DRAFT REPORT

STAFFING REVIEW OF THE BUREAU FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The budget allocated to the Agency for International Development for education programs has fluctuated over the years, and it is probably fair to say that it has not been a high priority of Congress until recently. However, in FY 1989 Congress earmarked $65 million for programs in basic primary and secondary education. 1/

In response to this earmark the Bureau for Science and Technology (S&T), Office of Education has requested the addition of two professional positions at the GS 14 level, a part-time clerical position and redesignation of the office director's position from Foreign Service to Senior Executive Service. As far as can be determined, the request for additional positions was approved by the Deputy Administrator of A.I.D. in early 1989, and then temporarily suspended contingent upon substantial reorganization of that and other bureaus. Then in March, the Deputy Administrator requested that the Assistant Administrator for Personnel and Financial Management sponsor an informal analysis of the request for additional staff in the Office of Education. He asked specifically for an assessment of the workload of the current incumbents, what the additional staff would be responsible for and "what, if anything, the Agency is foregoing by not having the additional people in S&T Education." 2/

1/ The earmark stated: "not less than $64,770,500 of the funds appropriated under this heading and under the heading 'Sub-Saharan Africa, Development Assistance' shall be available only for programs in basic primary and secondary education: Provided further, that in fiscal year 1989, The Agency for International Development (A.I.D.) shall initiate two new bilateral projects in basic primary and secondary education, at least one of which shall be initiated in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: Provided further, that in each of fiscal years 1990 and 1991, such agency shall initiate three new bilateral projects in basic primary and secondary education, at least two of which in each fiscal year shall be in Sub-Saharan Africa." Report submitted under Title II, Bilateral Economic Assistance, Education and Human Resources Development, Development Assistance, of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 1989.

2/ Memorandum, DA Jay Morris to AA/PFM Robert Halligan, March 29, 1989, "Follow-up Management Studies - Education."

In FY 1988 Congress instructed A.I.D. to assess the management and performance of several offices including the Office of Education. That assessment included comments on the size of the professional staff. They stated that if all seven positions were filled then "the office will be over-staffed for the size of its budget and portfolio," given the general pressure on personnel levels within A.I.D. In fact, they concluded the Agency could not "afford to devote a sizable amount of staff time to these activities," unless a congressional earmark of 50 percent of the Section 105 account occurred. Then a reduction of staff might not be advisable. 3/

This is a report of our findings of the staff requirements of the Office of Education after the congressional earmark. (Annex A provides a list of individuals interviewed for this review.)

A.I.D. POLICY ON EDUCATION

Most would argue that people are a country's most valuable resource, and that their development through education and training programs are required for sustained development. Education and Human Resource programs at A.I.D. have been influenced by a variety of forces, and as the Education Sector Council recently reported, "are wide ranging and include vocational skills and management training, higher education, participant training and telecommunications".

According to the Agency Policy Paper on Basic Education and Technical Training, the program is designed to help countries assess their education policies, to improve the efficiency in which education resources are used, and to explore innovative ways to provide educational and training opportunities at all levels. Specifically, the objectives are to improve:

a) quality basic education for children ages 6 - 14;

b) training in skills for adolescents and adults; and

c) training in scientific, technical, administrative and management fields. 4/

Priority is placed on "increasing the output of current (italics) investments" in established basic education and vocational training systems. 5/

3/ Management Assessment Office of Education in the Bureau for Science and Technology by Irwin A. Levy, Richard N. Blue, Robert Pratt, and James A. Graham, April 1988, p. 11.

4/ See A.I.D. Policy Paper Basic Education and Technical Training, Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC), December 1982; Education Sector council Concensus Statement June 1988, p. 1; A.I.D. Congressional Presentation FY 1990, Main Volume, p. 75.

5/ A.I.D. Policy Paper Basic Education, p. 4

 1+

The Office of Education is the focal point within A.I.D. for new research and technology on education. ~~They~~ sponsors research and disseminates new findings to recipients of economic assistance and their professional peers. The Office works with universities, contractors and the regional bureaus to improve basic education programs in developing nations by providing technical assistance to missions, funding research and disseminating research findings.

Currently, the Office is concentrating on three problems facing developing nations. The first is to help policymakers gain access to accurate information by strengthening the data base and skills of employees in national planning units, as well as to provide findings from research on education policy options. Educational technology is the focus of the second. A methodology to use radios to teach basic literacy and numeracy has been developed. Other technologies ranging from the sophisticated, such as using micro-computers and telecommunication, to the simple poster are being explored. And the third area of concentration uses development communication methods and technologies including social marketing to assist other offices in changing human behavior. 6/

This report is not intended as an assessment of the appropriateness of the Agency policy on education or whether or not the stated policy is being implemented. However, there has been a number of critics of the focus of A.I.D.'s education policy in general and the programs of the Office of Education in particular. The criticisms have implications on any changes in staffing levels and what kinds of skills are needed to better manage the program.

Critics contend that although the Agency claims the focus of the education strategy is to improve basic education, according to the Education Sector Council, A.I.D. support for basic education has "fallen dramatically" in recent years. In FY 88 less than 2 percent of the bilateral assistance program was allocated to help improve primary and secondary education systems. The Education Sector Council claims that this is due to myriad factors: funding of new programs out of the Education and Human Resource account, an expanded participant training program, etc. 7/

6/ Congressional Presentation, Main Volume, pp. 197-8; S&T Human Resources Portfolio Directorate, January 1989, pp.50-1.

7/ Education Sector Council Concensus Statement, p. 7. The Education Sector Council consists of representatives from S&T, the regional bureaus, PPC, Office of International Training and BIFAD. Current members are Antonio Gayoso, S&T/HR, Chairman; John O'Donnell, S&T/HR; Cameron Bonner, AFR/TR/ED; Harold Freeman, ANE/TR/HR; Joe Carney, LAC/DR/EST; Victor Barnes, PPC/PDPR; Clifford Block, S&T/ED; Gary Theisen, S&T/ED; Dan Terrell, OIT; and Dwayne Everrett, BIFAD.

The Council urges the Agency to place priority on basic education programs which they define as follows: "[the] minimum skills and knowledge that a society determines to be essential to function as a responsible and productive member. At a minimum this includes basic literacy and numeracy. As national economies and cultures become more complex, the scope of basic skills required also grows more diverse. For the foreseeable future for most countries the education of children through formal schooling is the most cost-effective means of providing these skills." 8/

The Senate Appropriation Committee echoed this view. The committee noted: "...A.I.D.'s dedication to basic education is evidenced far more in its publications than in its programming." They further added that the earmark was based on the belief "that investments in basic education bring the greatest return in all development sectors, and that more advanced training programs are often fruitless in countries whose literacy and numeracy rates are below 40 percent. A.I.D. support for basic education, according to the Sector Council Statement, "is minimal despite the fact that 46 A.I.D. assisted countries have less than 75% of their school cohorts completing the primary education cycle." 9/

Since the earmark for basic education, "A.I.D.'s program in basic education has not grown either in the number of project starts or in the number of countries served." Because of this the Senate Appropriations Committee has required the Agency to report on steps they have taken to implement the provision every six months. 10/

Supporters of the focus of the Office of Education argue that their program concentrates on the key constraints any developing nation faces in strengthening their education and technical training efforts, i.e., organizational and management problems, technical impediments to extending cost-effective programs and resource and policy constraints. 11/

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office of Education is one of two units in the Human Resources Directorate of the Bureau for Science and Technology;

8/ Ibid, pp. 1-2

9/ A similar view was expressed in the House. See Report of the House Foreign Affairs Committee on H.R. 31, Section 304(b), p. 28.

10/ Senate Appropriations Committee Report, p. 94-95

11/ These constraints are clearly identified in the A.I.D. Education Policy Paper, pp. 11-12.

the other unit is the Office of Rural and Institutional Development. The Office of Education consists of a Director's Office and two technical divisions: the Development Education Systems Division and the Education Technology and Communications Division. The Director's Office is responsible for:

a) a program of technical support to USAIDS and A.I.D./ Washington units on educational matters;

b) liaison with international organizations, other government agencies, universities and foundations on planning and coordinating education research, and presenting the results of A.I.D. sponsored research; and

c) internal technical committees on education.

The technical divisions have similar responsibilities, but limited to their particular expertise. They are:

a) to help USAIDS, regional bureaus and recipient nations identify problems impeding education development. This would include technical support in designing strategies and programs and evaluating current programs and projects;

b) to develop and manage office research projects that have global implications for increasing the number of people educated in developing nations;

c) to work with other donors and researchers in evaluating and disseminating state-of-the-art educational research and training techniques and materials within A.I.D. and represent the Agency at national and international meetings and conferences; and

d) to respond to enquiries from Congress and the public on general educational issues. 12/

The Director of the Office is viewed as the Agency expert on education problems in developing nations and the architect of innovative strategies to solve those problems in concert with the policy objectives of the Agency. This person represents the Agency at national and international conferences presents findings of research in education, and suggests how these findings might be used to improve educational levels in developing countries. Not an easy task for even the most talented of individuals.

12/ A.I.D. Handbook 17, pp. 20-22; S&T/HR Portfolio Directorate, p. 52; Staffing Pattern, March 31,1989 p. 57.

Technical experts are expected to manage centrally-funded education projects, develop a network of education consultants, work with regional bureaus and missions overseas to formulate country education strategies, initiate research, design projects and evaluate on-going education programs.

As recognized international authorities on education problems in developing countries they are expected to:

a) provide advice on Agency education policies;

b) critique research methodologies;

c) disseminate research findings to interested groups in the development community;

d) prepare and present papers on innovative research;

e) represent the Agency on advisory groups in their area of expertise; and

f) manage the office project portfolio.

Although some of their project management responsibilities are handled by the program analyst in the director's office, who keeps a well-designed project monitoring system, the workload is substantial. And much of this work is done in collaboration with other A.I.D. offices and bureaus, other U.S. government entities, private and university organizations, foundations and professional associations and contractors, further adding to the workload. 13/

A.I.D. Handbook 17, Chapter 3 proscribes the basic organizational principles that govern the structure of units in A.I.D./Washington. Government criteria of the most effective size of a unit take into consideration the relationship with other groups inside and outside of the unit, personnel competence and the physical environment. As these elements may vary considerably managers try to be flexible in "determining what is the most effective size of a component and the best supervisory-worker ratio in any given situation." 14/

Nonetheless, Agency principles stipulate that:

a) any organizational unit must have a minimum of two subcomponents;

13/ For additional details on the responsibilities of the professional staff in this office the reader is referred to A.I.D. Position Descriptions 80041, 80202, 80029, 80052, AD 508, AD 454, 80055, 80171. The program analyst's position (POSNO 136810010) in the director's office has no recorded job description in the Office of Personnel.

14/ Handbook 17, Chapter 3.3; Revisions 1987.

b) the minimum size for a division is a chief and three full-time employees involved in the substantive work of the unit. (Secretarial and clerical positions are excluded.) This means two divisions with four professional staff in each would be the minimum normally required to support an Office.

c) a supervisory position must have three subordinate substantive positions; and

d) a Deputy Office Director position requires a minimum of six non-supervisory subordinate positions involved in substantive work, or a minimum of three subcomponents in the case of divisions. 15/

The Office of Education, as it is currently structured and staffed, does not meet these criteria. According to the official staffing pattern, the Office has these positions:

Director's Office:

Director - vacant (Clifford Block acting)
International Education Specialist - Chloe Ogara
Program Analyst - vacant
(Mark Ritting incumbent, secunded to SAA/S&T)
Program Analyst - Linda T. White
Secretary/Typist - Barbara A. Adams

Below this are two divisions.

Development Education Systems Division (S&T/HR/ED/DES):

Supv Education Dev Specialist - James E. Hoxeng
Education Dev Specialist - Gary Lee Theisen
Education Dev Specialist - Bruce Fuller

Education Technology & Communication Division (S&T/HR/ED/ETC):
Supv Education Dev Specialist - Clifford Block
Supv Education Dev Specialist - vacant
(Anthony Meyer incumbent, ...secunded to WHO)
Secretary/Typist - Mary Lou Smale
Consultant - Robert Shenktan

To summarize: The Office has a total of 12 positions of which nine are professional positions. Four are in the Director's Office; three are in the systems division and two are in the

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15/ Handbook 17, Chapter 3.3; Revision 1987.

technology division. There are two secretary typists and one rarely employed consultant. And there is one supervisor for every two employees.

There are only eight employees on-board. Mark Ritting has been detailed indefinitely to the Office of the Senior Assistant Administrator of S&T, Nyle Brady, and Anthony Meyer has been detailed on a reimbursable assignment to the World Health Organization. He is scheduled to return to A.I.D. in October 1989, but in mid-May he asked to return as soon as possible for personal reasons. Chloe Ogara was recently selected to be the Deputy Director of the Office of Women in Development in PPC. 16/

The Office has defined the following staffing requirements:

Table 1*

Authorized and Requested Staff, S&T/ED

Office Mgt	Authorized	On-Board	Need
Director (Block act)	1	1	1
Program (White)	4/5	4/5	4/5
Professional Staff			
Block (vacant)	1	0	1
Hoxeng	1	1	1
Theisen	1	1	1
Fuller	1	1	1
OGara	4/5	4/5	4/5-1
Meyer (vacant return 10/89)	1	0	1
ED economist/planner	0	0	1
ED technologist	0	0	1
Secretarial			
Adams	1	1	1
Smale	1	1	1
Sect. Part-time (GS)	0	0	4/5

* Source: Memorandum S&T/ED, Clifford Block to PM/PSPE, Victoria Morss and Joyce Cosby, S&T/ED Staff Needs: Person Year Definition, May 5, 1989.

In short they are asking for three additional full-time employees and one part-time employee, one to fill Clifford Block's position and two to fill two new proposed professional positions and an additional part-time secretarial position.

They have also requested an exception to the Obey Amendment to recruit a Senior Executive Service officer to fill the position of the Director. That position is designated as a Foreign

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16/ Staffing Pattern April 30, 1989, p. 57; Interviews PFM Classification Staff

Service job. Based on a review of eligible Foreign Service Officers, they determined it was not in the best interest of the Agency to fill the vacant Director's position "with a FS rotation." They feel that the position needs continuity because there is no deputy position and there has been a large turnover of professional staff. The Director should be a leading professional in the education field, recognized by the research community and familiar with behavioral and social science disciplines required in the Office. Those skills, they concluded, are not available in the Foreign Service.

During the last assignment cycle two Senior Foreign Service Officers applied for the Director's position. As far as PM/FSP was concerned both applicants fit the criteria of the job, but they were turned down by the Bureau.

A number of personnel, classification and organizational experts were asked to comment on the structure and the staffing level of S&T/ED. They remarked that even if the Office were fully encumbered, there are not sufficient professional staff to justify two divisions or three supervisory positions. Probably the Office would be better structured as one unit with no subunits. Under these circumstances, a request for a deputy's position might be justified, as would an additional part-time clerical position. To justify a deputy's position there must be at least six employees doing substantive work or three subelements within the organization.

They also commented that the entire S&T Bureau ought to be reviewed for organizational clarity. Although it is recognized that the Bureau requires structural flexibility to be more effective, more than 40 percent of the division-level units within the Bureau fall below the minimal size requirements. This in turn effects 25 percent of the office-level units, which would fall below the minimum guidelines of 2 subcomponent organizations. 17/ Several professionals within the Office of Education remarked that the organizational layering within the S&T bureau impeded quick decisions, direct communication and clear lines of authority. Put another way, the Agency Handbook on organizational management emphasizes that there ought to be some obvious organizational logic that is readily understood by employees within the organization as well as observers outside of it. It would appear the logic is somewhat obscure to a number of observers. The Bureau has 43 separate units; several have only one or two positions. On

17/ RAMPS Special Report, Organizational Structure S&T, May 23, 1989.

the average each unit consists of 4.2 substantive positions (excluding consultants) and 2.0 secretarial positions. 18/

Space and Equipment

The Office occupies 2,177 square feet in State Annex 18. (See Annex B for a schematic of the floor plan.) Compared to Agency offices in general each professional staff member has an adequate-size, private office. One office is empty (AAAS intern on schematic), another has been lent to the Office of Health, and another is being used for storage (Block's office on schematic). It would appear there is room for three additional professional staff to occupy private offices.

In contrast, support staff are extremely cramped and subject to constant interruptions because of their location next to a conference room used by the Directorate. The file area is either inadequate or not maintained. Files are stacked in boxes in several areas.

In terms of access to automated data processing equipment both secretaries have WANG work stations. Two professional staff have OE-funded PCs in their office and there are two contract-funded PCs in the office plus one privately- owned computer. In addition, the Directorate has a computer center on this floor available to all its staff. No one expressed concern about inadequate access to equipment or training to use it.

THE OFFICE PORTFOLIO

The size of the Office of Education's appropriation has not changed significantly during the last three years as Table 2 indicates.

Table 2

Historical Overview of S&T/ED Project Portfolio, FY 1986 - FY 1988
($000)

FY	S&T OYB	Buy-Ins S&T	Buy-Ins AID/W	Buy-Ins USAIDS	Buy-Ins* Total	Total
1986	5,621	2,031	332	6,560	8,923	14,544
1987	5,692	3,351	1,274	8,634	13,259	18,951
1988	4,857	2,747	727	10,128	13,602**	18,459

* Source: S&T/ED Report PRO 86-88 OBL.FRM
**Thess figures do not correspond to those in Table 6. The Bureau project office does not count appropriated funds for one office but managed by another as a buy-in, the S&T ED Office does. An example, would be the Health project #931-1018.

18/ HB 17, Chapter 3.2; Revisions 1987; RAMPS Special Reports April 12 and 14, 1989.

However, the management responsibilities of the Office appear to have increased substantially as a result of buy-in activities. The buy-ins are funds that another bureau or mission adds to one of the S&T/ED projects from their own program budget to pay for additional services complemetary to those funded by S&T, but of more direct concern to the mission. In addition to buy-ins, the Office manages projects for which they have no appropriated funds. For example, the appropriation for AIDS technical support (project #936-5972) comes from the Office of Health.

The next table provides a list of current projects. The Office is responsible for a project portfolio of nine ongoing projects, and three are being developed.

Table 3*

S&T/ED Project Portfolio, FY 1989

Project Number	Title	Approp Accnt	LOP ($000)	Start Date	Completion Date
931-1109	ED. Tech.	EH	5,237	9/84	12/91
936-5831	Dev. Communications Clearinghouse II	EH	1,560	8/88	8/93
936-5818	Radio Science	EH	12,771	9/84	12/90
936-5823	Improving Efficiency ED. Systems II	EH	10,000	6/84	1994
936-5824	Basic Res. in ED. Dev.	EH	10,000	9/85	9/90
936-5826	Comm. for Tech Transfr in Ag (CITA)	VAR	16,804	9/85	9/93
936-5972	AIDS Tech. Support	VAR	15,407	9/87	9/92
930-0089	USTTI	EH	2,000	9/86	12/89
931-1018	Health Communications	VAR	13,681	8/85	9/90

New Projects:

936-5832 TEEM
931-1109 CARBINET
936-5834 Drug Demand Reduction

*Source: S&T/ED File:CONTRRES.FRM, April 24, 1989

The TEEM project, which is expected to begin this summer, will provide services to the missions in basic education and work on increasing educational opportunities for girls. The Drug Demand Prevention project is designed to help missions and recipient nations develop programs for the prevention of drug use, and the

CARIBNET project is a politically mandated project experimenting with communication technology in teaching.

In effect, the portfolio is divided into three clusters of activities: education planning and management, education technology and development communications. (For detailed descriptions of the projects see S&T/HR Portfolio Directory, January 1989.) With one new project in each cluster, and increasing numbers of requests for technical assistance from missions to meet the congressional earmark, office managers have concluded they cannot meet the demands for technical assistance and manage the portfolio without additional staff.

Evaluations of the education sector and the portfolio managed by S&T/ED were requested from PPC/CDIE to review perceptions of evaluation teams about the efficiency of managing the education portfolio. We were unable to locate an evaluation of the Education Sector. Nor did we find reviews that answer the question raised by S&T after reviewing the management assessment of the Office done in April 1988: Is the office making the right judgements now to assure that needed technology and knowledge in the education program will be available in the future?

COMPARISON WITH OTHER S&T OFFICES

In a limited review such as this, one is forced to make a number of assumptions about the objectives of the Bureau, the structure and staffing of the organization and the internal operating budget. These are: First, all offices have similar mandates: a) to manage a portfolio; b) to take a leading role in designing research and disseminating the findings to the donor and academic community; and c) to represent the Agency at national and international conferences, seminars, etc. Second, the organizational structure and staff reflect the programmatic need. And finally, operating expense allocations among the offices are driven by the program. Ideally, there is equity within the system.

Assuming the program is the primary factor determining organizational, staffing and OE budget allocations, a comparison of office program levels should provide some indication of relative levels of staff, and operating expense budget. Table 4 indicates that the Office of Education is the smallest programmatic office in the Bureau. The Office of Programs manages a few projects, but their primary function is to administer and oversee the Bureau portfolio. S&T/ED is responsible for about 2 percent of the Bureau programmatic funds. The largest program is in the Office of Population, which has about 44 percent of the Bureau portfolio. It is followed by the Office of Health, which has around 25 percent of the portfolio. Budget proportions have remained relatively stable for all offices for the last several years and are projected to be the same in FY 1990.

Table 4*

S&T Bureau, Comparison of Office Programs FY 1987 - FY 1989
($000)

Office	FY 87	% Bureau	FY 88	% Bureau	FY 89	% Bureau**
Education	5,692	2.3	4,857	1.9	5,450	2.0
Health	53,062	21.0	65,363	25.0	75,861	28.0
Population	115,427	46.0	114,663	44.0	110,123	41.0
Program	2,790	1.1	3,062	1.2	1,900	0.7
Agriculture	32,050	13.0	30,757	12.0	32,050	12.0
Nutrition	12,391	5.0	10,164	3.9	9,474	3.5
Energy	8,028	3.2	10,497	4.0	10,000	3.7
Forestry	6,426	2.5	6,080	2.3	5,254	2.0
Rural & Inst	8,065	3.1	8,526	3.2	8,569	3.2
Resch & Univ	8,894	3.5	8,559	3.3	8,894	3.3
Total	252,825		262,528		267,575	

* Source: Congressional Presentation FY 1990, Main Vol., p. 212
**Percentages rounded

If the assumption is correct that all the offices, except the Program Office, have similar responsibilities and mandates, one might predict that staff allocations would be based on program levels. Clearly, some other criteria than program level is used as Table 5 indicates.

Table 5*

S&T Bureau, Comparison of Program and Staff Levels, FY 1989

Office	Program ($000)	% Budget	On-Brd/DH	% Total	PGM/Staff ($000)
Education	5,450	2.0**	11***	4.7	495.5
Health	75,861	28.0	36	15.4	2,107.3
Population	110,123	41.0	46	19.7	2,394.0
Program	1,900	0.7	22	9.4	86.4
Agriculture	32,050	12.0	33	14.1	971.2
Nutrition	9,474	3.5	15	6.4	631.6
Energy	10,000	3.7	9	3.8	1,111.1
Forestry	5,254	2.0	14	6.0	375.3
Rural & Inst	8,569	3.2	29	12.4	295.5
Resch & Univ	8,894	3.3	19	8.1	468.1
Total	267,575		234		1,143.5

* Source: Congressional Presentation FY 1990, Main Vol., p. 212; Staffing Pattern April 30, 1989
** Percentages rounded
*** On-board includes all staff who encumber a position even if detailed elsewhere. That figure is used because details are charged against the FTE use for the office.

The Office of Education has 2 percent of the Bureau program budget and 4.7 percent of the staff working on the program. Including overhead costs of administering the office and managing the program, the ratio of program funds to staff is low: it works out to around $500,000 per on-board employee. It is even lower in several other offices such as the Office of Rural and Institutional Development where 29 employees manage a portfolio of around $8.5 million, or about $300,000 each. Some of the other offices such as the Offices of Health and Population have much larger management burdens.

One possible explanation for differences in the staff to program ratio might be the level of "buy-ins" from other bureaus or missions. When a mission or AID/W bureau buys into a S&T project through a PIO/T a contract is then negotiated with the entity that is implementing the project. The S&T project manager is responsible for managing the buy-in activities. There responsibilities include, among other tasks, drafting of cables, vouchers and review of contractor reports. Mission staff manage the activities in the field.

Table 6 compares the obligations and buy-ins for S&T offices in FY 1988.

Table 6*

S&T Bureau, Comparison of Office Buy-Ins FY 1988**
($000)

Office	FY 88 OYB	Buy-In	% OYB	Total Program	On-Brd DH-FY 89	PGM/Staff (Incl Buy-Ins)
Education	4,857	10,854	223.5	15,711	11	1,428.3
Health	65,364	13,950	21.3	79,314	36	2,203.2
Population	114,663	29,941	26.1	144,604	46	3,143.6
Program	3,062	0		3,062	22	139.2
Agriculture	30,756	1,011	3.3	31,767	33	962.6
Nutrition	10,164	518	5.1	10,682	15	712.1
Energy	10,497	1,764	16.8	12,261	9	1,362.3
Forestry	6,080	591	9.7	6,671	14	476.5
Rural & Inst	8,525	9,418	110.5	17,943	29	618.7
Resch & Univ	8,559	0		8,559	19	450.5
Total	262,527	68,047	25.9	330,574	234	1,412.7

* Source: Computed from Tables 4 and 5 and tables provided by S&T, Office of Programs, May 18, 1989.

** FY 88 Buy-Ins were used because this information for FY 89 is not yet available.

The question we asked, and were unable to answer satisfactorily, is how much of a burden buy-in activities are to staff in the Bureau. And if they add a significant management burden, are they being encouraged prior to putting mechanisms in place to see that they are properly monitored? To answer that question it would be necessary to perform regression analyses using buy-ins as an independent variable to see if buy-ins are a significant coefficient.

Budget trends for the last several years suggest buy-ins are increasing. In FY 86 buy-in activities represented 12 percent of the Bureau's program budget, that increased to 22 percent the following year. By FY 88, they added 26 percent to the program budget.

As can be seen from Table 6 the amount of funds put into buy-ins exceeded the appropriated budget in two offices: the Office of Education and the Office of Rural and Institutional Development. For the Office of Education the buy-ins amounted to an additional 224 percent of the OYB in FY 88. When buy-in funds are added to the appropriated funds the program to staff ratio looks quite different in some of the Offices. In fact, the Office of Education program/staff ratio is average in the Bureau: each staff managing $1.4 million of activities.

There are several ways to interpret the large discrepancies in levels of buy-in among the S&T Offices. One is that some programs are more attractive than others. Missions may feel they are more appropriate to the development needs of the country. Another is the program solves some political need to demonstrate an interest in a particular development focus. Yet another could be the result of good salesmanship. Whatever the explanation, S&T/ED far exceeds other offices in attracting buy-ins as a percentage of their appropriated funds. Ironically, without country buy-in activities, the ED staff manages fewer funds than most Offices in the Bureau. Including the buy-ins, which presumably carry some additional management burden, the program to staff ratio is average for the Bureau.

Put another way, assuming that comparisons of workload to staff ratios are valid, the Office has more staff to manage less money than most S&T Offices, unless you consider buy-in activities, when it has an average staff to program ratio. The question then is how large a level of buy-ins should the Office accept without the additional staff they requested?

A.I.D. POLICY ON MANAGING HUMAN RESOURCES

Perhaps the most difficult assignment a management team could have is to assess whether or not the employees of a particular government organization are accomplishing their responsibilities in a manner that is accountable for public funds. This task is easier in organizations where positions are clearly defined, and analytical tools have been developed to monitor employee productivity, efficiency and use of time. A.I.D. has not developed management tools to determine and justify staffing needs against operating expense budgets or program appropriations. Nor has the Agency had a universally accepted system to allocate staff levels to operational units.

As a result of this internal deficiency the Agency has lost 500 FTE (full-time equivalent workyear, or 2080 work hours per year) in the last several years. [19]

According to our interviews with staff at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) responsible for assigning and monitoring FTE levels at all government organizations, most have inadequate mechanisms for allocating and controlling FTE levels. (An exception is the Department of Housing and Urban Development that established management controls 17 years ago to track how staff hours are used by program and unit cost of implementing various aspects of a program.)

OMB allocates a FTE level to each government agency during the annual budget cycle: it is based on an analysis of previous FTE usage, and the program and operating expensive budget. OMB assumes that if an Agency does not use its entire FTE allocation it is because the program can be managed without those additional employees. The unused FTEs are then normally cut during the following budget cycle.

Because A.I.D. has never assigned FTE ceilings to bureaus or independent offices, there was no internal target each organizational unit was required to meet. When one bureau requested and was granted an increase in FTE there was never a corresponding adjustment somewhere else within the Agency to assure that the OMB allocation was not exceeded. Utilization rates of FTE were so poorly monitored that hiring freezes were often imposed on the assumption the OMB ceiling might be exceeded. In fact, the calculations were inaccurate and the Agency lost FTE as a result.

For the first time, the Agency has developed a plan to allocate FTE ceilings to bureaus and independent offices. It is based on historical usage as this is the only available data. Everyone is aware that these historical levels might not reflect the current requirements of a unit to implement its program in an effective manner. The problem is adjustments can not be made until better workforce analysis is done.

19/ A.I.D. is not the only Federal agency in this situation.

Since there are no data on how much time it takes to accomplish any office jobs, predictions on personnel resources required to accomplish additional tasks are based on estimates by staff and hunches. While they are often a fair reflection of the workload of the office, they rarely consider the overall needs of the Agency.

One of the points S&T/ED has made in requesting more staff, is that there are insufficient education specialists in the missions or regional bureaus to provide technical advise on new projects or to support requests resulting from the earmark for basic education. Perhaps this is true, but there is no measurement of what a sufficient level might be for education specialists or any other professional category of employees. As a preliminary step in workforce planning the Agency should know how many direct hire and contract employees are involved in education programs in A.I.D./Washington and the field. Information on contractors is not available.

Excluding participant training staff and all other extraneous job categories lumped into BS 60, there are only 38 education specialists in the Agency. Eighteen are in A.I.D./Washington, seven of whom are in the regional bureaus, and six in S&T. (See Annex C.) Two employees are detailed to other agencies and 23 are stationed overseas, of which only seven are located in Africa. 20/ We don't know how many contract employees are in the field. More importantly, we don't have sufficient information about the burden of managing the education portfolio to determine whether or not the current level of direct hire employees functioning as education officers is adequate.

During the initial stages of workforce analysis, bureaus and independent offices will be asked to absorb internally any changes in FTE ceilings. This means that any increase in FTE in the Office of Education will require a corresponding decrease from other units within the S&T Bureau. In other words, the size of the human resource pie is fixed; decisions on how to allocate those people, whether full-time, part-time, or secunded outside the office or bureau will be the responsibility of senior managers within the bureau. 21/

In addition to setting FTE ceilings by unit, a hiring freeze is in place until it is clear if the Agency will meet its designated ceiling from OMB as well as the fiscal year constraints on the operating budget. Implications for the

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20/ RAMPS Special Report Education Positions and Employees, May 23, 1989.

21/ Action Memorandum for the Administrator from AA/PFM, Robert Halligan, April 25, 1989.

Office of Education are that they will be required to recruit within A.I.D. to fill vacant positions, or to attract individuals such as American Academy for the Advancement of Science fellows who do not count against the ceiling. The bureau should also be aware that career employees detailed to international organizations count against the bureau's FTE ceiling, regardless of their type of detail.

The Question of Congressional Earmarks

It is not uncommon for a bureau to request additional staff when their budget has been increased or the administration has placed priority on a new agenda. The Bureau for S&T has experienced the problems of trying to conscientiously implement new congressional earmarks or administrative priorities in the past.

In October 1987, the bureau requested authority to recruit three new employees to respond to "major areas of program expansion," in the health program. The request was granted based on this justification:

> Over the past four years, the Agency's Health Program has grown dramatically in size, complexity and visibility. The priority that this Administration has given to biomedical research and child survival, the more recent need for a forward-looking and comprehensive response to the AIDS pandemic, and the leadership role which the United States has increasingly played with international health agencies -- all have placed enormous strains on the Agency's health staff in general, and the central office of Health in particular. The health and child survival accounts are now the second largest in the Agency. 22/

As the authors so aptly pointed out, "to reaffirm and institutionalize these priorities and programs takes resources, both financial and human. Approval was granted by senior managers to hire outside the Agency senior individuals trained in specific health fields.

The Office of Education also requested additional staff after learning of the congressional earmark for basic education. Interviews with the S&T/ED staff, other A.I.D. employees affected by their activities and outside contractors generally agree that the workload of S&T/ED is far greater than the on-board staff can handle comfortably. Many critical jobs have been sufficiently delayed to hinder the effectiveness of the project, i.e., windows of opportunity to expose project

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22/ Action memorandum for the Assistant Administrator for Management, from SAA/S&T, N.C. Brady, regarding Office of Health Staffing, October 1, 1987.

research were lost, to paraphrase one university contractor. 23/ On the other hand, contractors we contacted always spoke highly of the substantive support and professional interaction the Office staff provided.

Nonetheless, before new positions are created some critical issues and questions should be addressed, such as what are the costs and benefits of alternative methods of implementing a new earmark. Since the Agency does not keep official records on how employees spend time, it is extremely difficult to make accurate projections on future staffing requirements. In short, the Agency has never developed a methodology to assess the appropriate staff level required to implement a new congressional earmark or administrative initiative. Put another way, S&T/ED is the only office in A.I.D. tasked with implementing the earmark for basic education that has requested additional staff to do so.

The Agency is required in FY 1989 to obligate $64.77 million of DA-105 and DFA funds for basic education and to begin two new projects in this area, one of which must be in Africa. By Bureau the planned obligations are as follows:

Africa	$23,443 million
Asia/Near East	21,000
Latin America/Carib	14,501
S&T	4,975
Total	63,919

Of this earmark, $21 million represent new activities. They consist of two new projects: one for $8 million in Mali and one for $13 million in Pakistan. If the new projects are obligated as scheduled, the Agency will fall minimally short of the earmark.

The rest of the earmark consists of existing projects. Table 7 shows a breakdown of these projects for the S&T Bureau that are being managed by the Office of Education. In effect, 91 percent of the appropriated funds in FY 89 for S&T/ED are considered by the Agency to be activities in basic education. 24/

23/ Indeed, this professor who works on one of the Office managed cooperative agreements remarked that the main problem he and the university experienced with the Office was that the staff could not monitor the project on a timely basis. They appeared to be so overworked, he said, that routine project tasks such as field clearances and review of reports prepared by the contractor were always delayed.

24/ The Earmark and Planned Basic Education Obligations for FY 1989, drafted: V. Barnes, PPC/PDPR/SP, February 8, 1989.

Table 7*

Basic Education Activities in S&T/ED for FY 1989
($000)

931-1109	ED Tech: Studies & Applications	275
936-5818	Radio Science	1,250
936-5823	Improving Eff of ED Systems II	1,750
936-5824	Basic Research in Dev Systems	1,200
936-5832	Tech & Mgt. for ED Dev	500
Total:		4,975

*Source: Ibid.

According to S&T/ED there has been a sharp increase in the demand for staff support to help missions generate strategies and projects in response to the earmark. S&T/ED staff have participated in virtually every basic education planning effort to date, because there are so few direct hire education officers in the field. Nontheless, the largest new activity in response to the earmark is a $13 million project in Pakistan. There are three direct-hire education officers at that mission. With the exception of Egypt, where there are four direct-hire education officers, Pakistan has the largest number of education specialists in the field. 25/

We were unable to acquire detailed travel information from the Bureau showing how much time was spent on TDY, where it was spent and for what purpose. Consequently, it is impossible to determine how priorities were set in response to requests for assistance in designing activities in basic education. 26/

ISSUES TO CONSIDER BEFORE ALLOCATING
ADDITIONAL STAFF TO S&T/ED

Several key questions emerge from this survey.

Why is the Bureau requesting two additional professional

25/ Information Memorandum to the Deputy Administrator from S&T N.C. Brady, "Follow-up of the Management Assessment of the S&T Bureau of Office of Education, March 16, Meeting," March 16, 1989; Also see Annex C.

26/ The Bureau did provide gross statistics on travel for FY 88. The Directorate for Human Resources spent $80,390 on travel that fiscal year. If their expenditures conform to the usage of the bureau in general 15 percent of the travel budget was spent on attending conferences, 18 percent was spent on project related information meetings, in which they share research findings much like at conferences, 18 percent on project evaluations, 8 percent on site visits, and 9 percent on site visits involving project implementation. In FY 87, 40 percent of the budget went for attending conferences.

positions when two professional positions are encumbered by staff detailed to other offices in the Bureau and outside the Agency? Why were these employees detailed outside the Office when they felt they had a staff shortage?

Why did the Bureau reject the assignment of a qualified Senior Foreign Service officer for the director's position?

A number of issues need further investigation before action is taken to alter the structure or staffing configuration of the Office of Education.

- There is some criticism both within A.I.D. and from Congress that the Office of Education is not carrying out Agency and administrative priorities. It would seem that these concerns should be addressed before the office is expanded.

- Further, it is also not clear that the management structure of projects within S&T is efficient. Why, for example, is the office managing projects for which they have no budget allocation?

- There is a hiring freeze throughout the Agency with few excepted job categories. Any additional staff in S&T/ED would have to come, therefore, from the pool of on-board human resource specialists. See Annex C for a list of those employees.

- The director's position is vacant. It is one of only a few senior human resource positions designated for foreign service employees in A.I.D./Washington. The Bureau has requested an exemption to place a Senior Executive Service employee in that position. Informally, the Bureau has nominated the acting director, who is currently a GS 15, to be promoted into the Senior Executive Service and into the director's position. Until the Executive Resources Board completes their review of existing SES positions and career SES employees no new positions will be created or promotions considered.

- The organizational structure does not follow A.I.D. regulations. The Office is too small for two divisions and should probably be restructured as one unit. If that were done, a deputy's position might be justified.

- A proposal is before the Administrator to place FTE ceilings on all bureaus and independent offices. It would be based on historical usage. Any staffing changes within a bureau or independent office would be managed internally, and no additional FTEs would be allocated for the duration of this fiscal year while detailed staffing surveys were undertaken.

- Independent of FTE allocations, the Agency has a hiring freeze in effect in order to meet the operating expense budget. As an interim solution to their staff shortage, the Office might consider using non-direct hire employees such as AAAS fellows who are paid from the program budget and do not count against FTE.

- Excluding the two details out, the ratio of professional to secretarial staff is presently one to three. Upon the return of the details, the ratio will be four professionals to one secretary. The stated ideal in the Agency is three professionals to one secretary. This suggests a clerical/typist part or full-time position might be justified.

A FEW CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

It is not clear what aspects of the congressional earmark for basic education this Office is and will continue to be responsible for and, therefore, what the long-term staff requirements will be. Nor is it clear that the Office has reviewed and established priorities of the Office portfolio and non-project responsibilities such as communicating research findings and collaborating with other donor Agencies. Without that information we do not feel comfortable recommending the addition of two new professional positions.

Informal discussions with the S&T/ED staff and others who work with them suggest the workload is beginning to impede the effectiveness of the Office. The staff is hard working and diligent, and it does appear they need additional support. We recommend these personnel actions:

- Promptly fill the director's position through internal recruitment.

- Recall the two employees who are on detail out of the Office.

- Augment the clerical staff with a summer hire or intermittant employee, as needed.

- Request a project-funded fellow from the American Academy for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) or elsewhere to assist in project management.

- Begin internal recruitment to fill the anticipated vacancy of an education specialist.

Many observers of the Agency's education portfolio including members of Congress have commented that A.I.D.'s dedication to basic education is more rhetorical than factual, hence the earmark. Under these circumstances, Agency management should initiate an evaluation of the education sector and the role of S&T/ED in promoting stated education policies and objectives.

The Office needs to analyze the management burden associated with mission and A.I.D./Washington buy-ins and the rationale for managing education activities using this mechanism. It is not clear why buy-ins have exceeded appropriated funds in the last several years, nor is it clear what management authority S&T/ED has in these arrangements.

If there is a real staff shortage in S&T/ED why does the staff manage projects funded through other offices? Why don't those offices assign staff to manage their portfolio?

We recommend a full organizational study of the S&T Bureau. Many units violate Agency organizational regulations. In addition, we suggest the Office of Education be reorganized eliminating the two small divisions.

At this time A.I.D. has neither the operating expense budget or spare FTEs to expand the workforce. Under these tight budgetary constraints, the burden of responsible management rests with the Bureau. After a thorough review of time use of Bureau employees, the burden and value of buy-in activities and other office responsibilities the Bureau should determine an appropriate FTE level for each office, and reallocate FTEs internally.

We believe the Office of Education can carry-out their mandate more effectively if the above steps are taken.

ANNEX A

LIST OF INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

Bureau for Science and Technology

Office of Education

Clifford Block, Acting Director/Chief,
Educational Technology Communications Division
Chloe O'Gara, International Education Specialist
James E. Hoxeng, Education Development Specialist
Gary L. Theisen, Education Development Specialist
Linda T. White, Program Analyst
Barbara A. Adams, Secretary
Mary Lou Smale, Secretary

Office of Management

Kay Harley, Administrative Officer
Barbara Rogers, Administrative Officer

Office of Program

Douglas Sheldon, Program Officer

Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination

Frank Method, Chief, Sector Policy Division
Arnold Baker, Coordinator for Science & Technology
Howard Scharlock, Task Force on Personnel Operations

Bureau for Asia and Near East

Harold Freeman, Office of Technical Resource, Chief, Human Resources Division

Bureau for Personnel and Financial Management

Jan Barrow, Chief, Civil Service Personnel Division
Evelyn Hooker, Chief, Personnel Systems & Program
Evaluation Staff
Bill Harley, Management Analyst
Barbara Burriss, Management Analyst
Wilfred Dixon, Information Analyst
Oveta Watkins, Personnel Management Specialist
Cecilia Pitas, Personnel Staffing Specialist
Susan Troccolo, Position Classification Specialist

Contractors

Noel McGinn, Harvard University (Bridges Project
Cooperative Agreement)

S&T/ED

ANNEX B

S&T/ED = 2,177 square feet.

▲ - S&T/HR
▲ - S&T/RD
▲ - S&T/HR

? JACK LOCA: