

Assessment of Progress

The Peace Corps
PL 480 - Natural Resources Initiative

1985 - 1988

The Environmental Sector
Office of Training and Program Support
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AID	Agency for International Development
CCFI	Collaborative Community Forestry Initiative (Ghana)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DA	Development Assistance
EPC	Environmental Protection Council
ESF	Economic Support Funds
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (United Nations)
FSP	Forestry Support Program
GOG	Government of Ghana
IDA	International Development Assistance
ILO	International Labor Organization
INAFOR	National Forestry Institute (Guatemala)
LDC	Less-Developed Country
MCH	Mother/Child Health (Program)
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreement
PADF	Pan American Development Foundation
PC	Peace Corps
PL 480	Public Law 480 (Law governing Food Aid Programs)
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
S&T	Bureau of Science and Technology (AID)
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Executive Summary

In September of 1980, the Agency for International Development and Peace Corps signed a Participating Agency Services Agreement (PASA) in which both agencies agreed to share resources in an expanded effort to assist Less Developed Countries in forestry and natural resources. The PASA agenda included programming assistance, pre-service and in-service training programs, and material support for Peace Corps-assisted activities.

At the beginning of FY '84, the Agency for International Development (AID) requested that the Peace Corps (PC) assume an additional responsibility and study the possibility of placing Peace Corps Volunteers in forestry and conservation programs funded by PL 480 "Food for Peace" programs. During 1984 a seven-country assessment of PL 480 programs was carried out, which resulted in additional PASA funding in 1985 for a PL 480 Natural Resources Initiative.

The long-range goals of this PL 480 Natural Resources Initiative are:

- o to increase the development impact of the PL 480 food programs;
- o to increase the number of trees planted and surviving in developing countries, especially in Africa where deforestation and soil erosion have resulted in a downward trend in food production; and
- o to build local skills in tree nursery management and agroforestry practices.

Peace Corps' approach in implementing this initiative has been, and continues to be, a collaborative one involving more than 50 organizations. Most of these organizations -- PVOs, NGOs, recipient government forestry departments, and donor agencies -- have expanded their participation in natural resources activities as a result of this PC/USAID initiative.

To initiate this collaboration, PC held regional PL 480 workshops in Africa and Latin America. Most notable of the natural resources activities resulting from the regional workshops is the Ghana Collaborative Community Forestry Initiative (CCFI). It has become a model for forestry development in several major ways:

- o it was designed through a participatory workshop process, involving representatives from seven organizations and the target communities;
- o it establishes tree nurseries as income-generating enterprises in 20 rural communities -- to be owned and managed by each community;
- o it includes a major training component for nursery managers and community leaders to assure the transfer of technical and management skills; and
- o it has succeeded in obtaining financial resource from several sponsors, including the World Bank, AID/Washington, USAID/Ghana, Peace Corps, and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

Moreover, local and regional non-governmental organization (NGOs) have played a central role throughout the planning and pre-implementation phases of the Initiative. NGOs will have a

major role in project implementation at the community-level, particularly in helping to establish the economic viability of the nurseries and true community ownership.

The "multiplier effect" resulting from Peace Corps' collaborative approach is the single most important success of the collaborative PL 480 Initiative to date. The second most important success of the Initiative is that it has helped to legitimize food aid as a development resource.

More than 170 participants representing 17 countries and 50 different organizations have attended regional and country-specific workshops in Africa in 1987 and Latin America in 1988 to learn more about food aid assistance and natural resources possibilities, and to explore opportunities for collaboration within their own countries.

Anti-Food aid sentiments widely held prior to the regional workshops have been neutralized considerably, and collaboration in natural resources activities has increased in 12 of the 17 countries represented at the workshops.

Another accomplishment of the PL-480 initiative has been the publication of materials. Besides publishing the results of the 1984 PL-480 assessment which included guidelines for the use of food aid, the Initiative has published the proceedings from the 1987 and 1988 workshops, a pre-service training module for Peace Corps training, and a case study on the use of food aid in forestry projects.

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to review the progress made under the Peace Corps PL 480 - Natural Resources Initiative over the last four years, 1985 - 1988.

Clearly, Peace Corps has been a primary beneficiary: its effectiveness in natural resources programming and project implementation has been enhanced tremendously by the Initiative. But because of Peace Corps' collaborative approach in the implementation of this Initiative, many other organizations have also benefited a great deal, especially PVOs, NGOs, and recipient government forestry department.

This report looks at the achievements of the PL 480/Natural Resources Initiative from Peace Corps' vantage point as a primary beneficiary. However, it is not intended to be a full assessment of the initiative, since such an assessment would need to take into account the significant benefits realized by other organizations as a result of Peace Corps' collaborative approach. As a result of this approach, each dollar spent has had a "multiplier effect" that had a positive impact on organizations and individuals in 17 developing countries.

1. The Pre-Initiative Situation

"More than half of all tree planting that is taking place under U.S. Foreign Assistance Programs is actually being accomplished under PL 480 Food Programs, rather than under bilateral development assistance (DA) and Economic Support Fund (ESF) projects."

This key conclusion was announced by the Forestry Division of the A.I.D. Bureau for Science and Technology (S&T) in its 1982 report to the House Appropriations Committee, A Comprehensive Summary of U.S.A.I.D. Forestry-Related Assistance to Developing Countries (Deely, January 1982).

Although precise data and figures on the scale of PL 480 support to natural resources activities around the world were not available in any consolidated form at the time of the 1982 report to Congress, there were enough data to suggest that food aid was responsible for a significant number of trees being planted.

The Clement report, Food Aid and Forestry: Ongoing and Recently Terminated PL 480-Supported Forestry Projects Worldwide (March, 1984), sponsored by the Forestry Support Program (FSP) was the first step in gathering and consolidating more precise data. Based on responses to worldwide cables sent to USAID missions requesting information on their PL 480 programs, the report was able to provide an inventory of PL 480 programs.

The Clement report's major conclusion was that earlier estimates of PL 480-supported tree planting were conservative. It concluded that PL 480 support to forestry development under Title I, Title II (Food-for-Work), and Title III food programs could be responsible for direct tree planting on as many as 1,500,000 hectares in at least 53 countries in the last several years.

Although the Clement report was able to provide more precise figures on the scale of PL 480 support to natural resources activities around the world, information was still sketchy on the types of natural resources projects being supported and the issues these projects faced.

Moreover, although the Clement report suggested that there was great potential for collaboration in these programs, indications were that there was at that time very little collaboration going on between Peace Corps, AID, PVOs, NGOs, and recipient governments.

In addition to questions concerning the level of collaboration in PL 480 supported forestry projects, other key questions remained to be answered, including:

- o In what ways could these projects be strengthened to achieve greater development results?
- o How could PL 480 support to the forestry sector be expanded to help plant even more trees?

Rapid Country Assessments were ordered to address some of these remaining questions. In late 1983, a decision was made by AID/S&T and Peace Corps to conduct a seven-country assessment in Africa under its ongoing AID/Peace Corps Forest Resources Management Project, with PASA funding.

1.1 The Seven-Country Field Assessment

Based on the data summarized in the Clement report, seven countries in Africa were targeted for further information gathering. This information gathering activity, which began in February of 1984, produced the Burwell/Joyce report, Community-Level Forestry Development: Options and Guidelines for Collaboration in PL 480 Programs.

The seven countries selected for the Rapid Assessments were: Ghana, Senegal, Niger, Rwanda, Kenya, Somalia, and Lesotho. The criteria used in their selection, in addition to scale of PL 480 program, included:

- o the presence in the country of Peace Corps, AID, and at least one PVO with a PL 480 Title II food program; and/or
- o extensive experience in the country in natural resources and Food-for-Work (i.e., World Food Programme or PVO) that might serve as program models, both small-scale and large-scale.

As part of the country assessment activity, information-gathering visits were also made to Rome and Geneva. In Rome, the country assessment team met with Milicent Fenwick, the US Ambassador to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and with senior officials of both FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP). In Geneva, the team met with senior officials of the International Labor Office (ILO) to discuss ILO guidelines for Food-for-Work, and possibilities for ILO collaboration in the initiative.

A major purpose of the field assessment was to identify the factors that contributed to the success of PL 480 support to natural resources activities, and the constraints that kept them from having greater development impact. Another intention of the study, although perhaps undervalued in its significance at the time, was to determine the general awareness in the field of the potential contribution that food aid could make as a resource to natural resource programming efforts: What was the level of interest by field offices in an expanded PL 480 programming in the natural resource sector?

It became clear very early in the study that food aid in general, was not a popular resource, a sentiment which appeared to be based more on lack of awareness and information than on first-hand experience. There existed, in fact, a strong anti-food aid sentiment within Peace Corps/Washington and AID/Washington. But what was not known was how strong and pervasive this sentiment was in the field, and what underlying issues contributed to it.

Dealing with this anti-food aid sentiment became an important issue throughout the field assessment -- in getting objective information, in drawing realistic conclusions, and in making achievable recommendation.

For this reason, the assessment process itself became very important. In each country, briefings and debriefings (or roundtable workshops) were held with representatives of key organizations to ensure that information collected and "lessons learned" were widely shared, and to raise issues for further in- country discussion. The major challenge for the team in these meetings centered on food aid: How could food aid -- an abundant resource -- help plant even more trees, prevent even more soil erosion, restore even more land?

In all, the assessment process resulted in interviews with over 400 people, and visits to 34 project sites. Key conclusions summarized in the assessment report are outlined below.

- o Little Awareness of Food Aid Programs

The majority of people interviewed in the field were for the most part unfamiliar with the food aid projects and approaches in their countries, even though many expressed negative opinions about food aid in general.

The two most commonly heard charges were that food aid "causes dependency," and food aid projects are "make-work schemes." Most people, however, in making these charges, were unable to describe the basis for their opinions.

- o Little Awareness of Natural Resources Project Possibilities

Most donor, PVO, and host country representatives were un aware of the kinds of natural resources activities that could be implemented at the community-level, other than a general sense that trees could be planted.

Unlike the food production, health, and education sectors, in most countries visited there were no "model" community forestry projects to serve as prototypes. Many people in key positions -- i.e. the AID, Peace Corps, and PVO development generalists -- did not know what they could do to support forestry efforts, and therefore had difficulty understanding how food aid could make a positive contribution to those efforts.

- o Little Forestry Support and Extension to Rural Communities

When interviewed, most donor and PVO representatives argued that support to food production, health, and education was far more pressing in the short-term than support to forestry, although most were aware that deforestation and soil erosion were very serious problems. In most countries visited during the field study, the forestry sector was near the bottom on the list of priorities when it came to funding and other resource support.

- o Little Coordination of Natural Resources Activities In Country

Donors and PVOs for the most part did not know what natural resources related activities one another were doing. There was little integration of activities and PVOs in particular were unfamiliar with host government efforts and resources.

- o Unrealistic Role of Government Forestry Departments

Most government forestry officials (and many donor representatives) saw the forestry department as the principle "implementor" of community forestry activities, including nurseries and woodlots. The natural resources problem was being portrayed in many respects as a resource problem -- a lack of funds and trained staff. Yet the fact remains that few governments in the world have the staff and resources to successfully develop, manage, and market forest products at the community-level. It was unrealistic to think that there would ever be enough resources available for the forestry department in developing countries to adequately carry out this role. Community forestry activities needed to be implemented through local organizations and individual farmers.

- o Unrealistic Donor and Recipient Government Expectations for Voluntary Participation in Forestry Activities

Voluntary participation has never been a driving force in community forestry activities, yet donor and recipient government development planners continued to have high expectations for voluntary community participation in the implementation of community forestry activities. Tree planting, unlike most other self-help community projects, involves a longer-term commitment to seedling protection and maintenance. Without direct ownership of tree products, or a viable wage, expecting more than a few days of volunteerism was simply unrealistic. Personal and profit incentives needed to be integrated into the equation.

- o Insufficient Technical and Resource Assistance to Food for-Work Projects

In many cases, existing food-for-work project sites visited were "made work" schemes, not because they were intended to be that way, but because they were receiving little or no technical and resource support that would have enabled them to achieve more impact. Project site selection was often not based on valid technical or design considerations; basic hand tools and other materials essential in carrying out the activities were often unavailable to laborers; technical supervision of work activities was often not present; and the labor force itself was in most cases very young or very old and feeble, and labor turnover was high. Because of labor quality and frequent labor turnover and because of inadequate technical supervision, skill development -- essential for long-term forestry development -- was not occurring.

In summary, the Burwell/Joyce report determined that:

- 1) key people in the field -- people who would need to be instrumental in expanding food aid support to natural resources efforts -- were unknowledgeable about natural resources development possibilities, as well as about food aid programs and approaches;
- 2) many community forestry activities were based on unrealistic expectations at two levels -- on the capability of the forestry department to implement them and on the willingness of communities to provide voluntary labor over extended periods of time; and

3) existing food-for-work projects, for the most part, were poorly designed and implemented, largely because they received very little technical and resource assistance -- and not because they received food aid.

Several key recommendations resulted from these conclusions and subsequent discussions, including those listed below.

- o Peace Corps should collaborate more with AID, PVOs, NGOs, WFP, and recipient governments in PL 480-supported forestry activities: Peace Corps could help strengthen technical assistance to ongoing and new community-level natural resources activities by providing Volunteers as a resource.
- o Peace Corps should help raise awareness within the development community -- both in Washington and overseas -- on two fronts:
 - o to inform people of the kinds of activities that are needed at the community-level to address deforestation, soil erosion, and other natural resource problems; and
 - o to inform people of the ways that food aid can contribute positively to forestry development and other natural resources development efforts.
- o Peace Corps should help pilot several PL 480-supported community forestry projects in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to serve as models for further project development. These pilot projects should incorporate the following principles:
 - o primary responsibility for project implementation should ultimately be placed with local community organizations (and local women's groups in particular should be targeted);
 - o the role of the forestry department should be that of providing technical and material assistance;
 - o skill development at the community-level, both technical and managerial, should be a major program focus;
 - o income generation leading to self-sustaining, community-based nurseries and woodlots should be a key project goal;
 - o community activities should incorporate community volunteers for short duration activities, and paid labor for longer- term activities; and
 - o labor, whether paid with cash or a food wage initially, should gradually be compensated with funds generated by the sale of seedlings and wood products.

2. The AID and Peace Corps PL 480 PASA Amendment

The conclusions and recommendations from this seven-country study led to the decision by S&T to provide additional funding to the existing AID/Peace Corps Forest Resources Management Project. The additional scope of work, which was added in 1985, called for:

- o more country assessments of the potential for PL 480- supported forestry programs, modeled on the seven-country assessment process noted above;
- o regional PL 480 program planning/implementation workshops in Africa, Latin America, and Asia for the top policy makers of key collaborating organizations (Peace Corps, AID, PVOs, NGOs, WFP, and recipient governments) to develop appropriate strategies for implementation of the initiative;
- o in-country PL 480 program planning/implementation workshops for program officers of the principle collaborating entities, as well as officials of those organizations that would be providing project support;
- o follow-up staff training support for program officers of collaborating entities prior to and during initial stages of program support;
- o consultant support for technical and professional field staff backstopping, project implementation and management support, and annual program monitoring workshops;
- o material support for pilot project implementation;
- o pre-service training development, and training programs for new Peace Corps Volunteers;
- o pre-service and in-service counterpart training in conjunction with PCV training; and
- o the addition of two full-time staff professionals devoted to the PL 480/Forestry Initiative.

The long range goals of this continuing effort, as stated in the 1985 amendment, are (1) to increase the development impact of the food programs; (2) to increase the number of trees being planted and surviving in developing countries, especially where deforestation and soil erosion have resulted in a downward trend in food production; and (3) to build local skills in tree nursery management and agroforestry practices.

3. Implementing the Initiative

The Peace Corps Natural Resources Sector identified four activity areas to help accomplish these objectives: regional workshops, pilot project development, training, and material development.

Peace Corps' approach in implementing these activities has been, and continues to be, a collaborative one, involving more than 50 organizations. Most of these organizations -- PVOs, NGOs, recipient government forestry departments, and donor agencies -- have expanded their participation in natural resources activities as a result of these activities.

This "multiplier effect" resulting from Peace Corps' collaborative approach is the single most important success of the initiative. The second most important success of the initiative is that it has helped to legitimize food aid as a development resource.

More than 170 participants representing 17 countries and 50 different organizations have attended regional and country-specific workshops in Africa and Latin America to learn more about food-aid assistance and natural resources possibilities, and to explore opportunities for collaboration within their own countries. Anti-food aid sentiments widely held prior to these workshops have been neutralized considerably, and collaboration in natural resources activities has increased in 13 of the 17 countries represented at the regional workshops.

3.1 Regional Workshops

Two regional workshops have been held to date: the Africa Natural Resources and Food Aid Workshop held in Mombasa, Kenya, in May of 1987; and the Latin America Natural Resources and Food Aid Workshop held in Panajachel, Guatemala, in February of 1988.

The overall purpose of both workshops was threefold:

- o to raise awareness of the kinds of activities that are needed at the community-level to address deforestation, soil erosion, and other problems faced by the natural resources sector;
- o to raise awareness of the ways that food aid can contribute positively to forestry development and other natural resources development efforts; and
- o to strengthen the possibilities for collaboration in natural resources activities at the country level through team building and information sharing.

Both workshops were attended by country teams composed of senior representatives of Peace Corps, PVOs, USAID, NGOs, and the recipient government officials.

The Mombasa Workshop (May 1987)

Country teams representing eight countries attended the Mombasa Workshop: Kenya, Somalia, Rwanda, Lesotho, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Botswana, and the Gambia. Representatives also attended from USAID/Mauritania, CRS/Burundi, and WFP/Kenya. Teams averaged six people, ranging from 2 people (The Gambia) to 13 (Kenya). International PVOs represented included CARE, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Save the Children, Children's Mercy Fund, and Food for the Hungry. In addition, the following agencies were represented at the workshop: AID (Food and Voluntary Assistance (FVA), S&T and Africa Bureaus), as well as headquarters staff from various PVOs and Peace Corps. Over 60 participants attended the workshop.

The Guatemala Workshop (February 1988)

Seven countries teams attended the Guatemala workshop, including: Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador. Teams ranged from 3 people (Costa Rica) to 12 people (Guatemala). The international PVOs represented included CRS, CARE, ADRA, Pan American Development Foundation (PADF) and Planning Assistance. In addition, nine people representing AID (FVA and the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean), Peace Corps, and Washington- and New York-based PVO headquarters staff also attended. In all, more than 50 people attended the workshop.

Outcomes from the workshops included those listed below.

- o Fifteen country strategies designed to address natural resources problems.
- o General consensus that food aid can be a potential resource for development, and that both program and project food aid can be used to augment other resources to increase forestry and natural resources development impact.
- o Greater awareness that enhanced integration of development resources -- bilateral assistance; program and project food aid; PCVs; and PVO, NGO, and recipient government technical and financial resources -- will result in improved success in addressing pressing forestry and natural resources concerns.
- o Country teams more committed to developing viable collaborative activities based on the sharing of ideas, information, and resources.
- o Recognition that food aid programs are in a state of evolution with new procedures developing that will enable innovative and more appropriate food aid uses.
- o New terminology, definitions, and creative programming approaches for PL 480 Title II food aid, which directly contributed to the new AID project guidelines on food aid (Project Food Aid: Guidelines for Program and Project Development).
- o Improved communication and cross-fertilization of new ideas among countries during workshop group reports.
- o A broader understanding of natural resources problems and potential solutions, including roles and responsibilities among the diverse spectrum of participants.
- o A better understanding of the use of Peace Corps Volunteers to support food aid-assisted natural resources projects.

Proceedings, with country team action plans, were published for each workshop:

Food Aid and Natural Resources Programming Workshop, Mombasa, Kenya: The Proceedings, May 25-29, 1987.

Memoria del Taller de Programacion Sobre Recursos Naturales y Asistencia Alimentaria en America Latina: Panajachel, Guatemala, 7 al 12 de Febrero de 1988.

3.2 Pilot Project Development

As a result of the two regional workshops, four pilot projects are underway in Kenya, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Ghana.

A wide range of technical assistance has been provided to these pilot projects, which are all in various stages of development. The Ghana project is presented below as an example of the pilot project development process, and the range of technical assistance that the Initiative has provided.

The Northern Ghana Collaborative Community Forestry Initiative (CCFI): A Project Model

The Northern Ghana Collaborative Community Forestry Initiative (CCFI) entered the implementation stage in September, 1988. Although in the early stages of its development, the Ghana pilot project has become a remarkable example of collaboration and participatory planning, and will serve as an exceptional model for program development and implementation, with impact beyond the forestry sector.

The CCFI project has become a model for forestry development in several important ways:

- o it was designed through a participatory workshop process, involving representatives from 7 organizations and the target communities;
- o it establishes tree nurseries as income-generating enterprises in 20 rural communities -- to be owned and managed by each community;
- o it will include a food wage component for nursery managers and community leaders to assure the transfer of skills in technical and management areas; and
- o it has succeeded in obtaining implementation resources from several sponsors, including the World Bank, AID/Washington, AID/Ghana, Peace Corps, and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA).

The overall purpose of the CCFI pilot project is to establish 20 community nurseries in the three northern regions of Ghana by 1990. These nurseries will be managed by PCVs initially, and staffed by food-wage nursery workers. The ultimate goal for the nurseries is that they will eventually be fully managed by the community, and that the wages of permanent nursery workers will be paid with revenues generated from the sale of seedlings and wood products.

The Government of Ghana (GOG) Forestry Department and ADRA are the chief project sponsors, USAID/Washington will provide start-up funding, the World Bank will be the primary long-term donor, and local and regional NGOs, Peace Corps, and the GOG Environmental Protection Council (EPC) will provide the primary community-based support.

The participation of local and regional NGOs in the Initiative is a very key element of the implementation strategy. They will have a major role in helping to establish the economic viability of the nurseries and true community ownership. Amasachina, a regional NGO based in one of the three target regions, has taken a very active role throughout the planning and pre-implementation phases of the Initiative. However, since Amasachina is only active in one of the three target regions, the Initiative is working through local community organizations in the other two regions.

The project has gone through the first several stages, from project identification to project start-up. These stages are outlined below.

Project Identification In October of 1987, Peace Corps/Washington provided a consultant to assist the Ghana country team that attended the Mombasa workshop to further identify and clarify project possibilities and to determine the goals for an in-country workshop. A three-day "Implementation Planning Workshop" took place in December 1987.

Implementation Planning The Peace Corps consultant returned to facilitate the Implementation Planning Workshop along with the Peace Corps Natural Resource/Food Aid Specialist. Over 50 people representing 11 organizations attended the workshop, which resulted in 9-month plan

to move the project to its September 1988 start-up date. It also led to pre-implementation funding in the amount of \$44,700 from the FVA Bureau of A.I.D. (in the form of a matching grant to ADRA), and to an implementation funding proposal submitted to the World Bank for \$600,000 over an eight-year period. Major pre-implementation tasks included the identification of pilot communities and nursery sites, the construction of water reservoirs for nursery water supply, and construction of accommodations/tool storage facilities for nursery managers.

Pre-Implementation Review Workshop In March of 1988, the Peace Corps Natural Resources/Food Aid Specialist (in a brief stop-over on his way to another assignment) conducted a one-day pre-implementation review workshop. This workshop reaffirmed the September 1988 project start date (intended to coincide with the completion of PCV training), helped re-clarify roles and responsibilities of key project implementors, and identified and resolved bottlenecks impeding pre-implementation activities.

Project Start-Up Workshop A three-day Project Start-Up Workshop, funded by USAID/Ghana and implemented by ADRA and Peace Corps/Ghana, was conducted in September 1988. The major outcome of this workshop was a 12-month work plan for the project. Additional outcomes included agreements on how participating organizations would work together, how project issues would be addressed, and how the project would be managed. [See proceedings for this workshop: Collaborative Community Forestry Initiative (CCFI) Project Start-Up Workshop. September 14-16, 1988. 38 pages.]

Project Review Workshop Scheduled for September of 1989, this workshop will review agreements between the collaborating groups in the project, review project roles and responsibilities, and develop a work plan for the next 12-month period.

A key conclusion can be drawn from the Ghana experience: without the Mombasa workshop and the team building and information sharing that took place, there would not have been a "country team organization" committed to a common purpose, and there would not have been a "project organization" for Peace Corps/Washington to work with in the pilot project development.

3.3 Training

In addition to regional workshops and pilot project development, training was the third area of activity identified to help accomplish the recommendations from the field assessment. Training support is being provided in the form of training plan development, training guides, and training consultation identification.

Pre-Service Training Guide In July 1988, a pre-service training guide on natural resources/project food aid was developed to introduce concepts of food aid to Peace Corps trainees and pilot tested during the Ghana pre-service Peace Corps training program. This training guide, Natural Resources Activities Supported with Project Food Aid : A Peace Corps Training Guide, was also pilot tested in September of 1988 in the Peace Corps/Ghana pre-service training program for foresters assigned to the Northern Ghana Community Forestry Project. The purpose of the seven sessions (31 hours) in the training guide is to provide Peace Corps Trainees with the skills needed for planning and carrying out community forestry activities which rely on food aid for labor payments or farmer incentives. The training guide will be available to Peace Corps field offices and PVOs.

Training Plan In March 1988, a 3-year training plan was developed for the Northern Ghana Community Forestry Project, and submitted to USAID/Ghana for funding. It included the Project Start-Up Workshop (which USAID/Ghana agreed to fund), annual 3-day nursery manager training workshops and nursery worker in-service training workshops, and an annual Project Review Workshop.

Technical Training Support In addition to the training support provided in the form of training guides and training plans, the initiative has also provided consultant support in the form of technical trainers. A technical trainer, for example, was provided to conduct the pre-service training for Peace Corps Volunteers who were assigned to the Ghana CCFI project.

3.4 Material Development

Material development is the fourth area of activity identified to help accomplish the recommendations resulting from the field assessment. These materials included country and project assessments, project case studies, and Project Food Aid guidelines.

Country and Project Assessments The seven-country assessment resulted in a publication which continues to serve as the basic handbook for the Initiative:

- o Community-Level Forestry Development: Options and Guidelines for Collaboration in PL 480 Programs (Peace Corps, January 1985, 236 pages) is now in its third printing; over 1000 copies of the handbook have been disseminated around the world. The document illustrates on-going projects supported with food aid; it highlights specific programming factors and "lessons learned" that should be taken into consideration in forestry projects supported with food aid; and it provides recommendations for Peace Corps assistance to these activities.

Project Case Studies One project case study has been developed, and a second case study is in progress:

- o We Did This Ourselves (December 1987) is a case study of the 13 year old INAFOR/CARE/Peace Corps Soil Conservation and Forest Management Program in Guatemala. The program uses food-for-work as an incentive to subsistence farmers to carry out soil conservation and reforestation activities on their own private land as well as on community land. The program is seen as an excellent model for how collaboration between the participating entities can occur, as well as for the use of food aid to help accomplish program goals.
- o The Northern Ghana Community Forestry Project (publication pending) is a case study of the project development process briefly described above in Section 3.2. The case study looks at issues of collaboration, consensus building, communication and project management, as well as the workshop process used in project design and planning.

The case studies are available to all PVOs, project planners and implementors for use as a project development and training tool. They have also been distributed to leading academic institutions working in forestry and development. Project Food Aid Guidelines

A set of guidelines for the application of project food aid has been developed by the FVA Bureau of the Agency for International Development for use by PVOs and USAID missions:

- o Project Food Aid: Guidelines for Program and Project Development (Draft Printing, January 1988) is the direct result of the 1984 field assessment. (The lead author of the guidelines was part of the original Peace Corps study.) The document presents "how-to" guidelines for developing country programs that involve several collaborating groups (e.g., the Ghana Project), as well as technical and management considerations for designing projects with a food-wage component. The draft guidelines have been made available to participants in both regional workshops.

4. Peace Corps' Role

Peace Corps has taken the lead role in this initiative, which primarily has been along two lines: to provide opportunities for information giving and sharing; and to help nurture in-country project development. Taking this lead role has not come without some "lessons learned."

For one, the lead role in this type of initiative can only be taken so far. Peace Corps can help create an environment for collaboration through its regional workshops, it can provide technical assistance consultancies to countries to nurture the process, and it can provide Peace Corps Volunteers as resources to projects. But Peace Corps cannot implement the projects, it cannot manage the projects, and it cannot fund the projects. These latter roles and responsibilities must be taken on by other organizations.

As the Ghana experience has demonstrated, planning projects is one thing, funding them is quite another.

Peace Corps, PVOs, and government foresters cannot move a forestry project into implementation without funds for nursery establishment -- the basic component of any forestry project. And in most cases, these funds can only come from a major donor (e.g., the USAID mission or the World Bank).

Two major questions have arisen as a result of this pilot Initiative:

- o Are USAID missions or other donors willing to support these projects with long-term funding, and are they able to get approval for this support from their headquarters?
- o Can the momentum established at regional and country workshops be sustained long enough for the funding pipeline to deliver, a process that could take two or more years?

This second question is particularly troublesome, given the frequent staff turnovers in Peace Corps, PVO, and AID field offices. Peace Corps can help build and educate a "country team" at its regional workshops, but these teams are viable for only as long as the original membership remains intact.

Therefore, it is not only a question of funding availability, but also a question of time frame. Can funds be made available for these activities while the interest and commitment to collaboration is still strong?

Project Implementation As stated above, Peace Corps is not the appropriate organization to serve as "lead implementor" in natural resources projects involving food aid; this role is most appropriate for PVOs such as CARE, ADRA, CRS, World Vision, and Save the Children.

But the list of potential project implementors is very limited, and becomes even more limited on a country-by-country basis. CRS, for example, handles over 80% of all Title II in Africa, and was targeted in the field assessment as the only PVO with the food resources, continent-wide presence, and local food distribution networks to carry forward the initiative on any major scale. But on the whole, CRS has given priority to its Maternal Child Health (MCH) program.

Fortunately for the CCFI project, ADRA has an excellent food aid program in Ghana, and was very keen on collaborating in the project. But ADRA's only other PL 480 program in Africa is in Rwanda, and the Government of Rwanda is restricting the uses of food aid in that country.

5. Initiative Achievements and Benefits

The Peace Corps PL 480/Natural Resources Initiative has resulted in several significant achievements and benefits. It has also contributed to a variety of other related efforts.

The seven-country assessment, the two regional workshops, and the in-country workshops and training programs have involved 19 countries in Africa and Latin America. Over 400 people representing more than 50 local and international organizations and 18 recipient governments had provided an opportunity to learn more about food aid and natural resources.

Country strategies were developed by country teams for 15 of these countries, which resulted in four pilot food aid-supported natural resources projects (Ghana, Kenya, Bolivia, and Ecuador), and new and/or expanded food aid-supported natural resources activities in Peru and Guatemala, and new natural resources activities (without food aid support) in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Botswana, and Dominican Republic.

The Peace Corps PL 480/Natural Resources Initiative has also contributed to a variety of other related efforts.

- o The Initiative, and the regional workshops in particular, have helped legitimize A.I.D./Peace Corps/PVO collaboration at the field level.
- o The workshops have helped legitimize the use of food aid in natural resources activities.
- o The Initiative has helped institutionalize the use of food aid and forestry within Peace Corps and A.I.D., and enabled technical foresters and training specialists to become specialists in food aid programming as well.
- o FVA's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation in its FY 1989 PL 480 Title II Development Grant Program Schedule includes for the first time a clause that gives special consideration to "proposals that demonstrate joint programming with the Peace Corps." This step will encourage more collaboration between AID, PVOs, and Peace Corps.

Other organizations, as a direct result of Initiative activities, have also recognized the important role that Peace Corps can play in the development process.

In February, 1988, the Peace Corps PL 480/Natural Resources Specialist worked closely in Ghana with the World Bank appraisal team for the IDA community forestry project in Ghana, which will fund the CCFI project as a component. The World Bank cited the joint effort as an example of "how the Bank's macro and the Peace Corps' micro approach can be merged in the cause of development."

The Food for Peace Office of the FVA Bureau of AID is also encouraging increased field collaboration with Peace Corps as a direct result of Initiative activities. The 1985 Annual Report on Public Law 480 listed Peace Corps forestry programs around the world, and highlighted Peace Corps' technical assistance to forestry activities under PL 480. The FVA regional directors not only attended the two workshops, but were actively involved in their planning as well. They have also been active in the country-specific project development planning process, the Ghana project in particular.

There is also a strong consensus on the part of both Washington and field participants that the two regional workshops and other Initiative events have contributed a great deal to turning around much of the anti-food aid sentiment that existed prior to 1984. Furthermore, the Initiative has strengthened the relationships between A.I.D., Peace Corps, and PVOs, and given a realistic meaning to the word collaboration.

These events have not only affected Peace Corps policy toward collaboration with A.I.D. and PVOs, but Peace Corps/AID/ PVO collaboration in other sectors.

6. A Proposal to Sustain a PL 480 Initiative

Peace Corps proposes to maintain and redirect a PL 480 initiative to help strengthen Title II collaboration in natural resources activities on two fronts:

- o to encourage greater PVO collaboration in PL 480 natural resources activities through technical assistance, workshops, and training programs; and
- o to strengthen the capability of existing NGOs to facilitate PL 480 natural resources programming at the community-level and to help establish new community-based NGOs.

6.1 Expanded PVO Collaboration

As mentioned previously, with only three or four PVOs with PL 480 Title II programs in developing countries, the choices for PL 480 Title II collaboration are limited. Moreover, with the exception of ADRA, there has not been a strong willingness on the part of these PVOs to take the lead role in project development and implementation.

Two incorrect assumptions were made early in the Initiative:

- o that it was sufficient to target PVOs with existing Title II programs for participation in regional programming workshops, at the exclusion of other PVOs with potential interest in PL 480 food programs; and

- o that the PVOs with the traditional Title II programs had the capability to collaborate readily in PL 480 natural resources activities.

If the PL 480 Natural Resources Initiative is to succeed in any major way, it will need to expand PVO participation.

Peace Corps proposed the following ways for expanding PVO participation in the Initiative:

Country Strategy Development Workshops The purpose of these workshops would be to provide information about Project Food Aid possibilities and natural resources possibilities, and to help facilitate collaboration between PVOs, NGOs, Peace Corps, A.I.D. Food for Peace and program officers, and recipient government officials in the development of natural resources activities. The workshop would particularly target PVOs which do not have PL 480 programs, but which could have a potential interest in food programs.

Technical assistance would also be provided in the form of consultants -- both food aid and natural resources consultants -- for project identification, design, or review status.

Training Programs It was an incorrect assumption that the field staff of PVOs with traditional Title II food programs had the food aid knowledge and experience to readily take on the role of "lead implementor" in PL 480 natural resources programs.

Not only do these PVOs experience as much staff turnover as Peace Corps and A.I.D., but also many of their personnel are unfamiliar with current Project Food Aid possibilities and guidelines. They may know how to keep the MCH program going, but they may not know how to establish a new food wage program.

Training programs of two types are proposed:

- o Regional Project Food Aid Training Workshops These training programs would focus on Project Food Aid possibilities and guidelines specific to natural resources objectives, and would be conducted on a regional basis for PVO field personnel with programming responsibilities. Ideally, these training workshops would take place prior to the Country Strategy Development Workshops (see above) would include personnel for the traditional food aid PVOs, and would include personnel from PVOs that currently do not have food aid programs.
- o Program-Specific Project Food Aid Training Workshops These program-specific training workshops would take place prior to the start-up of a PL 480 natural resources program in a particular country. They would focus on food aid guidelines and lessons learned, as well as on the nuts and bolts of handling and distribution. These workshops would include PVO personnel, NGO personnel and community representatives responsible for managing the food aid component of the program.

The design requirements for these training programs are already essentially in place. Project Food Aid guidelines, as noted earlier, have already been developed. The food aid training guide developed in July, 1988, for Peace Corps pre-service training can provide a design model for the PVO training programs. Modifications and additions (e.g., new case studies and critical incidents) would be required, however, for both training programs to tailor them to the PVO situation.