women; also within this overall target group, youth, rural people, community leaders and the private sectors were privileged in the selection process. Most of the scholars (80%) were sent to short term training (more than 28 days, but less than 9 months). During the implementation of CAPS II, the leadership criterion was elevated to the primary consideration for recruitment and selection, that meant to concentrate on individuals with greater potential to influence the direction of their

communities and societies.

After selection, the second major consideration was technical or academic training. Technical training included on the job training, technical courses at community colleges or universities, short-term technology transfer or a combination of these forms. Academic training was defined as any program at a college or university that resulted in a degree. For the long term scholarships the program emphasis was undergraduate training, in general Ph.D. level was considered inappropriate. Observation tours, seminars and conferences were an important element in the program. The appropriateness of training was judged according to its contribution to: a) enhance the leadership role of the individual; b) exposure to the working of free enterprise economy; c) the opportunity to build lasting relationships with American citizens and institutions and d) enhance professional or technical skills that contribute to economic development.

A final and important consideration of the program was the Experience America component. This was an experimental and participatory approach to American life and values, particularly related to democratic institutions, free enterprise and personal relationships with Americans. Several academic areas were excluded from the scholarships: medicine, veterinary medicine, dentistry, topography and architecture.

Expected results: The target for CAPS in Central America was 12,200 trainees. For Costa Rica it expected to train over 2,000 persons. By the end of the program the trainees, according to the AID's Project Paper (1990), "are expected to be employed in their respective fields of expertise, applying the skills learned in the US, and to have benefited from the program in terms of either finding an appropriate job or having increased responsibility or salary in a existing one. Furthermore it is expected that returned Peace Scholars will be active and influential in community or professional affairs and that they will maintain some relationship with the US. Finally Peace Scholars are expected to develop an understanding of some aspects of US life, values and institutions relevant to their own occupation or situation". (p. 10)

Actual Results: 2,368 Costa Ricans were trained during the CAPS period (1985-95), fifty percent of the scholarships were short-term, 33% were long-term high-school students sent for the academic year period, and 17% were undergraduate and graduate scholars, that attended American colleges and universities. According to different sources, the program produced a good impact on the life and on the community of the scholars. From the viewpoint of USAID personal and the different evaluators of the program, it was very successful, because the goals were met.

Evaluation: Several evaluations and audits were carried out to assess the process, management and the impact of training under CAPS. (Aguirre 1990; USAID 1991 and Saunders-Smith, Seelye and Castillo 1995). All these evaluations agreed that the program had the following positive results: a) high level of trainee satisfaction (88.6%, Aguirre 1988), b) most (87%) of the trainees found a job or felt they have a better job than prior to the training (77%) (Aguirre, 1990), c) a much better perception of the United States and American life, d) the knowledge and skills learned during training were useful and applied in the job for a great majority of the trainees; e) contacts with U.S. counterparts were maintained (Chesterfield, et al, 1989); f) changes in the trainee's vision of themselves: more confidence, self discipline and more responsible, g) a new vision of their country, their culture and the relationship among cultures, h) community involvement, most trainees played a leadership role in their community or in the job place.

It is clear from the conclusions in these prior evaluations, that the U.S. government planned objectives for CAPS were achieved; that the economic and political objectives were attained, since the participants in the programs had the opportunity to live the American free enterprise and democratic ideals and had contacts with American citizens and institutions; they also got acquainted with U.S. products, services and technologies and understood the mutual benefits of the relationships of the private and public sectors of both nations.

The developmental objective of providing Costa Rica with the trained manpower to manage economic growth and developmental programs effectively, was also attained, but could have been reached with greater positive impact to Costa Rica, if different requirements or prioritizations of requirements were used to choose scholars for the different types of scholarships. For the long term scholarships for undergraduate and graduate studies, a greater weight to the academic background and record of the future scholar had to be given, than been socially or economically disadvantaged. It is well known in predictive validity studies for college and university entrance, that students with better previous academic record have a greater possibility to be successful in university programs. Academically potential better candidates for university studies were not chosen because they were middle class or lived in the urban areas, given that the criteria for selection were the same for all types of scholarships. The selection process and its requirements were good for the short-term and the long-term high school scholarships, but do not seem logical for choosing the better potential candidates for college and university studies.

Another general consideration about the requirements and selection process could be made: Why the same requirements that were applied to the other Central American countries were applied to Costa Rica, especially those aimed to meet the objective of understanding a democratic society, if the political, history and democratic background of the country were different to the other Central American countries? It seems that a great deal of money was spent in short-term training aimed, principally, at the achievement of this objective, that could be spent in a greater number of long-term scholarships which would have more benefits for the educational system and the development of the country. It should be remembered that the public universities in Costa Rica had, for the last 15 years, lack of economic resources that did not allow them to send young scholars to study abroad, and therefore programs like CAPS, were one of the few ways to maintain its faculty training program.

Apart from the two limitations, commented before, it is evident that the CAPS program has benefited Costa Rica. There are several examples, that can support, that the Peace Scholars have had an important impact in their communities and job places and that the skills and knowledge acquired benefited the development of Costa Rica. It is also clear, due to the economic crisis of the 1980's, that the country did not have the economic resources to carry out a training program as the one provided by CAPS.

CASE No. 4
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
PROJECT No. 515-0138

Project Objective: To strengthen Costa Rica's capacity to plan, conduct, and apply to its productive processes, scientific and technological research, which takes into account the needs of Costa Rica's poorest groups and the rational use of its natural resources.

National context: At the end of the 1970's Costa Rica entered into a deep economic crisis with the collapse of the import substitution model, and reinforced by the armed conflicts intensified in Central America. The GOCR developmental strategy as reflected by the 1979-1982 National Development Plan "places greater stress than has existed in the past on achieving a more efficient productive structure, on the nationalization of resources used, both human and natural, and on the permanent socio-economic improvement of the Costa Rican population, especially its poorest segments, though higher productivity and greater access to the means of production". (USAID 1979, p. 9-10). Other concerns of the plan were "man-centered development" and geographic decentralization. One clear objective that derives from the plan is the "capitalization" of the poor, that is, to increase their skills, their productivity and participation in the ownership of other productive assets.

Project Motivation: During this period (1972-81) the USAID Costa Rica's mission had four strategic objectives, as outline in its Country Development Strategy Statement (CDSS). These objectives were: "1) Increase poor people's access to the factors of production; 2) Increase production and productivity in a manner consistent with the first and third objectives; 3) Reverse natural resources degradation; and 4) Decentralize development by promoting activities in lagging regions, in accordance with the second objective". (USAID 1979, p. 22). The activities financed with this loan project had a strong relationship to all four objectives, especially with the first three, therefore the project accomplished the goal of being related to AID'S objectives for the development of Costa Rica and to the National Development Plan of the Government of Costa Rica.

Amount donated by US AID: \$ 4.047.000 (US dollars)

Government of Costa Rica counterpart: ₡ 4.500.000,00 (CR colones)

Execution Characteristics and Limitations: The project had three components: a) research and development assessment, planning and promotions; b) research community support, and c) technology extension. With the first component CONICIT's ability to identify, promote and find an increase amount of relevant high quality research in industrial technology, natural resources and energy was supposed to be strengthened. Assessments carried out in the industrial sector and in technology, energy and natural resources permitted identification of areas of research and formulation of a research program. The second component was supposed to strengthened the capacity of the country's research institutions to carry out more high quality research in the project's priority areas. This purpose was accomplished by increasing the numbers of scientists with graduate studies, with specific short-term, in country and foreign training, and upgrading research management practices. The third component was carried out by the Technical Department and Extension Division (DIDET) of the Technological Institute of Costa Rica (ITCR) This department was an ideal choice, because it had experience in delivery programs, it did technology research, and had extension contacts with small industry associations and cooperatives. It was expected that DIDET would be able to transfer technology to poor farmers and small entrepreneurs and, to convince them of the benefits of the new technologies. It was also expected to be able to return the feedback information to the researchers from the extension interaction with the farmers and entrepreneurs.

Expected results: For the first component: twelve industrial and technology assessments would help the development of annual research programs in CONICIT; these programs would result in 42 (25 with AID funds) financed research projects during the life of the project. The second component was expected to result in the training of 35 master level and six Ph D's level scholars. An undetermined number of exchange experiences with researchers and research centers in foreign countries was expected. CONICIT would also, organize several Research Methodologies Workshops. Finally the

third component would result in four M.Sc. and six Ph D's scholars from the ITCR, trained abroad. Also, the DIDET planned to carry out: a) 220 in depth technology consultations; b) prepare and publish 75 pamphlets, manuscripts and guides; c) 150 short courses and demonstrations; d) distribute 500 NTIS bulletins per month; e) fill 200 technical information request annually; f) establish direct contact with two foreign databases and g) create 10 data banks.

Actual results: For the first component: a) Twelve industrial and technological assessments were accomplished; b) fifty research projects were completed (39 with AID funds); c) 136 research searches and 125 project evaluations; d) one mid-term evaluation; e) 16 persons from CONICIT were trained on scientific and technological administration and six foreign scholars of high level visited and consulted CONICIT. For the second component: a) 37 scholars were trained at the Ph D. level and 21 at the M.Sc. level, and there were 279 persons-month training and scholars exchange; b) nine workshops on research methodology were completed; c) an administrative practice evaluation was completed in 1984.

For the third component, the Costa Rican Technological Institute (ITCR) accomplished the following: a) 221 in depth technological consultations; b) 84 pamphlets, manuals and guides; c) 148 short courses; d) 310 NTIS monthly bulletins; e) 964 technical information given; f) two direct contacts with foreign databases; and g) 18 data banks were created. Besides, 15 scholars at the master level and four at the Ph.D level were trained, and 23.1 persons-month of foreign short-term assistance were provided.

Evaluation: The relationship of the expected results with the actual results speaks for themselves. It is clear that CONICIT, the state universities and the Costa Rican Technological Institute achieved all the objectives of the project; in several cases the accomplishments exceeded the expected results. Two of the more important examples of this assertion are: a) the number of scholars that completed graduate program, exceeded in a 51% the expected numbers of graduates; and b) the numbers of persons-month on short-term training and exchange of researchers exceeded on a 211% the expected results.

If one judges the impact and success of this project on the basis of the mid term evaluation carried out by Bock and Trumble (1983) and on the interviews of persons involved in the project, the project was important to the development of Costa Rican scientific and technological research; for the relationship between research and technology done at the higher education institutions and the application of the findings of research and technology in the productive process, and for the administration of the scientific and technological research. As unplanned results it is important to quote Bock and Trumble (1983); "There are at least two major unplanned effects that are potentially very useful. First, the desire for greater administrative efficiency that emanates partially from the demands of the researchers as a direct result of this, both CONICIT and the UCR are serious by considering the creation of research foundations. Second, there is a greater realism at virtually all levels of research management and performance. The delays that occur, primarily outside of CONICIT, have led the research administrators to study the award and reimbursement to determine where the greatest delays reside" (p. 9).

This project was planned during the poverty, basic needs phase (1972-81) (Fox, 1995) and was carried out basically, during the stabilization, restructuring phase of USAID's aid to Costa Rica. The project was aimed to help a lagging area of the country development as was the concept during the third phase of USAID's help to Costa Rica.

One of the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation (Bock and Trumble 1983) was: "For these reasons, we conclude that USAID should extend this program as a supplemental science and

technology loan" (p.3). From interviews with four well-known scientist and high level administrators of higher education institutions of the country, it was learned that CONICIT prepared, in 1983, a new loan project as a continuation of the one that had been executed, nevertheless it was not approved by the USAID. In there opinion two factors may have influence that decision: the change of phase in the way USAID was trying to answer the question: what is economic development and how it is achieved? (Fox, 1995), refered in the preceding paragraph, and second the problem in the normal relationship between AID and CONICIT: It seems, according to the opinion of several persons interviewed, that the final external evaluation of the project, that was programmed in the original loan agreement, was not carried out because of the same negative change in the relationship between both institutions.

In the opinion of those university scholars and administrators interviewed, the long term effects of the loan have had important positive impact and lasting effects in the universities capacity for doing research, because the loan permitted the strengthening of the research centers at the universities, since new equipment was bought, in-service training was possible, and young professors were able to complete graduate studies abroad.; most of whom are still working at the universities. For the first time the importance of the production of scientific information, for those who could benefited from the scientific knowledge produced in those centers, and for the general public, was understood. In particular, at the Technological Institute DIDET became the Vice-precidency for Research and the foundations for the research work on productivity and on the transference of technology was established.

Recently the GOCR have been considering closing CONICIT, since it is judged as a bureaucratic institution that has grown as much as only having money for salaries and not for promoting and improving scientific and technological research. There is evidence that the USAID loan execution by CONICIT did not produce any of these negative effects. According to the persons interviewed, this bureaucratic growth occurred during the implementation of the first IDB loan, in the mid eighties. This situation was maintained because an expectation was created of new funding, since negotiations of possibles loans with international agencies, including USAID, were carried out, during the rest of that decade. A second BID loan was executed by CONICIT at the beginning of the nineties.

CASE No. 5
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
PROJECT No. 515-0063

Objective of the project: To collaborate actively with the Public Education Ministry (MEP) in the organization and establishment of a modern vocational education system for youths in relevant activities for the progress of the country.

National context: Since 1945, based on the approaches given by the Chilean mission of 1935, the creation of technical education was proposed. In 1951, the first mission of UNESCO developed a diagnosis that included vocational education, and provided ideas for its development. On the other hand, the population growth had repercussions especially marked at the secondary education level, which was declared free in 1949. During this period, the country was in a capitalistic modernization process, which was stressed with the coming to power of the "Liberación Nacional" party (1953 - 1958), In this point in time an agreement was signed between the GCR and "Point Four" for the planning and development of the vocational education.

Motivation of the Project: This project was developed during this specific period of "Technical Assistance from the U.S.G.", during which the focus of the USG to the problem of economic development was based on the premise that technical knowledge was the key. Therefore the strategy was centered on knowledge transfer through foreign experts, and of the training of Costa Ricans.

Amount donated by USAID: \$996,000.00 (US dollars)

Counterpart: There was no counterpart.

Characteristic of the execution and limitations: In 1955, an agreement was signed between the Education Minister and the director of ICA (International Cooperation Administration), as a result of the aid requested by the MOE to the technical assistance mission of ICA. A three international experts mission was accredited in the country, that proceeded to study the reports on the matter elaborated in the country. It was determined that one of the greater difficulties to develop this program was the lack of qualified personnel to teach the youths. To settle this need, in 1956, nine specialists were sent to Peru to study during nine months, and two more were sent to the United States during a ten months period, to study in the field of vocational high-school administration. These last two were intended to direct the program after their return. A work plan was formulated that had to begin with the operation of the high-schools with shops for qualified workers, an extensive plan to be carried out, between 1956 and 1961, to expand vocational high-schools of Desamparados and Heredia, and to establish agricultural and commercial high-schools in Liberia, Limon and San Isidro de El General. Another plan was elaborated in 1961, for the creation of six high-schools specialized in trades and industrial education. The plans were approved, and there were available funds for the construction and equipment of a vocational high-schools in Golfito. The economic help consisted in the purchase of a model shop for three vocational high-schools (Heredia, Desamparados and Golfito), and the equipment for the office at the Ministry. The original plan called for fund for the six schools, but it was not possible to obtain budget for three of them. Many aspects of vocational education remained without attention, since a work program was initially laid out that was not developed in the way it was expected.

Expected results: Three operational vocational schools: one in Heredia, other in Desamparados, and another in Golfito; two agricultural vocational high-schools in Liberia and in San Isidro de El General and a commercial technical school in San José.

Actual results: Support for the three operational high-schools: Heredia, Desamparados and Golfito, and technical advising for the consolidation and development of the vocational education in the country. It was not possible to obtain the budget for the others planned centers.

Evaluation: Considering the situation the country was facing when USAID granted cooperation for the development of the vocational education, it can be appreciated the relevance and positive impact of such cooperation. The country was in a capitalistic modernization process and was facing a considerable increase in secondary education demand. These circumstances formed a very auspicious context for the creation and development of vocational education. On this base, the cooperation offered by the AID implied that it would be possible to begin this project in a very auspicious moment. The project was begun in 1955 and for 1961 a plan of Vocational Education studies, and regulation on vocational schools, were used. These instruments collected the aspirations of the country in this matter in that moment. This means that the intervention of AID was decisive and effective for the institutional development of Vocational Education in the country. ~~If this cooperation had not been given, probably the consolidation of Vocational Education would have been delayed for some time, and its development would have faced a less auspicious context.~~ It is important to emphasize also, that in that moment,

vocational schools were received with great enthusiasm and positive expectations by the communities, therefore community movements arose that tended to contribute with the obtaining of funds for the creation of new vocational schools in their localities.

In general terms, the support offered for the development of vocational education in the country constituted an attainment for the reasons explained above. In more specific terms, another success was the implementation of the Golfito's high-school, since in that zone of the country there was no secondary education center, and there was a great need of it. In this sense, the plan to install agricultural vocational schools in the rural zones can also be considered a success, because in these zones the possibility of access to education was much more limited than the access in the cities. On the other hand, the only error that could be detected was the failure to complete the elaborate work plan, because the project remained interrupted for some time. Nevertheless, in the following fifteen years (1962-78) the country was able to develop a strong vocational education program with more than thirty secondary vocational schools. The U.S. ICA support for the initiation of vocational education was pivotal in its later consolidation, without that support the country would have had to wait some more time to attain its full development.

CASE No. 6
EDUCATION AND PREVENTION OF THE USE OF DRUGS
PROJECT No. 515-0253

Objective of the project: To establish a program of awareness of drug abuse in the community.

National context: The improper consumption of drugs has been object of social preoccupation in Costa Rica from beginning of the 1970's. With the increase in the density of urban population and of the residents in the Central Valley (60% of the national population) the improper consumption had continued to increase. The government and various social organizations have undertaken several activities of corrective, preventive and educational character. These actions had a positive pay off, but it has not been sufficient. Given this fact and that public agencies have been doing what they can, there has been an increase in the participation of private entities in this type of activities, which has helped to amend the deterioration that was coming.

Motivation of the project: 1) The project was motivated by the magnitude of the social problem that the improper use of drugs in the national and international area entails. 2) The possibility of having human resources trained to exercise the multiplying actions, until arriving fully to the population at risk. 3) A certain guarantee of the continuity of the processes, because they were proposed by the National Committees No Drugs.

Amount donated by USAID: \$394 000 (USDollars)

Counterpart: There was no counterpart

Characteristic of the execution and limitations: The project was executed between 1990 and 1992 by ADIFAC - FUNDA, within the National Program No Drugs. This was delivered through two components: a) The first one was administrative, and provided the necessary human resources for a competent administration of the operational systems of the project. The second component was training, including seminars, courses, and field-extension activities, as well as production of printed and audiovisual materials. The proposed educational model was centered on the development of leadership

abilities, of a positive attitude toward the education programs on the use of the drugs in the beneficiary communities, and in activities for the development of social programs for the prevention of the use of drugs.

Expected results: To train 840 leaders of the community, that were to be multiplying agents, during the second year of the project, to train 8,000 persons in 91 communities of the country. To design and execute 166 training activities, to develop training material. To establish an advertising campaign, that will serve as base for the sustained development of prevention projects on the use of drugs in each community.

Actual results: The project was initiated in 1992. "1) 840 members of the "No Drugs" Committees trained in the prevention of drug abuse. Under the Project, more than 300 "No Drugs" Committees were established with an average of 7 members, 3 of which received intensive training in the prevention of drug abuse. They were acting as multiplying agents in their communities. 2) Eight thousand members of 91 communities aware of the danger of using drugs. Project personnel and committee members conducted courses, workshops and conferences on drug prevention in 310 communities of 72 counties around the country. These activities were attended by more than 8,500 people, mostly community leaders. 3) Didactic materials were developed and publicity campaign established as a basis for development of sustained drug awareness projects in each community. Twenty-four bulletins were prepared and distributed. An audio visual on the "Impact of the Project on the National Community" was completed, but the final professional editing work had finished at time the project was terminated" (Project Assistance Completion Report 1995, p.1).

Evaluation: From the evaluation report, () executed at the end of the project, the more prominent conclusions can be summarized as follows: "The Project was very successful and all of its objectives were met or exceeded (...). However, the Project was plagued with a Board of Directors whose interference with administrative matters in the Project was preventing good project implementation and causing possible points of vulnerability for the Mission(...). At the end of the 2-year Project period, the board requested a Project extension to be able to use the approximately \$160,000 which had not been used during the life of the Project. The Mission was interested in granting this extension, which would strengthen the activity's self-sufficiency and permit institutionalization of the excellent work being done in the communities by the more than 300 "No Drugs" committees that were formed under the Project". (Project Assistance Completion Report 1995, p. 2-3). The project extension for a six month period affected the rhythm of its development, the frictions between the Director of the Board and the Board members increased and things did not finish in a good manner.

CASE No. 7
FUND FOR WOMEN
PROJECTS Nos. 938- 0287 y 515- 0140

Objective of the project: To improve the socioeconomic condition of low income women and their families through the strengthening of the participation of the women in agriculture and small development enterprise. To increase the capacity of national organizations to provide training, to put projects in practice and to affect the policy related to the participation of low income women in agriculture and the development of small enterprises.

National context: Since the decade of the 1960's the country entered a greater growth phase of the secondary (manufactures) and tertiary (services) sectors of the economy. The National Apprenticeship

Institute (INA) was created In 1965. The 1960s closed with a clear scheme of education and development relationship, while it has been a urban population rapid growth due, in good measure, to the migration from the rural area to the city which formed belts of population considered in extreme poverty around San José. Therefore, the Institute Mixed of Social Help (IMAS) as an assistance institution for such people was created. The government encouraged cooperativist and communal development in order to strengthen the organization and communal participation.

Motivation of the Project: In the cities, the persons that live in poverty belts face a situation characterized by very poor housings, low income and limited employment opportunities, and lack services. These conditions are particularly adverse for the women, many of whom are headsof family and do not count with the necessary abilities to take advantage of the available resources (for example, the self-help governmental housing programs). The approach adopted by USAID can be summarized as an "innovative attempt to breaking the cycle of urban poverty" through two narrowly linked actions: the training of national organizations, in order that they design and put in practice competent projects that affecte the living conditions of low income women and those of their families; and the training of the women directed to create and encourage in them, abilities to use the existing aid programs, to obtain employment and to develop their own sources of income, based on cooperative and community organizations.

It is considered an approach of "training for human development", sustained in three principal assumptions: 1) The priority for the women was to expand their possibilities of generating income. 2) The women needed more confidence and resources knowledge and greater individual and group problem solved abilities. With this knowledge and confidence the women would be better trained to draw advantage from the existing programs, governmental or not, or to begin their own income generation and community development activities. 3) Organizations like the FOV (Federation of Voluntary Organization) were able, and adequately located to promote favorable changes in low income women.

Amount donated by AID: \$80 000 (1987 - 1991) (for Costa Rica)

Counterpart: There is no registered counterpart

Characteristic of the execution and limitations: These were a series of projects accomplished during the decade of the 70's and the 80's. Initially a survey was carried out to identify the needs of the women of the southern suburbs. A structured questionnaire was used, and several groups of persons surveyed 272 women about themselves, their families, their communities and their problems. Generally, the projects consisted of the development of training programs for low income women, directed to train them in the maximum use of their housing units, to develop skills for employment seeking, for income generation initiatives and for community activities development. In addition to the identification of the needs and problems, some of the available resources to face those needs, such as the programs to contend with urban poverty, developed by the government and nongovernmental agencies, were identified, too.

In the specific case of the training "program for the human development", the first phase of the project (June-December, 1977) consisted in the development of the necessary administrative infrastructure: training, research and information/communication departments; design of the training model and materials; and identification of the initial subprojects. The second phase (January - November, 1978) consisted in the execution and evaluation of three pilot training project for human development, for 181 low income women: in a low income community, in a vocational program

sponsored by the government (INA) and in a factory. The third phase (December 1978 - November, 1979) was the expansion of the training for the human development, in 65 additional subprojects, for more than 892 low income women, information and material preparation for the project, and institutionalization, within the FOV, of the technical, organizational and financial capacity to continue the project.

The training tended to be more effective in the communities bounds. Once the women recognized that they had common problems and that they were able to do something with them, they tended to form groups of natural support and action. In the communities, the training seemed to provide a framework that mobilized the latent potential of the women to work together. The training program included personal and group development, as part of a human development methodology. FOV recognized the importance of the paper of the their own low income women to recruit other women for the program. In a certain moment the success of the projects was limited by conflicts between the responsible organizations, about the property of the project.

Expected results: To improve the socioeconomic condition of low income women and their families through strengthening of the participation of the women in small development enterprises. To increase the capacity of national organizations to provide training, to generate projects and to affect the policy related to the participation of low income women in agriculture and development of the small company.

Obtained results: The program trained about a thousand women to learn some of the attitudes and necessary abilities to change their situations, in the sense of improving their life by themselves and that of their families. In terms of the income increase, women in several low income communities developed production and market cooperatives. Women in technical training programs acquired marketing abilities and got jobs. Though the increase in the income was not determined, it was established that they were on the road of income generating activities. The initiative of the women of the marginal Leon XIII community, to establish a cooperative (Coopeleon), for example, demonstrated that the women could organize and work together successfully, to improve their standard of life.

Positive changes registered in attitudes, securities and conduct are the following: 1) Aspirations and expectations for self and daughters: more specific and guided by the groups goals, aspirations that their daughters may not have a specific occupation, but they could choose. 2) Self-conscience and self-esteem: better knowledge of their own qualities and improvement of their own image. 3) Increase knowledge of their own rights. 4) Problem solving: increase knowledge of the community resources, greater cooperation among the members of the family, adequate use of the individual efforts for the solution of problems. Participation in group activities for economic and community development. 5) Reduction of the drop out rate from the vocational training programs and from the factory projects. 6) Positive changes in husbands' and in relatives attitudes toward the roles of the women and their potential. 7) Increase in family revenue.

One of the specific projects (80-84) was the operation of an ice cream parlor and its insertion in the formal economic market. The training was carried out for one to two years and was localized, not only in business abilities, but also in the context in which those abilities were required. The national organizations were prepared to gather data about the economic impact of the projects, the contributing factors to their success or failure and the issue of self-sufficiency. In another of the projects, hundred of women were educated about their rights in such areas as custody of the children, adoption and pensions.

A educational radio program was strengthened ("Dialogo"), developed by the Family Orientation Center. Its institutional base for the future was strengthened. A new emphasis in topics as family planning and women in development was given, and its diffusion by various means of communication, was widened. As one unexpected result the government requested help from FOV to develop a training program for the human development of 500 door-to-door sellers, forced to change their subsistence manner.

Evaluation: The intent to break the vicious circle of poverty, through "training programs for human development", directed to promote the integration of the lower income women to the productive sector of the small enterprise, could be considered as a significant contribution for the improvement of the quality of life of a sector of the urban marginal population of the country. This approach, directed to make the low income women: 1) aware of their own possibilities of assuming an active position in the generation of income for their families. 2) Develop their abilities to take advantage of the assistance resources available, and 3) generate their own income sources, through community cooperative work, was achieved.

To develop training plans, that considered the importance of the change in attitudes of the women (many of them were directly responsible for the subsistence of their families) toward the roles that they could play to contribute with income generation for their families, constituted an important success; because attitudes are one of the key factors, that can propitiate or put obstacles in the effectiveness of training. To consider this dimension implied to take into account the socialization conditions, that are determinants of the behaviors, which tend to reproduce the vicious circle of poverty. With this approach of this human dimension, a greater effectiveness in the creation of conditions was created, that permitted breaking the poverty cycle and improving the quality of life. This was one of the goals of this serie of project.

The inclusion of the "training program for human development" in the INA's (National Institute of Apprenticeship) courses was an important contribution for their transformation from an instructional to a more formative approach. This transformation provided a greater capacity to affect the living conditions and achievements of the person that participated in those courses. From a different perspective, the comunitary education resource, for those persons that did not have access to formal education and that desperately needed the possibilities to procure themselves the means of subsistence, was a correct way of access to education for this type of population. The meeting of subsistence needs with the training possibilities was achieved, in this way training had an impact. These training efforts and attitude changes were translated into the creation of possibilities for improvement of the life levels of families, declared in extreme poverty. This effect would have not been attained without the financial support, and the technical and methodological approach facilitated by the USAID.

It is important to point out that, this same successful approach used in the comunitary environment, was a failure when it was attempted in the factories. The main reason for this failure was that the owners were not in the disposition to give time for the interaction with the women. The money spent in this failed effort, could have been better spent in the community education program.

CASE No. 8
EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER SCIENCE PROGRAM (PIE)
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION -
OMAR DENGO FOUNDATION (MOE-FOD)
PROJECT Nos. 515-0192, 515-0231, 515-0240

Objective of the project: To introduce the computer as a tool for learning in the Costa Rican public education system.

National context: Costa Rican education has been going through a crisis reflected in a deterioration in the teaching and learning processes. "There was consternation due to: the situation of learning at the national level, the short annual school year, the lack of control of the instructional processes, and the lack of preparation of the educators. The search for solutions and alternatives was an urgent problem" (Fonseca, 1991, p.9). Therefore, the Government of Oscar Arias, (1986 to 1990), proposed a number of measures to face the problems of quality. The concern for achieving improvements in education, through improvements of its quality led to one of the campaign promises of Mr. Arias, for the large-scale introduction of computers in the primary school.

Motivation of the project: AID in principle, "considered that our country was not yet prepared for a technological installation of this dimension and that the developmental state could require guided help in other fields. However, given the interest of the Government and of the potential of the proposal, the AID supported the initiative and has continued to support its development with interest and enthusiasm" (Fonseca, 1991, p.15).

Amount donated by USAID: \$ 7.953 423,00

Characteristic of the execution and limitations: The introduction of computers in the Costa Rican primary school, began in 1988 with the creation of the Educational Computer Science Program MOE-FOD. "This initiative is not the result of an accidental decision or of an isolated modernization impulse.

On the contrary, the idea reflects the conviction of the politicians and those who decide in the national educational area, and wanted to generate a change toward a more modern and efficient education. It reflects, furthermore, an interest in developing new attitudes toward science and technology in a open and creative context, guided by the solution of problems and toward productivity" (Fonseca, 1991, p.7). Fifty-four percent of the assigned resources were invested in the purchase of the necessary equipment for the three Program stages and with the remaining 46% a patrimonial fund was created through an endowment, that guaranteed continuity of funding for the program. Computers were bought for a total of 157 schools, approximately one third of the school population of the country (and it was made effective in three stages). The schools were selected according to: a greater population coverage, of scarce economic resources, of rural and urban zones, covering all the country. The schools had to have the facilities to install a laboratory with twenty computers each (there were some exceptions of smaller laboratory, installed, given the particular characteristics of some schools). Twelve tutors were trained in the Logo language at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who were in charged to train and give follow-up counseling to the teachers of each of the laboratories. Each school had between one and three teachers for each laboratory. The number of tutors grew with the growth of the number of schools involved. Currently there are 29 tutors, which are competent teachers, chosen on their proven capacity as former laboratory teachers. There are now approximately 408 teachers trained and working at the computer laboratories. The students and teachers activities laboratories are carried out in a constructivistic approach to teaching and learning processes. This approach demands from the teacher a basic change in his role: from a teacher-instructor to a teacher-facilitator, mediator in

significant learning processes for the students. One of the major limitations of the program (PIE) has been the limited accomplishment of this change. In spite of the great training effort, it has not been possible to make all teachers think about the change of their function in the classroom.

Expected results: To install 3,000 computers in the Costa Rican public schools in all counties of the country. "To produce a new generation of children and Costa Rican youths that could be converted into lance points of new forms of thinking and acting, of new forms of impelling the socioeconomic evolution of the country (...) to incorporate the technological and intellectual potential that the computers can provide, in natural forms of acting and thinking of the new generations of Costa Rican. (...) The closing of the technological gap was a central preoccupation, (...) specifically it was sought the demystification of computer technology in the eyes of the new children and younger generations and to link education to work and production. (...) With this Computer Science Program (PIE) introduction, a renovation of the teacher activity, as well as a modernization of the activity of the communities, in different regions of the country were sought. (...) With the creation of the project, it was also procured, to begin a modernization process of Costa Rican education, not only by the incorporation of computer science technology, but also based on pedagogic approaches that could offer new training process, exploration and innovative work for teachers and students". (Fonseca, 1991, p.8-9)

Obtained results: "Three thousand and six microcomputers were bought during the execution of the three stages of the Educational Computer Science Program. The installation of the laboratories and the use of the equipment was slow and in some cases the computer were stored for a full year before be installed. In spite of this, the program succeeded and at the term of the agreement achieved the established goals". (OCS Second Semester Report 1994). With respect to the impact of the technology on the children, there is no doubt that computers are no longer alien to them anymore. However it is premature to speak of the closing of the technological gap. Concerning the modernization of the educational system it can be asserted that the Computer Science Program (MOE-FOD) began with a pledge of support from the MOE and from the FOD. However with the change in administration (1990 - 1994), a lower commitment by the Education Ministry reduced achievements. The current government (1994-1998) has recaptured the project, but it is known that when the training of educators is reduced in an innovative project, re-invigorating the program will be more difficult than it was at the begining. In 1995 the installed computational equipment is now eight years old and, in spite that it has an adequate maintenance and more than 80% of it is operating, renovation is necessary.

Evaluation: A formative evaluation of the program (PIE) was accomplished, during twenty-four months as a cooperative project between the Inter-American Development Bank and the Foundation Omar Dengo (IDB - FOD), and it was part of the evaluation of the IDB-FOD Project. This evaluation noted the following positive results: a) The internal coherence between the philosophical and pedagogic positions. b) The definition of visionary organization execution of the program. c) The emphasis in the role of the pedagogic facilitators and their training. d) The facilitation in the educators of the development of positive attitudes toward the use of technology in education. e) The effective creation, within the educational culture, of contact opportunities with technology for boys and girls of scarce socioeconomic resources. f) The positive impact on children's education and the impact on the school community.

In general the problems identified by the evaluation were: a) An absence of strategic planning. b) Deficiencies in the training of the advisors in detection, investigation and evaluation processes of the cognitive processes of the children. c) A lack of conceptual clarity of tutors and teachers, with respect to the role that each one performs in the construction of a learning enviroment. d) The cognitive

processes achieved by boys and girls in their work with the computer reach the expected levels (high level: analysis, anticipation, metacognición, abstraction, equilibrium, etc.) (Dobles, García, Murillo and Zúñiga, 1995).

The Computer Science Program (PIE) has opened an important path that provides a hopeful alternative within Costa Rican education. The obstacles it encountered were due to the political priorities of the governments and to the in-service training problems and to the lack of permanent and continuous training of the educational human resource. These human resources are in the last resort the ones which determine the educational processes and the Logo learning environments.

CASE No. 9
REGIONAL TECHNICAL AID CENTER II (RTAC II)¹
PROJECT NO. 598-0791 (FORMERLY 597-0011)

Project objective: To increase U.S. cooperation with Latin American institutions and to provide Central American university students, libraries and professionals with up-to-date, high quality US technical materials and textbooks in Spanish at affordable prices.

National Context: Costa Rica was in a profound economic crisis in the middle of the 1980's, living near the Central America political crisis: with its revolutions and counter-revolutions and receiving a flow of refugees from Nicaragua and El Salvador. These economic and social conditions led to reductions in the quality of services provided by the education and health sectors. In this context the supply of quality written materials in Spanish, with up-to-date content, for the university students, and scholars and for Costa Rican professionals, was very poor. There was a need for these materials and textbooks.

Project Motivation: It is clear that this project and its later extension had economical and political goals. In the political sense it aimed "to enhance the U.S. access, presence, and influence in the Central America region by increasing U.S. participation in the higher education and training of Central American professional and leaders" (USAID 1991a, p). It responded to recommendations of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America and to offset Cuban Soviet distribution of textbooks in the areas, book pirating and photocopying.

Amount donated by USAID: \$ 43.000 000 (U.S. Dollars) (for Central America)

Counterpart: There was no counterpart

Execution characteristics and limitations: A consulting firm: Aguirre International was contracted to implement the project. Initially was carried out in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras and extended in 1991 to Colombia, Panama, Ecuador, Peru and The Dominican Republic. The book demand was determined by market studies conducted by the contractor. The books selected were restricted primarily to science and technology; texts in economic, political and social sciences were discouraged, but could be considered on a case by case basis, Costa Rica was an example of this exception. Others criteria used in book selection were: a) books originally published in US in either Spanish or English and currently published in Mexico, Guatemala and Argentina were selected; b) the

¹ The RTAC I project was not analyzed because there was not enough information available and it had a different objective from the RTAC II project.

texts had to be current in their content, and c) the books must not contain material that would be counter to the interests of the US. The project's book supply was "demand driven", therefore it was very important to obtain professors' recommendations and their commitment to include the texts in their courses. This process was called "adoption" and related supply with demand. The project included pamphlets and video-tapes production. There was also technical assistance and training for publishers and book-stores organization, since the project required the modernization of these two enterprises. The organization counted on: a) Aguirre International in Mexico as implementing office (RTAC II: books purchases and consultants), b) USAID missions, as coordinator that serve as liaison between RTAC II and in-country institutions, c) distribution centers, non-profit organizations that receive and distribute the books, (CINDE in Costa Rica), d) book stores, e) university professors, that choose the books for their courses, and f) students and professionals, that buy the books which meet their needs and that they can afford. The books were sold to a price that was 32% over price cost, fifteen percent was the profit for the book seller and 15% for distributor expenses.

Expected Results: Four million textbooks to be sold to students, libraries and professionals. One million pamphlets and other materials were distributed. Self-sustaining distribution centers and publishers and book stores personnel better prepared to attend a modern enterprise. To develop a management information system (MIS).

Obtained Results: As of 1989 RTAC II had shipped 560,728 books for Central America. At that time the project was exceeding expectations on book numbers. There was another important result, the book program had also provided USAID mission entry to university campuses where they had been unable to work for many years. This relationship resulted in new linkages between the different Central American universities and U.S. universities. There had been a very positive reaction from students and professors, that sincerely appreciate the results of this AID project. The distributors center had developed well and were accomplishing their work with success. There had been some complaints with the MIS's account modules. The mid-term evaluators (Jones, Knerr and Hansen, 1989) also found that pirated editions and photocopying had decreased; and that Soviet book influence had also decreased, but they were imitating the organization and operation model of RTAC II and were concentrating on technical fields not included in RTAC II.

Evaluation: According to the evaluation carried out by Jones, Knerr and Hansen (1989) the project had been a success, because a) the demand for books had exceeded the goals, b) the missions had been able to support new convenants between US and Central American universities, and c) the other results specified in the paragraph of obtained results were positive. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the decision not to include books on social and political sciences and on economics had negative results for the accomplishment of the political purposes of the project, because that decision opened the door to the Soviet and Cuban sponsored books in those areas.

This was a project planned and executed by the initiative of USAID, without any previous solicitation by Costa Ricans. Nevertheless the positive impact and benefits for the students and professors of Costa Rican universities was and still is unquestionable. As a proof of this last statement, the program is self-sustaining now and is still going on. As professors of the Universidad Costa Rica and the Universidad Nacional we could experience the invaluable impact of the availability of up-to-date books for us and our students.

CASE No. 10
RADIO LEARNING
PROJECT No. 936 5818

Project objective: To improve the teaching of basic primary school skills through the use of Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI). It also aimed to further the adaptation of IRI as an efficient and cost-effective means to improve the quality of basic education worldwide.

National Context: The project started in Costa Rica in 1989 at the end of the government of Oscar Arias as a Costa Rican initiative. In education one of the main ideas impeded in the Ministry was the return to teaching the basic skills. The National Center for Teaching was one of the Ministry agencies dedicated to fulfill that objective. The radio learning project already was very attractive to the Costa Rican authorities in order to reinforce the teaching of mathematics, giving the low results in that subject matter achieved by Costa Rican students on national criterion referenced tests.

Project Motivation: For many years AID had supported the interactive radio instruction all over the world. The Radio Learning Project used the IRI methodology to improve teaching of basic skills in developing countries. The IRI methodology was developed for the Nicaragua Mathematics Project in the middle 1970's, and it proved successful in improving mathematics achievement of students, led to its dissemination in AID projects in several African and Asian countries. In Central America besides Nicaragua, Honduras and Costa Rica initiated RLP in the 80's, the same happened in the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Bolivia.

Amount donated by USAID: \$ 75 000 (U.S. dollars)
Counterpart from the G. of C.R: \$ 51 500 (U.S. dollars)

Executions characteristics and limitations: The Ministry of Education began using IRI in 1988, as one of the sections of CENADI (National Center for Teaching). Educators from this center slightly modified the lessons developed by AVANCE in Honduras of "La Familia de los Números" and started broadcasting in August of 1988 to a pilot group of schools. In 1989 using Radio Nacional de Costa Rica, the first grade lessons were radioed to 500 schools. All the funds used up to this point were internal government moneys. The technical assistance and IRI materials were provided by the RLP through a subcontract with AVANCE in Honduras. AID/COSTA RICA did not provide funds for this purpose. The low level of assistance needed in Costa Rica was due to two factors: 1) MOE only made minor changes to the lessons developed in Honduras, and 2) MOE had a high level of technical competence in the required areas of expertise. In June of 1989 a proposal for a 15 months period for the training of teachers in the area of mathematics using R.L and IRI, printed materials and workshops was presented to AID/Costa Rica, by the MOE, for funding. The proposal was funded by AID/ Costa Rica. It is important to point out the five elements that are the basis of interactive radio instruction: a) Active student participation. Students are actively involved in the learning process due to the creative approach of the radio broadcasts that allows an interaction between the radio and the students; b) Rigorous instructional design. The plan identifies skills to be taught, how to present them, the sequence of learning activities and the prerequisite skills. c) Distributive learning. Individual learning segments are designed to guide students to subject mastery by distributing instruction and practice over time. d) Immediate student reinforcement. The radio broadcast provides immediate correct answer, after a question has been asked to the students. e) Creative format. Maintains children's interests while at the same time being pedagogically sound.

Expected results: The production of: a) Ten radio programs to support teachers who are using the "Familia: de los Números" programs. b) Twenty radio programs together with complementary printed materials to enrich the teacher knowledge of mathematics c) Seven videos to accompany the face to face workshops. Based in the materials detailed before, CENADI developed two training modules that included face to face workshops. The most important expected result was the effective teachers learning of mathematics and of how to manage the IRI mathematics lessons for the children.

Actual results: According with Solís (1995), 29 radio programs were produced with cassettes and other written materials for the training of teachers in mathematics teaching. Besides this production of materials, there was a more important achievement in the positive change in attitude of teachers toward mathematics and the teaching of mathematics. It was also proven that the radio programs and materials were an effective way to improve teacher's mathematics knowledge.

The success of this project gave space to the application of other Learn Tech initiatives: a) the new methodological option for multi-grade school, and b) Environmental Education by Radio. Both new approaches were established in 1992 and gave very good results according to Learn Tech, annual report, 1993-1994 (USAID 1994).

Evaluation: This was an example of a Costa Rican initiative that generated interest by USAID. It gave good results, because the goals were met and new pilot projects were started after the training project funded by USAID. These new projects were supported by USAID through Learn Tech and during the 1990-1994 government period was impeded by the Ministry of Education, but that support ended when the change in the administration of MOE occurred, in 1994. This excellent initiative that received the USAID's help, was slowed down by the new MOE administration, given that they had other priorities. This case is an example of a trend which can be noticed in many decisions within MOE. This trend signifies that a greater priority is given to the goals of a government period, than to what is necessary to the global improvement of education.

4. GLOBAL EVALUATION

Each one of the projects was evaluated, according to: a) the results obtained; b) the comparison of these results and those expected results and c) the opinions of persons that were involved in the development of the projects. Besides the specific and particular evaluative judgments given in each case, there are general conclusions that can be drawn from the project cases analyzed:

- In all cases analyzed the majority of the goals and objectives established were met. In general, USAID respected the governments established policies in Education and responded to needs expressed by the different governments.
- In almost all USAID projects for all sectors, there were educational components (training and scholarships programs) that were very successful and constituted important factors for the development and impact of each project.
- There are several examples (textbooks, vocational education, EARTH) where the absence of USAID activity would have caused that: a) The project would have started some time later, because it was a Costa Rican initiative and a need, one example is case No. 2: "Textbooks for General Basic Education". b) The project would have never initiated, like Case No. 1 "EARTH", because it was

not a governmental priority and the amount needed to carry it out was too big for the country's economic capacity and situation in the 1990's. c) The project would have never existed, because it was not a Costa Rican initiative and one of the purposes was to accomplish a USG political objective (example in this case, is the "CAPS Project" only for short-term scholarships). d) The project would have existed at a later time and at a lower pace, because AID'S help was a catalytic, this was the case of "Vocational Education" (Case No. 5).

- According to the result and evaluation of each of the projects studied, all of them had an important influence and impact on Costa Rica's welfare, because they contributed positively to national development.
- In general, it can be concluded that USAID's activities in the education sector were in no manner planned and that this sector was not perceived as a sector in need², because it was considered the country's high development of education as compared with other underdevelop countries.
- The projects analyzed could be categorized in: a) projects derived from private and personal Costa Rican initiatives that encountered interest in USAID's directors, had political support from CRG, for the legislative approval, and later were developed entirely as private institution with tight planning and controls from AID (EARTH) b) Projects that corresponded to USG general policies for Costa Rica, the Central America area or the World. (CAPS, RTAC II, Women Education and No Drugs Programs). c) Projects that were Costa Rican initiatives from public institution, that received support from AID (Science and Technology, Fundación Omar Dengo, Vocational Education, "Hacia la Luz" textbooks, Radio Learning).
- In two projects (CAPS and the ROCAP textbooks) with clear political objectives for the USG, the selection of the personnel that was going to carry out the project or that was going to receive scholarships, were not made thinking of the best academically fitted candidates, but in those that could serve the political purposes better. This situation caused lack of quality in the case of the books and the undervaluing of candidates for long term scholarships, because being poor, a potential leader and live in the rural area was more important than the academic record and potential of a candidate for undergraduate and graduate studies.
- At least in two of the analyzed projects, there was an overestimation of the implementation capacity of the organizations that were in charge of the expenses ("No Drugs" and "Hacia la Luz" textbooks), because these organizations were not able to expend the money in relevant items or the money allocated exceed their capacity to plan and execute.
- If a comparison was made between the potential impact on Costa Rican Education of two of the projects funded: EARTH and Fundación Omar Dengo (FOD), could be concluded that: a) The FOD project could have a greater impact, because it is directed to the elementary public education of the country, and seeks radical changes in the learning process of Costa Rican children; but it received much less funding and a reluctant support from AID, big political patronage in one governmental period (1986-90) and was ignore in the next (1990-94) b) EARTH has a much lower impact on Costa Rican education, because it is mainly internationally directed, has a big agricultural component.

² Although the projects analyzed in this paper were funded with around 250 millions dollars by the USAID, a considerable amount, most of that money (145 millions dollars) was expended in cases Nos. 1 (EARTH) and 3 (CAPS) which were projects that had a not as primary objective the improvement of Costa Rican Educational System..

It received huge funding and enthusiastic support from USAID and political support from the government in the appropriate moment (law's approval). This comparison reflects, from our point view, a general bias from AID of low interest in education and a greater interest in agriculture.

- During the period of USAID's "local currency program", there were not projects presented by Costa Rican private or public institutions to combat some of the main problems of Costa Rican Educational System. The exception to this statement was MOE-FOD Educational Computer Science Program.
- It is also clear that, there are not differences in the success of projects initiated by AID or by Costa Rica. There are other factors that contributed more to the success of a project, such as those analyzed ahead in the lessons learned.

5. LESSONS LEARNED

5.1. For USAID:

- It seems that projects that: a) are controlled by the private sector, b) functions without lucre but service purposes, c) had appropriate political support, but without any political influence in its development, function and management and, d) have a continuous monitoring from USAID; tends to be successful. This is the case of EARTH.
- The political goals of the projects sometimes darken the developmental goals, which should be of paramount importance, if the legitimate goal of USAID is to aid the countries to develop themselves.
- In other textbook projects it should be considered that is better to sell books at low cost to those students that could afford to pay for them and give books at no cost to students of poor and rural areas.
- Evaluations, like the one realized here, would have been richer and more complete if the projects all had impact evaluations after conclusion. It seems very important to establish follow up evaluations for future projects. The period for those impact evaluations would depend of each particular case.
- In the analysis of projects to be funded in the future, AID could considered that a group of national high level professionals could act as an advisory counsel for the decisions that AID's country's missions have to take. These groups could be ad-hoc groups. These persons would have the advantage of knowing national reality in their specific fields and having a excellent academic preparation.
- USAID would have advantages in the possible impact of the projects, if the reflections over the needs of a country are made with the civil and political societies of that country, and the aid had stronger cooperative character than assistencial character.
- Evaluations, like the one that is the object of this report, should be carried out after shorter times periods.

5.2. For COSTA RICA:

- In order to plan and carry out a project, it is not enough to have the money, it is also important to assess: a) the institutional capacity, b) the needed human resources, c) the conception and direction of the project, and d) the possible impact on society in the short and long terms.
- There is a need to establish long term educational policies, approved by the Superior Council of Education and respected by all MOE administrations, so that the successful projects have continuity and do not suffer ignorance or constraints because of partisan political reasons.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A

List of USAID Projects during the
1945 - 1970 period
Educational Sector - 1996

Number	Name	Type	Objective	Amount U.S \$ miles	Starting Year
*515-0000	Tech supporting activity	A.D		11	?
*515-0026	School Education Team	A.D		5	?
*515-0036	AID American Sponsored School	A.D		32	?
*515-0063	Vocational Education	A.D	Dar oportunidades de adiestramiento a nivel de secundaria en ocupaciones industriales, agrícolas y domésticas, preparado de acuerdo a las necesidades de la mano de obra para la industria.	996	1955
2 2 *515-0054	University of Costa Rica	A.D		160	1962
*515-0055	Ministry of Education development	A.D		468	1962
*515-0056	Development of Basic Science	A.D		62	1959
2 2 *515-0057	Inst. Higher Education	A.D		129	1962
*515-0068	High Level Man Training	A.D		104	1963
2 *515-0069	Ministry of Education Development	A.D		144	1963
*515-0958	University of Costa Rica Assistance	A.D		79	1957
*515-0959	Ministry of Education Assitance	A.D		155	1958
2 2 *515-0101	Lincoln School Grant	A.D		16	1966
*515-0104	Texbook Rental Library	A.D		10	1967
2 *936-3032	Alternative Educational Radio	A.D			?
2 515-0083	Texbooks	A.D	Impresión de libros de texto, para la	221	1965

ANNEX B

List of USAID Projects during the
1970 - 1995 period
Educational Sector - 1996

Number	Name	Type	Objective	Amount U.S \$ miles	Starting Year
*598-0635	LAC Education Information System/Network	A.D		174	1985
515-0138	Science and Technology	A.D	Aplicación de la investigación científica y tecnológica al proceso productivo en apoyo a la población pobre de la nación y a sus recursos naturales.	4074	1979
515-0140	Overseas Education Fund (OEF PVO OPG)	A.D	Desarrollar programas de intercambio para las mujeres y sus familias de barrios marginados, capacitando a las mujeres para que participen ampliamente en el empleo, en el hogar y en otros programas socioeconómicos.	402	1977
515-0253	Drug Awareness	A.D	El propósito de esta donación es proporcionar ayuda al Proyecto sobre Educación y Prevención del Uso de las Drogas.	394	1990
596-0129	Regional Higher Agricultural Education	A.D /ROCAP	Ofrecer una base de recursos humanos profesionales con la experiencia práctica y educativa que se necesita para enfrentar los problemas de producción agrícola de la región de C.A. y Panamá.	138116	1985
597-0011	Regional Technical Center II	A.D/W USAID	Ofrecer a un precio razonable libros de	12	1986

			texto en español a estudiantes universitarios en América Central, a fin de aumentar el desarrollo económico, reducir el fotocopiado, disminuir escritos y publicaciones de libros soviéticos y evitar la piratería.		
598-0616	Intercountry Technological Transfer	AD/LAC	Acelerar la aplicación de conocimientos científicos y técnicos a la resolución de problemas de desarrollo en el hemisferio oriental.		1984
936-5818	Radio Learning Project	AD/Development Suport	Incrementar el acceso a la educación privada, para esto se desarrollará un modelo para la instrucción de la escuela primaria por medio del uso eficiente de la radio, promoviendo el uso de la instrucción radial interactiva (IRI)	27.5	1984
938-0277	Godwill Industries of America	AD/Private and developmen tal Coopera-tion	Dar apoyo al programa de creación de empleo y adiestramiento vocacional para personas discapacitadas.		1986
515-0242	Central American Peace Scholarships I (CAPSI)	A.D	Capacitación de costarricenses en los Estados Unidos, a fin de darles adiestramiento técnico y académico.	20226	1987
515-0254	Central American Peace Scholarships II (CAPS-II)	A.D	Continuar con el proyecto 515-0242	10856	1990
515-0231	CAPS Nota: Este proyecto es una contrapartida de CAPS I	ESR	Central American Peace Scholarships for Costa Rica youths	171620	?

515-0240	CAPS Nota: Este proyecto es una contrapartida de CAPS II	ESR	Fundación del programa de intercambio estudiantil	251457	?
938-0287	Overseas Education Fund	A.D/W	Capacitar a ciertas organizaciones para que den adiestramiento, implementen algunos proyectos que afectan la política relacionada con la participación de las mujeres de bajos ingresos en el desarrollo de la agricultura y de pequeñas empresas.	80	1987
596-0129	Regional agriculture higher education (EARTH)	A.D /ROCAP	Producir profesionales con los conocimientos necesarios para enfrentar los problemas agrícolas de CA y Panamá, y de esta forma incrementar la productividad mejorando el crecimiento económico rural y las oportunidades de empleo	33400	1985
515-0192	Agricultural School	ESR/ Contrapartida	Desarrollar técnicas adecuadas para el manejo de las tierras bajas de los trópicos húmedos y capacitar las bases de los recursos humanos para desarrollar y ampliar este conocimiento.	3519296	1984
515-0192	TF II Agricultural School	ESR Contrapartida	Establecer la EARTH	131292	1988
515-0222	Agricultural School	ESR Contrapartida	Crear la EARTH	2 443 842	1987
515-0222	Agricultural School		Establecer la EARTH	29200	1987
515-0194a	AID / BOOK Chamber /GOCR (Proyecto de libros de texto serie	ESR	Fondo para libros de texto y guías para los profesores.	27542	1984

	"Hacia la Luz")				
515-0192	AID/ Book Chamber	ESR	Impresión y distribución de libros para primaria.	115042	1984
515-0194a	COCR / MEP / PEACE CORP.	ESR	Renovación de escuelas rurales	50000	1987
515-0192	AID/BCO.Interfin, S.A./CIAPA	ESR	Ayudar al CIAPA en su expansión y mejoramiento como grupo independiente de intelectuales capaz de dirigir investigaciones y ayudar a resolver problemas de desarrollo socioeconómicos de C.R. a mediano y largo.	?	1985
515-0194a	Education INVU	ESR	Construcción y ampliación de escuelas en zonas marginales y zonas rurales disminuir el déficit de aulas y atender necesidades de infraestructura educativa.	345000	1988
515-0192	GOCR /MEP/ COMPUT.	ESR	Compra de computadoras para escuelas públicas.	200000	1988
515-231	MEP/Fund. Omar Dengo	ESR	Compra de computadoras para escuelas públicas.	176496	1989
515-240	Fundación Omar Dengo	ESR	Fondo y provisión de computadoras para las escuelas públicas.	271719	1990
0.0035	Remodeling of the Central Offices	PL-480		3000	1987
0.0113	Computers Center Installation (Univ. Nac. Aut.)	PL-480		2000	?
0.0093	Reconst. of the March 12th School, PZ	PL-480		1341	1988
0.0202	Recont. Liceo José Martí	PL-480		8000	?
0.0206	Library & Cult. House Construction	PL-480		15000	?

Notes:

* Projects without available information at USAID Costa Rican Mission

AD - Development assistance.

ESR - Stabilization and economic reconversion program. The amount of these projects is given in miles of "colones".

PL-480- Public Law-480. The amount of these projects is given in miles of "colones".

Source: Information compiled by "Academia de Centroamerica" 1996.

INDEX

ABSTRACT	2
THE USAID AND THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR	3
1. INTRODUCCION	3
2. ANALYTICAL REVIEW OF THE EVOLUTION OF THE EDUCATIONAL SECTOR.....	3
2.1 <i>The educational sector development before the USAID projects</i>	3
2.2 <i>Situation of the Educational Sector in 1945</i>	4
2.3 <i>Evolution of Educational Policies between 1945 and 1970</i>	4
2.4 <i>Evolution of Educational Policies between 1970 and 1995</i>	6
2.5 <i>Effects of Educational Development on Costa Rican welfare</i>	9
3. ANALYZED PROJECTS	10
CASE NO. 1	12
AGRICULTURE SCHOOL FOR THE HUMID TROPICAL REGION (EARTH)	
PROJECT NO. 596-0129, 515 0192, 515 0222	
CASE NO. 2	14
TEXTBOOKS FOR THE GENERAL BASIC EDUCATION (G.B.E.)	
FIRST PROJECT, NO 515-0083, 515-0085	
SECOND PROJECT NO 515-0192, 515-0194A	
CASE NO. 3	17
CENTRAL AMERICA PEACE SCHOLARSHIPS (CAPS)	
PROJECT NOS. 515-0242, 515-0254	
CASE NO. 4	19
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	
PROJECT NO. 515-0138	
CASE NO. 5	22
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	
PROJECT NO. 515-0063	
CASE NO. 6	24
EDUCATION AND PREVENTION OF THE USE OF DRUGS	
PROJECT NO. 515-0253	
CASE NO. 7	25
FUND FOR WOMEN	
PROJECTS NOS. 938- 0287 Y 515- 0140	
CASE NO. 8	29
EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER SCIENCE PROGRAM (PIE)	
MINISTRY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION -	
OMAR DENGO FOUNDATION (MOE-FOD)	
PROJECT NOS. 515-0192, 515-0231, 515-0240	
CASE NO. 9	31
REGIONAL TECHNICAL AID CENTER II (RTAC II)	
PROJECT NO. 598-0791 (FORMERLY 597-0011)	
CASE NO. 10	33
RADIO LEARNING	
PROJECT NO. 936 5818	
4. GLOBAL EVALUATION.....	34
5. LESSONS LEARNED	36
5.1 <i>For USAID</i>	36
5.2 <i>For COSTA RICA</i>	37
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY	37

TABLES INDEX

TABLE NO. 1.....	4
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS BY YEAR	
TABLE NO. 2.....	7
PER CAPITA EXPEDITURE IN EDUCATION, COSTA RICA (US.\$ 1970)	
TABLE NO. 3.....	10
INDICATORS OF THE EVOLUTION OF COSTA RICAN EDUCATION:1940-1990	

ANNEXES INDEX

ANNEXES	43
ANNEX A	44
LIST OF USAID PROJETS DURING THE 1945 - 1970 PERIOD EDUCATIONAL SECTOR - 1996	
ANNEX B	46
LIST OF USAID PROJETS DURING THE 1970 - 1995 PERIOD EDUCATIONAL SECTOR - 1996	