

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EVALUATION PAPER 4

**UTILIZATION
OF
ECONOMIC RESEARCH**

**PPC/PDA
OCTOBER 1971**

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AID EVALUATION PAPER 4

UTILIZATION OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

An Analysis of the Agency's Use
of the Results of the
Centrally Funded Economic Research Program

by

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With a Statement on Subsequent Changes
in the PPC Research System

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October 1971

FOREWORD

In May of this year the Agency held a review of the Central Research Program, the first of the series of Spring Reviews for 1971. Glenn A. Lehmann, then Associate Assistant Administrator for Policy Development and Analysis in the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, was asked to prepare a report for the review dealing with the centrally funded economic research program, the part of the Central Research Program administered by PPC. He and members of his staff focused on that phase of the research program which appeared to offer to PPC the most room for improvement, the stage at which worthy research results are or are not put to use.

This is a revised version of the PPC/PDA report. I have asked that it be issued in the Evaluation Paper series for two reasons. First, it is the result of a critical self examination of an apparent weakness in the PPC program. Second, the report initiated immediate and significant changes in PPC policy, changes designed to improve the utilization of the results of its research contracts. Alexis E. Lachman, Deputy Associate Assistant Administrator, describes those changes in a statement appended to this report. Beneficial feedback is what the A.I.D. evaluation system is aimed at, and what the Evaluation Paper series in this instance has a chance to publicize. These changes, it should be noted, are only part of the much wider plan for improvement that the Office of A.I.D. Research and University Relations, which supervises the overall Central Research Program, has initiated following the Spring Review.



C. William Kontos
Director
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I. DESCRIPTION OF THE CENTRAL ECONOMIC RESEARCH PROGRAM

A. Characteristics

1. Historical Summary

The first contracts under the economic research program were signed in 1962. Funds were provided by REPAS (Research, Evaluation and Planning Assistance Staff, also referred to as RES) the special central office organized at the time of AID's creation in 1961 to develop within the Agency a competence for research, evaluation and planning assistance. Responsibility for the conceptual development of the economic research program was shared between the director of REPAS, an economist who took special interest in this part of the research program, and the director of PPC (Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, which initially was called Program Review and Coordination Staff) the new central programming office. Of the six contracts studied in this report, four were initiated during the first year of the program (1962/63), and three of these (Brookings, NPA and Wisconsin) were prepared in REPAS. The fourth (Yale) was prepared by PPC, with a small though significant conceptual contribution by REPAS.

In the spring of 1963, REPAS's operational procedures came under severe criticism from one Congressional committee, and both REPAS and the centrally funded research program which it administered were reorganized. The economic research program, and REPAS's planning assistance staff, were shifted to PPC shortly thereafter (most of the rest of the centrally funded research program, and REPAS's evaluation and research units, were incorporated in the now defunct Human Resources and Social Development office).

Since the reorganization, the planning assistance staff and its successor units have supervised the economic research program on behalf of PPC. In fact in 1969 the planning assistance function was dropped, and the unit, renamed the Economic Research Support Staff (ERS), was able to devote its energies to managing the research program -- to the guidance, funding and dissemination functions.

Monitors for a few of the contracts, including two of the six we are studying (Brookings, Wisconsin), were occasionally drawn from the planning assistance staff and ERS. But most were drawn from the pool of economists in PPC's "economic policy" office (now PDA). In late 1969, ERS was shifted to that office, bringing supervision and monitors together under one office head. For several years prior to 1969, however, ERS and its predecessors had reported to the "technical assistance" office of PPC, an office which was absorbed by the Technical Assistance Bureau when the latter was created. Thus the planning assistance staff and ERS have served several masters, of different professional orientation, and the economic research program which they tried to cultivate reflected a shifting spectrum of

opinion. The two post-REPAS contracts reviewed in this report (Williams and Harvard) were begun in 1964 and 1967 and were entirely developed by the economists of the "economic policy" office. They were thus largely insulated from changes in the organizational location of the planning assistance and ERS staff.

2. Size and Timing of the Contracts

Nineteen contracts have been signed during the nine year history of the program (through March 1971). This excludes reformulations of earlier contracts with the same contractor. Of the nineteen projects, thirteen have been completed. Of the six ongoing projects, three are less than two years old. Table 1 identifies the contracts and provides some relevant data. Five of the contracts are much larger, in terms of funding, than the others. Three of the five were begun in 1962 and concluded in 1970, a longevity which helps explain their size (NPA, Yale, Brookings). All three are reviewed in this study. A fourth was begun a year later and ran until 1969 (Rand). We have largely ignored this contract in the review, because much of the early work under the contract was classified. The fifth large contract (Harvard) began in 1967 and is included in the study.

3. Purpose and Planning of the Program

The purpose of the economic research program is to improve understanding of the fundamental economic processes in development, with emphasis on useful policy prescriptions. That "purpose" would characterize the entire nine year history of the program. Almost all of the research can be described as applied, rather than basic, and country case studies have been a prominent research method. Several of the big university contracts (Yale, Harvard, and, in part, Williams) have also served as an instrument for creating and/or strengthening specialized growth study-centers at the universities, and have been, to a certain extent, institutional grants (the Harvard contract finances research that is largely a by-product of DAS advisory activities). Complementing these omnibus contracts have been a larger number of projects, usually small in dollar terms, directed at discrete issues. Together, these contracts have provided a rather broad assault on interesting and important policy questions.

One important characteristic of the program is the fact that (with a few exceptions) it has not supported research by the LDC's. Although REPAS initially attempted to concern itself with AID-financed research worldwide, support for research by the LDC's has up to now been left to the Missions.

Whatever its merits, the economic research program has never had a central planning design which set priorities for research and formulated

Table 1

CONTRACTS FUNDED UNDER THE ECONOMIC RESEARCH PROGRAM

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Contract Title</u> (Abbreviated)	<u>Obligations</u> (\$000 Cumulative) to March 1971)	<u>Period</u>	<u>Active</u> (x)
NPA	<u>Development Planning</u>	2,223	6/62 - 8/70	
Yale	<u>Economic Structure</u>	1,858	6/62 - 6/70	
Harvard	<u>Resource Allocation</u>	1,557	5/67 - 1/72	x
Brookings	<u>Transportation</u>	1,495	6/62 - 1/70	
Rand	<u>Allocating Assistance</u>	1,481	11/63 - 8/69	
Yale	<u>Unemployment</u>	487	6/69 - 6/73	x
Simulmatics	<u>Venezuela</u>	349	3/64 - 9/66	
Iowa State	<u>Food Aid</u>	330	6/68 - 6/71	x
Wisconsin	<u>Southeast Asia</u>	313	3/64 - 12/67	
Williams	<u>Import Substitution</u>	289	12/64 - 6/72	x
UCLA	<u>Housing</u>	169	6/64 - 8/69	
NBER	<u>Exchange Control</u>	128	6/70 - 12/72	x
MIT	<u>Analytical Methods</u>	72	6/64 - 3/66	
Nathan	<u>Air Transport</u>	50	10/61 - 8/62	
NPA	<u>Capacity Expansion</u>	42	1/65 - 4/66	
Yale	<u>Foreign Trade</u>	39	5/62 - 8/63	
Pennsylvania	<u>Indian Income</u>	31	6/69 - 12/71	x
Johns Hopkins	<u>Aid and Growth</u>	19	5/64 - 3/66	
Haverford	<u>Aid and the BOP</u>	5	5/63 - 8/63	
	Subtotal, Active	2,822		
	Subtotal, Inactive	8,116		
	Total	10,939		

Note: Titles underlined indicate contracts reviewed in this study.

contracts and sought researchers accordingly. The director of REPAS tried to impose such a logic at the beginning of the program, but the focus disappeared when REPAS disappeared. Instead, the Agency has generally reacted to outside research interests and proposals, a policy which we do not argue was up to now necessarily mistaken.

As part of the recent Agency decision to formulate agreed "research strategies" for each sector (field of activity) PPC is currently engaged in an effort to establish priorities and identify specific social science research needs. Two working assumptions for this exercise are: (1) future research will involve the LDC's to a much greater extent, including development assistance to LDC institutes, and (2) future AID (or IDI) research and institutional grants will attempt to promote and work within an "international network" of research activities in a specific field.

B. Systems for Utilizing the Program

1. General Comment

The output of the research program -- written and oral reports, consultations, trained experts, etc. -- ought to be useful to several communities, including AID (both AID/W and the Missions), other donor agencies, host governments, professionals in the U.S., and professionals in the LDC's. Since we are discussing changes in economic policies, the primary impact presumably must be on decision makers in the host governments. But for AID to have that impact it is not necessary to address the decision makers directly. The persons who advise and influence the decision makers are at least as important an audience, and this would include the other communities mentioned above. There is also a longer-run impact that results from adding to the body of knowledge on the development process -- through the economic literature, courses and training of future decision makers.

Within AID, some persons believe that the entire centrally funded research program, including the economic component, ought to be aimed at the AID Missions and their backstop offices in Washington, and that contracts ought to be written with current Mission needs in mind. Others, particularly those that have been associated with the research program, believe that the central program should address worldwide problem areas as perceived by AID central offices, on the one hand, or the U.S. development community, on the other, with Missions free to promote single country research and shorter-term consulting studies. In short, one must be careful in analyzing the utilization of research, since the intended audience varies by contract and commentator and, in any case, it is not clear which audience has the most impact on the development process.

2. Written Reports

The typical contract calls for a number of research papers. These might include a final report of findings and a number of interim staff papers, all of which would be in addition to the standard semi-annual progress reports on the contract itself. In most contracts the substantive reports and their widespread distribution and readership are considered the primary goal of the project. For example, one of the original objectives of the major NPA contract was to produce a handbook for planning, to which practitioners could refer to absorb, quickly, experience with planning in countries that had used it successfully and to relate that experience to their own problems (the objective was later judged impractical and dropped)* Under the AID "by-product" contract with the Harvard DAS, a series of staff papers on certain development topics, written by DAS team members after their return to Cambridge, are sought. Taking all of the contracts together, a body of professional staff papers, occasional papers, interim reports and journal articles have appeared which, in the aggregate, amount by now to an enormous and impressive library and a substantial contribution to U.S. economic development literature. A number of books, the research for which is attributable to the AID contract, have also appeared, including all twelve reports from the Brookings transport study and a half dozen of the Yale country studies. Costs of publication of books is sometimes covered by the contract (Brookings), sometimes not (Yale).

To date printing of articles and books has been almost entirely in English, which limits the audience. But both the contractor and AID have mechanisms for distributing the reports and they are getting out. Section II of this report describes the AID mechanism and estimates how large the distribution of research papers might be.

3. Consultants

The category of "results" includes advisory services of the researchers provided during or subsequent to the research program. Where the researcher was associated with an operational program in the host country, and served either as agent or advisor during the so-called research interval, he will have been sharing his learnings and conclusions with his program colleagues

*One of the original objectives of the Yale contract was to produce a corresponding handbook, or primer, on preparing national accounts for developing countries. This was included in the contract at the urging of the director of REPAS, and was conceived by him to offer an ultimate utility to the country studies of economic structure and growth which Yale's Economic Growth Center contracted to undertake. Yale did issue a general report on national accounts, but it appeared in the second year of the contract and did not offer itself as a practitioner's manual synthesized from the lessons of the country studies.

continuously. Even where the researcher worked in relative isolation, he may have imparted his findings orally to decision makers and their advisors long before preparing his report, and have had an impact even though his report was not read. Other examples of consultancy are drawn from the post-reporting period, when the contract team makes formal and informal presentations to donor agency and host country officials. PPC exploited this medium in 1970 by sending a senior team from Williams to several countries to discuss with interested officials the general findings of the Williams study of import substitution.

4. Training Foreign Professionals

Some of the economic research projects involve host country professionals, doing research under the contract. What they learn will be carried with them to subsequent jobs, where they might perform as advisors to the very men the contract was trying to influence. Alternatively they may return or go on to work in academic institutions, where their continuing research and writing in related fields keep the issues alive and in front of the readers.

5. Training U.S. Professionals

There are corresponding effects on U.S. professionals who once but no longer work under the contracts. Some continue in research. Others may serve as advisors to foreign governments. The Brookings transport study was aimed at building a group of transport specialists who could answer recurring questions in the transport sector, questions which before 1962 largely went unanswered for want of professional expertise. The Brookings contract succeeded in this venture, a success which is said to be of even greater importance than the valuable series of books.

C. Role of PPC and the Project Monitor

The economists of PPC play a number of roles:

Project Identification: This would involve an investigation of research needs and the establishment of AID priorities, taking account of other research activity. As mentioned earlier, PPC has never carried out such a central design function. But there has been a continuing flow of research proposals from universities and other prospective contractors, and this has substituted to some degree for PPC's initiative.

Project Formulation and Approval: In practice, initial drafts have been submitted by prospective contractors and reviewed and modified by PPC staff, a pre-RIGC review panel, RIGC, and sometimes RAC.* A PPC staff economist is designated as action officer on each submitted proposal and is heavily involved in redrafting the proposal in cooperation with the applicant. This economist becomes the first monitor of the project if it is approved.

Contract Negotiations: After the project is cleared and, generally, modified by RIGC and RAC the designated project monitor and the ERS staff help the AID Contract Office with the preparation of the actual contract. This is a crucial staff function, since the nature of the "output", which may not materialize for several years, is defined in the document. Because of loosely drawn contracts, PPC has had difficulty in getting several of its major contractors to deliver products which PPC assumed were required.

Project Monitoring: The PPC monitor is responsible for continuing surveillance of the project. He is familiar with the schedule for reports and pushes them along. He arranges with the Desks and Missions for support for in-country research. He reviews the periodic progress reports, advises PPC and others on problems as well as progress, and transmits reactions and guidance to the contractor. In a well-functioning system, the monitor works closely with the contractor's project manager and they exchange telephone calls, letters and visits with one another. It has been estimated that for most contracts the monitor devotes 10% to 20% of his time to the contract, depending on its size. Some monitors declare that because of other office commitments they have been unable to give the contract the time and priority it deserves.

Utilization of Results: The previous stages mean little if the research findings are not put to use, and PPC has a major role in seeing that they are. The monitor has the primary responsibility. He is expected to be familiar with the written reports, and to see that they are distributed to AID/W offices and Missions that can use them. He should also ensure adequate distribution of reports outside of AID, complementing the distribution systems which most contractors institute directly. Beyond the function of disseminating written reports, the monitor is responsible for arranging semi-annual or annual review sessions with interested AID and non-AID personnel. Normally 2 to 4 papers are presented by contract authors and discussed in seminar fashion.

* RIGC and RAC are the two research review committees. RIGC is The Research and Institutional Grants Council, composed of AID personnel. RAC is The Research Advisory Committee, composed of non-AID experts.

In 1966 PPC developed an airgram series to help disseminate the results of the economic research program. Sixty-three airgrams have been sent in the series (which is unique to the AID centrally funded research program). The great majority discuss interim or final findings of individual contracts, that is, the typical airgram summarizes the more important papers issued under the contract in the interval since the previous airgram dealing with the contract. The airgrams are prepared by the monitor, the ERS staff, and/or the contractor, depending upon availability and substantive requirements. In addition, at intervals of about a year, an airgram lists titles of all papers, for all contracts, issued since the last such bibliographical airgram. A few airgrams have also dealt with reports and other projects related to the economic research program but not formally a part of it.

In practice the quality and frequency of the airgram series have been uneven. One or two large contracts have not been reviewed for a period of years, and the selection of reports for discussion has been unsystematic and incomplete.

Nevertheless, the airgrams are the major vehicle for alerting the Missions as well as most AID/W offices of research contracts and papers. The monitor distributes papers as received to 10 or 20 officers in AID/W and, on occasion, to Missions in countries where the research was performed (he also sends copies of progress reports to interested offices). But the main distribution is supposed to follow requests from the Missions and AID/W offices, requests stimulated by the airgram summaries and bibliographies. Neither ERS nor the monitor make any substantial, automatic distribution of reports within AID other than the limited number mentioned above. The contractor makes an independent distribution, often to Missions and governments in countries where research was performed, occasionally to officers and academics in other countries, and generally to the interested U.S. professional community. Books published as a result of the contract are sold commercially and it is difficult to determine the audience.

Another medium that was once conceived to offer a major channel for disseminating research results is the Development Digest, the quarterly journal edited by NPA under separate AID financing. In 1962, when REPAS wrote the original contract with NPA for the Digest, the director of REPAS intended it to be the platform for summarizing and abstracting from the centrally funded research program reports of universal relevance. Since then, Congressional opposition to Agency involvement with allegedly self-styled instruments of publicity has helped push PPC toward a policy of strict neutrality in the selection of Digest subject matter. As a consequence, most of the articles published in the Digest have had nothing to do with the Agency's economic research program, and most of the reports from the program have not appeared in the Digest.

The reader will note that the position of the monitor in the utilization system is key, since he has considerable scope for independent judgment and initiative and since the announcement of research results via ERP airgrams and semi-annual review sessions is largely his responsibility.

II. UTILIZATION

A. Sources

1. The May 1970 Survey

Contractors are not required to submit periodic reports on known utilization of research results, but in May 1970 a special request was made of them to provide AID with such an account. They were asked, "has the research been used in Central AID and USAID mission policy formulation? congressional presentations? program execution, LDC action and research programs? instruction, both in LDC and U.S.?" The instructions called for a "convincing, factual response" based on their current knowledge.

The responses were anecdotal rather than systematic, and failed to make a clear case that research results had their intended impact. But that is in the nature of the process: we simply have no good way to prove that research has had an impact on economic policies, and the best one can do is cite examples where decision makers were exposed and appeared to be receptive to research findings, or where a recommendation was followed closely by a policy shift. It is impossible to cumulate and measure benefits to all the pieces of research, and say anything about a benefit cost ratio. Nevertheless, the 1970 responses presented a fair amount of evidence that the research has had some impact through each of the channels described in Section I B, i.e., written reports, consulting and professional training.

2. The April 1971 Questionnaires

To get more evidence on utilization for this study, special questionnaires were developed and distributed within AID/W and to the field. They were based on six of the nineteen contracts, selected for their large size, long life, and/or focus on a major set of policy issues (Brookings, NPA, Yale, Wisconsin, Williams, Harvard). The questionnaires were prepared for three sets of respondents: for economists and policy makers in AID/W (105 distributed), for economists in the Missions (16 distributed), and for economists from host as well as donor agencies in four selected countries (10 to 15 to be distributed in each country). A copy of the Mission questionnaire is appended. The other two were derived from it.

The main purpose of the questionnaires was to determine whether the written reports were being read by the AID officers who ought to be reading them if they are worth reading. This line of inquiry is admittedly

limited. It concentrates on only one channel (the written report), and one audience (AID professionals), and assumes that the reading of reports is an indicator of impact. The limitations are acceptable for a cursory evaluation of this sort since (1) the written report is undoubtedly the most extensive channel, especially outside the country where the research was conducted, (2) it might be hard to defend AID research, on subjects relevant to AID operations and policy, if AID officers weren't being exposed to the results, and (3) exposure to ideas through reading and other channels is a necessary, if not sufficient, condition for impact.

Included on each questionnaire were a few inquiries that went beyond the reading issue, asking for views on quality of work and overall impact of the contract, and for description of cases where impact on policy could be reasonably well substantiated. The results of these investigations are described below.

B. Dissemination and Reading of Written Reports

1. Development of the Questionnaires

The AID/W and Mission questionnaires were concerned primarily with measuring the reading of research reports. A single list of reports was made, and used for both questionnaires. The list included five reports from each of the six selected contracts, or thirty reports in all. Five contractors helped select their five titles; a project monitor selected five titles for the sixth contract (Williams). The criteria for selection were that (1) the report deals with issues, and offers findings, of universal relevance, even though the research was conducted in one country;* (2) the report was at least listed, and preferably summarized, in the ERP airgram series; and (3) the contractor would consider it one of the superior products of the contract. Thirty reports is a small sample from the hundreds that have been produced, and the sample does not include titles from the majority of the contracts. Nevertheless some selection had to be made, and five of the best titles from each of these six contracts seemed to offer a good list. If any reports are being read, some from these thirty ought to be included.

AID officers in Washington and the Mission were asked to indicate whether they knew about the reports, had read them, and had them. If they had read them, the officers were asked to judge relevance, influence, etc.

Another type of list was developed for four countries: Colombia, Pakistan, Thailand, and the Philippines. In these cases the list included any worthy report from the six contractors (plus Rand for Colombia and the Philippines) which dealt with that country or that part of the world.

* The Yale contract is disadvantaged in this study because it was less directly policy related than the others. Moreover, the principal reports are the country studies, which we did not include in the lists because of their deliberately narrowed geographic focus. (As of this date, seven country studies have been published, and full drafts of three others and substantive chapters of five more have been submitted to AID.) These disadvantages may explain the relative rating of Yale reports in comparative tables on subsequent pages.

The four countries were selected because more AID financed research by these contractors has been conducted there than in other countries. The reports did not have to have universal relevance, and they did not have to be discussed in the ERP airgrams. The reason for making four country lists was to test the hypothesis that research reports have a larger audience in the country where they were prepared than they do in other countries, no matter how general the problems. The Missions in these four countries were sent fifteen copies of the questionnaire, and asked to distribute them to economists and other officials, inside and outside government and AID, likely to be reading reports. We had few results from this survey as discussed in the third section below.

All three questionnaires, and the lists of titles they show, suffer from limitations already mentioned. In addition, several reports from a given contract may treat a particular issue, so that a respondent who has read reports other than the one listed may have assimilated the results even though he marks "No". Also, respondents may have forgotten titles and authors of what they have read, especially of the shorter reports. Despite these problems the questionnaires offered a manageable way to gather some quantitative evidence on utilization, and were distributed for that purpose.

2. AID/W Findings

Of 105 questionnaires distributed, 42 were completed and returned in time to be included in the primary compilation (another 5 were received late* and 8 more addressees offered reasons why they should not be included in the sample.) Of the 42, one-third (14) were from PPC. The rest were mostly from regional bureau staff: economists and other officers who make decisions on economic matters.

Since each respondent was asked to consider 30 reports, the maximum number of "readings" that could have been made by the respondents was 1,260 (42 x 30). Table 2 shows the results. The actual number of confirmed "readings" was 255, which means that on the average only one out of every five reports was being read by the selected audience. "Reading" refers to skimming as well as thorough study. The actual number of "thorough" readings was 65, which means that only one of every twenty reports that reach AID/W officers was getting the attention it probably deserved.

The table shows that readership in PPC was significantly higher than the AID/W average, as would be expected. Although PPC accounts for only one-third of the respondents, it accounts for almost one half of the "readings" and well over half of the "thorough" readings. Still, only 30 per cent of the "readings" that could have been made in PPC were actually made, and only 10 per cent of the "thorough" readings.

* A second analysis which included these five was subsequently run. It showed no significant differences from the results presented here.

Table 2

AWARENESS, READING AND HOLDING OF RESEARCH REPORTS BY AID/W RESPONDENTS
5 Reports for each of 6 Contracts -- Aggregate Responses by Contract*

	<u>Brookings</u>		<u>NPA</u>		<u>Yale</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>Williams</u>		<u>Harvard</u>		<u>Total</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	
<u>Were you aware of it?</u>															
No	44	91	37	104	22	117	46	130	31	115	24	110	204	667	871
Yes	26	49	33	36	43	28	19	15	34	30	41	35	196	193	389#
<u>Have you read it?</u>															
No	10	10	11	13	8	6	4	3	5	6	10	9	48	48	96
Don't remember	3	4	6	2	7	3	5	1	5	3	2	1	28	14	42
Skimmed	7	10	10	7	11	8	6	7	6	13	7	12	47	57	104
Parts	3	23	3	8	7	7	4	2	5	3	12	9	34	52	86
Thorough	2	2	4	5	8	8	0	2	14	5	10	5	38	27	65
<u>Do you have copies now?</u>															
No	20	31	27	17	21	23	11	14	16	19	20	25	115	129	244
Yes	5	11	5	6	18	2	7	0	15	5	20	2	70	26	96

*Only respondents who were "aware" of a report were counted for reading and for copies.

#Four respondents checked two answers under Have you read it? This accounts for discrepancy between the sum of those answers (393) and the number aware of the report (389).

The table also brings out the differences in readings between the six contracts. Except for the exceptionally low reading reported for Wisconsin, which might be explained by the geographic limitation of the contract, there are no striking differences between the six. Looking at individual reports, we find that certain ones were more popular than others. The following list shows the ten which topped the survey:

<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Title (short)</u>	<u>Response</u>
Harvard	Falcon	"Green Revolution"	24
Brookings	Owen	"Strategy for Mobility"(book)	24
NPA	Paauw	"Development Strategies"	23
Yale	Cooper	"Currency Devaluation"	22
Harvard	Chenery	"Targets for Development"	20
Brookings	Fromm, ed.	"Transport Investment" (book)	18
Williams	Clark	"Import Demands"	17
Yale	Frank	"Urban Unemployment"	17
NPA	Paauw	"Planning Approach"	17
Williams	Power	"Import Substitution"	15

This list is based on the respondent's "awareness" of the report, rather than "reading". These were separate questions. We wanted to find out how many people, other than those who had read the reports, were at least aware that they existed and could be expected, therefore, to call for them if needed. The differences were brought out in Table 2. In short, for every two "readers", another respondent knew about the report even if he hadn't read it. That still leaves seven out of ten respondents who didn't know the report existed.

One's interpretation of these results depends upon the importance one attaches to the reading of these 30 reports by the AID/W audience we sampled. The reports were among the best produced under the six contracts, and the sample included the principal types of persons in AID/W who would read such reports. While recognizing that impact can be achieved if only one person reads a report, provided he is the right person, and admitting the 30 titles cover a variety of subjects not all of which would be important to each respondent, nevertheless we conclude that awareness and readership in AID/W are very low. If AID/W is an appropriate audience for the research reports, there is no reason why "awareness" shouldn't be running close to 100 per cent in both PPC and the select, non-PPC, audience, and there is good reason to believe that "thorough reading" has to be much higher than 5 per cent.

3. Mission Findings

Questionnaires were sent to 16 Mission officers asking them the same types of questions that were asked in AID/W. Eight useful responses were received (six other officers replied with a short narrative statement, declining to submit a completed questionnaire; two officers never replied). The answers with respect to awareness and readership are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

AWARENESS, READING AND HOLDING OF RESEARCH REPORTS BY USAID PRINCIPAL RESPONDENTS#
 5 Reports for each of 6 Contracts -- Aggregate Responses by Contract*

	<u>Brookings</u>	<u>NPA</u>	<u>Yale</u>	<u>Wisconsin</u>	<u>Williams</u>	<u>Harvard</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Were you aware of it?</u>							
No	16	22	26	19	18	26	127
Yes	24	18	14	21	22	14	113
<u>Have you read it?</u>							
No	12	7	9	13	9	9	59
Don't remember	3	3	1	1	1	2	11
Skimmed	4	6	2	3	5	0	20
Parts	3	0	1	3	0	1	8
Thorough	2	3	1	1	7	2	16

#The "principal" respondent is the addressee. Data referring to the reading habits of "collaborators" and other Mission personnel is not included on the table.

*Only respondents who were "aware" of a report were counted for reading and for copies.

The maximum number of possible readings is 240 (using the formula on page 17). Actual readings (skimmed, parts and thorough) totalled 44, or about the same percentage as in AID/W -- one in five. Thorough readings numbered 16, which is a higher fraction than the general AID/W readership reported, but less than for PPC respondents.

Mission respondents differ somewhat from their AID/W colleagues in terms of their relative familiarity with individual contracts and reports. For instance, the Mission men are more "aware" of the Williams and Wisconsin reports than of the Yale and Harvard reports -- the reverse of the AID/W findings. Also, only four of the most popular AID/W titles appear on the Mission popularity list. Another interesting difference is the fact that there were twice as many claims to awareness than to readership in the Mission survey, a ratio just opposite that found in AID/W.

Despite the differences, a conclusion similar to that drawn from the AID/W survey can be reached: awareness and readership both appear to be much too low.

4. Country Findings

Of the four sets of country questionnaires sent to Missions, only one -- Thailand -- was returned.* There were nine completed questionnaires in the set, three from USAID personnel and six from Thais involved in government or the university. The questionnaire for Thailand had referred to 12 reports (2 Brookings, 4 NPA, 6 Wisconsin), which allows a total of 108 potential readings. The summarized results are given in Table 4 without comment. They are consistent with the hypothesis expressed on page 17 that research reports have a larger audience "in-country", but the data base is too small to permit meaningful generalizations.

* We would like to thank James R. Hoath, the then Chief of the Research, Economic Analysis and Evaluation Division of USAID/Bangkok, for the substantial time he devoted to this survey.

Table 4
Readership and Accessibility-Thailand

	<u>USAID</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>Have you read it?</u>			
Never heard of it	10	18	28
Don't remember	2	3	5
No	9	25	34
Yes, skimming	9	10	19
Yes, parts	2	4	6
Yes, thoroughly	4	12	16
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total:	72	36	108
 <u>Do you have it, or is it easily available?</u>			
No	8	53	61
Yes, have it	7	5	12
Yes, available	9	13	22

C. Requests for Written Reports

In addition to the small, preliminary distribution made by the project monitor, the mechanism for wide dissemination of the reports is through the requests received by ERS in response to the airgram announcements. One might expect that the low readership revealed by the questionnaires indicated low rates of dissemination. The distribution accounts maintained by ERS, however, do not entirely confirm that expectation.

The available evidence does suggest that dissemination of the 30 documents has not been widespread. Three of the 30 (all 3 from Yale) were never announced in the airgrams,* but the other 27 were. ERS records permit a fairly accurate count of the distribution of each report, by Mission. Table 5 shows the result of a count made by the ERS staff for four recent years, for each region, for Mission requests for the 27 reports. Only thirteen of the largest Missions were surveyed: three from each region (excluding Vietnam) except Africa, which had four Missions represented. # Altogether, 447 copies were requested, which means that on the average each Mission asked for nine copies per year. Variations between Missions, and between reports, are very large. Although the count is not complete, in the sense that some of the newer among the 27 reports would not have been adequately covered in the 1967-1970 files, nevertheless the trend is clear. Missions have been neither requesting nor receiving from AID/W other than a token distribution of the 27 reports, certainly not enough to sustain an aggressive secondary distribution program within the host countries.

The evidence from the AID/W questionnaire points in the same direction. We asked respondents whether they had copies of the 30 reports. Of the 1,260 possibilities for possession, there are only 96 acknowledged cases of possession (8 per cent). Actual possession may be higher, since people forget what is in their libraries. But acknowledged possession is the relevant indicator of effective distribution.

* Inclusion of the 3 titles in the questionnaires was a mistake, but it does allow two observations to be made. The requests cumulated in Table 5 include very few for Yale, and this fact suggests that without the airgram series or some such announcement mechanism, distribution would fall drastically. On the other hand, the fourth most popular report listed on page 19, Yale's Cooper study of devaluation, was among the 3. This study started as a PPC summer research project and was advertised within the AID community in various ways that did not involve the ERP airgram series. Thus other "mechanisms" do exist and can be profitably exploited to complement the airgrams.

These 13 Missions were all among those selected for the Mission questionnaire.

Table 5

COPIES OF WRITTEN REPORTS DISTRIBUTED TO USAIDs
BY AID/W, UPON REQUEST

(6 Contracts, 27 Reports, 1967-1970)

By Year

1967	200
1968	67
1969	94
1970	86

By Contract

Brookings	149
Williams	99
NPA	91
Wisconsin	54
Harvard	46
Yale*	8

By Mission

Pakistan	64
India	59
Brazil	49
Kenya	44
Philippines	39
Colombia	36
Ghana	32
Nigeria	31
Thailand	31
Turkey	28
Chile	16
Korea	14
Morocco	4

* Three of the five Yale reports were never mentioned in the ERP airgrams.

Despite evidence that the 30 reports surveyed here have not been widely distributed, nevertheless we know that the ERS staff has not been idle. ERS records show a large aggregate distribution of the 461 reports that have been produced under the economic research program. The following figures give yearly totals since the airgrams began:

Oct. '66 - Dec. '67	3,545
Jan. '68 - Dec. '68	5,275
Jan. '69 - Dec. '69	3,694
Jan. '70 - Dec. '70	2,632
Jan. '71 - Mar. '71	532
<hr/>	
Total	15,678

This distribution is to Missions, AID/W and non-AID audiences. The total volume is not unimpressive. It suggests that the ERS has been providing a valuable dissemination service, though obviously not with respect to the reports we and the contractors selected as being most significant.

For purposes of this review, the ERS staff counted the volume of requests from the Missions that followed within the year an important airgram in the series. The first airgram describing the Harvard contract was selected. It was dated 12/30/67, and made reference to 31 Harvard reports. By the end of 1968, a total of 743 copies had been solicited (NESA 265, LA 250, AFR 137, EA and VN 63, undifferentiable 28). We consider that a commendable performance.

Incidentally, Table 5 does bring out the rather widespread popularity of the Brookings books. This is further supported by the ranking of individual reports according to quantity requested of ERS by the 13 Missions in the four year period:

<u>Contract</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Title (short)</u>	<u>Requests</u>
NPA	Paauw, Cookson	"Capital Inflows"	62
Williams	Powers	"Import Substitution"	36
Brookings	Haefele, ed.	"Transport and Goals"	35
"	Owen	"Strategy"	34
"	Wilson, et al	"Highway Investment"	34
"	Fromm, ed.	"Transport Investment"	32
.			
Harvard	Bird	"Taxation"	16*
Wisconsin	Bell	"Entrepreneurship"	15*
Yale	Berry	"Luxury Imports"	5*

*These are the Harvard, Wisconsin and Yale contractors' most popular reports among the five selected, according to the ERS accounts. They are listed for comparison with the three contractors who made the "top six".

This best seller list is not really comparable with the list of titles, presented on page 19, ranked according to "awareness", since the latter list allowed a longer time for "awareness" of the most recent reports among the 30 -- of the Falcon paper, for example. The difference between the two lists is nevertheless interesting.

D. Quality, Relevance and Influence of Contracts and Reports

We have deliberately focused our survey on the utilization rather than the substance of research. Nevertheless substance can affect utilization -- bad and irrelevant research will (hopefully) have low impact -- and the questionnaires included a section which allows limited judgments to be made.

The following comments refer to the AID/W questionnaires, in particular the questions about individual reports. As mentioned, few of the 30 reports had been read by the 42 respondents, and fewer still read thoroughly. Only readers were asked about quality, relevance and influence (if answers were given by persons who had not read the report, we ignored them). Aggregate accounts for the answers that were received are shown in Table 6. They suggest the following:

Professional Quality: About 70 percent of the responses said the quality of the report was good (rather than fair or poor), and most of the rest said fair. This is significant. It clearly indicates that the quality of the reports is acceptable to the persons who are familiar with them. PPC and non-PPC responses had identical distributions.

Influence on the Respondent: The great majority (80 per cent) said the report had influenced their general thinking to some degree (large, and small were allowed), and almost one quarter (23 per cent) claimed the influence was large. The PPC responding reader was more likely to admit being influenced, though the difference with the non-PPC group is not striking.

Relevance to AID: A majority (56 per cent) of respondents said the reports were very relevant; most of the others said they were somewhat relevant; hardly any felt they were irrelevant. Again the PPC/non-PPC difference is not striking.

Influence on Policy: Of the respondents who gave a clear answer to the question, three out of five felt the influence on policy was zero. But a larger number of respondents selected hard to say as an answer, which must be interpreted to mean they do not know if the influence on policy was large, small or none. It is clear, however, that the responding readers feel the reports have a smaller impact on policy than on the respondent's own general thinking. PPC respondents were more timid ("hard to say"), but of those who chose a clear answer, they tended to be less dubious about the impact on policy than their colleagues outside PPC.

Table 6

QUALITY, RELEVANCE AND INFLUENCE OF RESEARCH REPORTS AS JUDGED BY AID/W RESPONDENTS
5 Reports for each of 6 Contracts -- Aggregate Responses by Contract*

	<u>Brookings</u>		<u>NPA</u>		<u>Yale</u>		<u>Wisconsin</u>		<u>Williams</u>		<u>Harvard</u>		<u>Totals</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>
	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other</u>	
<u>What is its professional quality?</u>															
Good	9	19	5	10	20	11	2	0	18	18	18	13	72	71	143
Fair	3	2	4	6	3	6	6	4	4	2	5	5	25	25	50
Poor	0	1	4	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	5	4	9
<u>How much influence on your general thinking?</u>															
Large	1	12	0	3	4	0	0	0	9	2	12	2	27	19	46
Small	9	7	7	11	14	12	7	2	10	12	14	14	61	58	119
None	2	5	6	3	2	7	1	5	1	5	0	5	12	30	42
<u>What is its relevance to AID?</u>															
Very relevant	5	18	6	9	14	9	4	1	16	13	20	19	61	69	130
Somewhat relevant	6	12	6	11	10	11	4	8	5	9	7	3	38	54	92
Irrelevant	0	1	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	3	5	6	11
<u>How much influence on bureau policy and practice?</u>															
Large	0	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	3	1	2	5	6	12	18
Small	0	5	1	5	6	4	0	0	4	2	4	3	15	19	34
None	2	7	11	7	3	9	5	6	1	7	3	6	25	42	67
Hard to say	10	11	3	4	13	11	4	4	15	10	19	6	64	46	110
<u>Are the findings presented in understandable and operationally useful form?</u>															
Yes	8	15	10	9	13	10	4	0	19	10	16	11	72	55	127
No	0	1	3	1	6	3	3	2	0	5	3	6	15	18	33
Don't know	4	2	2	3	3	8	2	5	7	4	8	3	26	25	51

*Only respondents who had "read" the report were counted.

Presentation of Findings: For every one respondent who felt the reports were not presented in an understandable and operationally useful form, there were four respondents who felt they were. This suggests the responding readers are not bothered by a factor which is often thought to curtail readership.

The preceding points must be interpreted properly. Together they show that the respondents who had "read" the reports were impressed with their quality, relevance and presentation, and were influenced to some degree by their findings. These responding readers did not feel the reports had had any significant impact on policy, or did not know whether there had been impact or not. But we did not expect this type of research to have had a significant, recognized impact on policy, and the answers are not disheartening.

However, these comments refer just to the "readers". Most respondents were non-readers -- were not even aware the reports existed. A few of them answered the relevance and impact questions anyway, and invariably checked none. If those non-readers who had not answered were asked to do so, we must assume they too would have tended in the same direction. Thus most of the 42 respondents feel most of the reports are worthless to AID. The only sub-group that disagrees are the persons who do the reading.

Table 7 presents the AID/W response to questions about the relevance and influence of the overall contract. All respondents were addressed. The aggregate figures summed over six contracts look much like the aggregate for individual reports: most respondents indicated they didn't know, or found it hard to judge; the others rated relevance rather highly and influence very low. Elsewhere in the questionnaire AID/W respondents were asked to describe instances of impact which they were personally familiar with. Very few examples were given and half of the respondents didn't even bother to answer. Most of those who did indicated they didn't know of any cases, but that some might exist.

The preceding paragraphs dealt with AID/W respondents. Responses from the eight Mission officers were practically the same, as shown in Table 8. Again the material is rated of good quality, generally relevant, having some influence on the respondent's thinking and practically no ascertainable influence on Mission policy. Three reports were judged to be presented in understandable and operationally useful form for every one that wasn't. Only four Mission officers answered the question about relevance and influence of the contracts as a whole. The aggregate figures (4x6=24 responses in total) are repeated in table 9. They are based on too small a sample of opinion to offer anything more than a rough confirmation of the AID/W trend.

Table 7

RELEVANCE AND INFLUENCE OF THE SIX CONTRACTS
MEASURED BY AID/W RESPONSES *

	<u>BROOKINGS</u>		<u>NPA</u>		<u>YALE</u>		<u>WISCONSIN</u>		<u>WILLIAMS</u>		<u>HARVARD</u>		<u>TOTALS</u>		
	PPC	Other	PPC	Other	PPC	Other	PPC	Other	PPC	Other	PPC	Other	PPC	Other	Total
Relevance to AID															
Very relevant	2	7	1		5	2	2		10	3	9	3	29	15	44
Somewhat relevant	5	4	7	6	6	7	2	3	2	7	4	5	26	32	58
Irrelevant		1	2	4		1		2				1	2	9	11
Don't Know	7	10	5	10	3	10	11	15	3	10	2	11	31	66	97
Influence on Bureau Policy and Practice															
Large		2				1			2	1	1	1	3	5	8
Small	3	2	2	2	3	2	2		4	4	4	2	18	12	30
None		7	4	8	1	6	2	8		4		5	7	38	45
Hard to say	6	4	5	3	6	3	3	3	5	2	8	3	33	18	51
Don't know	6	7	5	7	4	9	7	9	4	9	2	9	28	50	78

* All respondents were asked to answer these questions. Not all did.

Table 8

QUALITY, RELEVANCE AND INFLUENCE OF RESEARCH REPORTS AS JUDGED BY USAID PRINCIPAL RESPONDENTS
5 Reports for each of 6 Contracts -- Aggregate Responses by Contract*

	<u>Brookings</u>	<u>NPA</u>	<u>Yale</u>	<u>Wisconsin</u>	<u>Williams</u>	<u>Harvard</u>	
<u>What is its professional quality?</u>							
Good	8	10	5	5	10	9	47
Fair	5	4	3	2	3	1	1
Poor	0	0	0	1	3	0	4
<u>How much influence on your general thinking?</u>							
Large	0	3	3	0	0	4	10
Small	6	7	3	5	8	4	33
None	0	0	2	1	4	0	7
<u>What is its relevance to the Mission?</u>							
Very relevant	2	6	2	6	5	6	27
Somewhat relevant	10	8	2	5	5	4	34
Irrelevant	0	0	2	1	4	0	7
<u>How much influence on Mission policy and practice?</u>							
Large	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Small	5	0	2	0	0	1	8
None	3	5	3	5	8	2	26
Hard to say	4	9	1	7	6	7	34
<u>Are the findings presented in understandable and operationally useful form?</u>							
Yes	5	9	3	7	3	6	33
No	1	2	1	1	6	0	11
Don't know	1	3	1	4	4	2	15

*Only respondents who had "read" the report were counted.

Table 9
Response by Principal Mission Officers

What is the contracts' relevance to the Mission?

Very relevant	7
Somewhat relevant	11
Irrelevant	4
Don't know	2

How much influence has the contract had on
 Mission policy and practice?

Large	0
Small	4
None	5
Hard to say	3
Don't know	12

Finally, we present below the results of the Thailand survey of nine professionals, three in the Mission and six outside, with respect to the quality, relevance and influence of the individual reports and the overall research projects.

Table 10
Quality, Relevance and Influence - Thailand

	<u>USAID</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
What is the professional quality of the report?			
Good	10	10	20
Fair	6	15	21
Poor	0	0	0
What is the relevance of the research project to your work?			
Very relevant	4	13	17
Somewhat relevant	12	27	39
Irrelevant	0	1	1
How much influence has the research had on your thinking			
Large	0	2	2
Small	10	34	44
None	14	2	16

A pattern emerges from this material. To those persons who have read them, the contracts and the reports are judged relevant and of generally high quality. But by and large most of the officers who ought to

be reading these documents are not, and the impact on AID policies and programs is probably very low. The prevailing opinion in the Agency about the central economic research program is indifferent or hostile.

One reason for this is that the research results may not be presented to AID in the right form. Tables 6 and 8 showed that most responding readers are not unhappy with the presentation (the question was: "Are the findings presented in understandable and operationally useful form?"). But then most respondents are not readers. At the end of the questionnaires, AID/W and Mission officers were asked to suggest possibilities for improvement of the economic research program. Few suggestions were made. But almost all of those that were, said in one way or another that the contracts and reports ought to be made more operationally useful to the Agency. Half of the AID/W suggestions were attributable to PPC, half to other bureaus.

The same point is made in a different way in the inter-contract comparisons provided by table 7. Our own acquaintance with the contracts and contract reports leads us to the opinion that the Harvard and Williams material would probably rate higher among AID/W officers than the other four contracts in terms of operational relevance and utility -- it is in the nature of the contracts. Table 7 confirms our judgment, and also shows that outside of PPC the Brookings contract has the best operational image. All three contracts can be compared in the table with NPA, which received the most votes for irrelevance and no influence and which has all along been pointed toward a more theoretical investigation of the development process.

E. The ERP Airgram Series

AID respondents were asked to evaluate the airgrams and to indicate whether a change in the frequency of transmission was warranted. The answers were satisfying, as shown in the following table.

Table 11
AID/W and Mission Responses on the ERP Airgram Series

Question

	<u>PPC</u>	<u>Other AID/W</u>	<u>Total AID/W</u>	<u>Missions*</u>
1. <u>Have you read the airgrams?</u>				
None or very few	3	5	8	3
All of them	4	2	6	9
Something in between	8	19	27	4
2. <u>How would you evaluate the airgram series?</u>				
Outstanding	0	0	0	2
Generally useful	11	13	24	5
Occasionally useful	3	10	13	5
Not useful	1	1	2	0
3. <u>Should airgram series be continued?</u>				
Yes, at more frequent intervals	3	5	8	0
Yes, at present rate	12	17	29	9
Discontinue summaries	0	1	1	0
Discontinue lists	0	1	1	0
Discontinue both	0	0	0	0

At the end of the questionnaires a space was provided for any comments the respondent cared to make. Of the 42 AID/W respondents only 19 offered any observations. Of these, almost half felt that the summary airgrams were useful, the research papers being considered too long for recipients to take the time to read. Some of those who liked the airgrams ventured that the airgrams themselves would benefit from having a short, concise summary at the beginning. The general conclusion was that the airgrams constituted a service which should be continued (this view is shared by most Mission respondents.)

Among those who offered comments, there were several who felt that seminars in the field (supplementing those conducted by contract in AID/W) might be a good way of disseminating the gist of the reports. Five respondents advocated greater relevance of the papers themselves to AID policies and issues.

We did not deal in this survey with the professional quality of the airgrams. But we know that both the quality and the frequency of the airgrams have been uneven and that even some of the better written airgrams fail to do the job they should be doing, that is, translating and summarizing the research findings in operationally useful statements. All the more satisfying then that the airgram series has been well received. It obviously fills an important need.

* Includes responses by collaborators as well as addressee.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions

The very low level of dissemination and reading of research reports within AID has been suspected and is confirmed by the questionnaire surveys. Good reports are not being read by most AID officers in Washington and the Missions, even by those officers who one would suppose ought to be reading these reports if anyone in the Agency is reading them. This is not necessarily surprising, given the specialization and orientation of the reports already produced and the limited opportunities most officers have to apply the results. It is also not necessarily bad, provided that the few officers who could influence AID or LDC decisions on issues examined under the research program are reading them. But there is no evidence that this is so, and we are driven to conclude that the readership is not only narrow but more random than it ought to be. This is not an indictment of the economic research program; since much of the research has been of good quality and high relevance, and since there are channels other than AID for delivering the results and having an impact. The practice of several of the major university contractors to assemble periodically to compare their results and their plans for the future under the contracts hints at the lively dissemination process which this limited survey has completely ignored. The survey results do suggest, however, that there is room for improvement by AID in the final step of the research effort.

An issue arises from the survey which we want to raise at this point but not try to resolve. The Agency has had no clear policy on who the primary audience for the research reports ought to be, and the process for selecting research proposals may therefore be inefficient.

Many officers in the regional bureaus, and a few in PPC, think that the research program ought to be geared to AID's programs. This doesn't have to mean short-term research, nor does it necessarily have to mean responding to the "felt needs" of the Missions. But it does imply an investigation of problems that interfere with development programs in which the Agency is directly involved, or a search for strategies which would make the Agency more effective. AID officers would not be the only audience for such research, but they would be an important one. Evidence such as we have gathered that AID officers are not reading or even aware of the reports would then offer a clear case for altering the research program.

Most officers who have been connected with the research program hold quite a different view. They feel the focus ought to be on the development process, rather than donor operations, and that the audience for the reports is the community of development scholars: some of whom are in AID, some of whom are in host governments, most of whom are scattered in a variety of institutions. The research would only indirectly influence AID decisions, particularly those in AID/W. A variant of this view, which

has gained considerable support recently, is that the primary audience is in the IDCs. High rates of utilization there would be the appropriate indicator of success. Impact studies such as ours which are looking only at the AID readership would in either case be inconclusive and possibly misleading.

The choice need not be exclusive. If one imagines a spectrum of research proposals which run the gamut from a process which produces operational handbooks for action officers who have no time to read longer reports, to a theoretical study of development which is intelligible only to other academics (though not necessarily a less "important" study in the long run), the AID experience is somewhere in between, probably a few steps toward theory.* The question arises as to whether the lack of focus has reduced the effectiveness of the research program; whether a forthright position on the primary audience and, therefore, on the shape of the program, would improve it.

We will move on from that issue, because the results of our survey do not help direct us to any answers. What is clear from the survey is that regardless of the priority one gives to the AID audience, improvements can be made to see that that audience is better exposed to the research findings than it is now.

The principal explanations for the relatively low rate of utilization by AID in the last decade appear to be the following:

- (1) Most AID officers are what they say they are -- too busy to digest the flow of information from the research program. These officers respond to job requirements, and the research results have not been essential to them or have not seemed essential to them.
- (2) The project monitors have not given, or have not been given, enough time to the business of interpreting and disseminating the results. They have not given adequate attention to the job of preparing the airgram reviews.
- (3) The turnover of monitors has been high, with a consequent loss in the continuity of review. A count of the monitors assigned to the NPA, Yale, Williams and Harvard contractors during the last five years showed that sixteen different PPC economists handled those jobs over a period of 260 monitor months. The average tenure per contract was 16 months.
- (4) Organizational and personnel changes affecting REPAS and PPC have undermined the continuity of orientation and supervision of the whole economic research program, continuity which would appear essential when dealing with contracts that last as long as eight years.

* The element of mathematical and statistical analysis associated with the economic research program, attributable to the "economic policy" division in PPC and, in particular, to the Chenery-Strout period from 1962 to 1968, has led critics of the program to complain about an over-emphasis on model building. While the research program both within PPC and under contract involved a considerable amount of statistical analysis (which may have been taken for abstract model building) the share of research hours actually devoted to models was quite small and mostly limited to a few contracts.

(5) Partly because of that state of flux, there has been no central design to the program, no deliberate effort by AID to make the contracts fit together, to ensure that contractors working in the same area build upon each other's findings and that the outputs of the overall program reinforce each other and can be integrated. Fortunately, some contractors have developed an informal coordinative mechanism on their own (with PPC encouragement).

Points 3 through 5 deal with problems that characterize the AID program as a whole. They are not at all special to the research component, though they affect it considerably.

B. Recommendations

Some of these points have been used before to argue that AID is not the proper institution to run an efficient research program. Our findings do not necessarily point to drastic changes. We feel that with some of the changes noted below, PPC can significantly improve the utilization of economic research results by the AID community, and thereby increase the impact of an otherwise good program on one of the audiences which ought to be using it.

(1) The research results have to be digested for an operational audience; not only digested, but interpreted in a way that AID/W officials, Mission officers and their LDC counterparts know at a glance if the results are relevant to them and what to do when they are. Two jobs have to be done: summarizing the results and making them operational. One possibility would be to require the contractor to provide brief summaries of written reports as a routine requirement. In addition, a page long "operational" statement which translates the gist of the argument for the AID audience could be prepared by the project monitor. The contractor could be asked to prepare the "operational" statement as well, but he will resist and in any case AID probably has a comparative advantage for this job. An alternative, or supplement, to these digest proposals is to contract with a single firm to provide a digest service for all economic research contracts.

(2) Other Bureaus ought to appoint more economists to their staffs, so as to increase the absorptive capacity for the reports as well as the digests. These economists would be better able to adapt research results to the needs of each Bureau.

(3) The popular ERP airgram series should be regularized, and improved in terms of frequency and uniformity of quality and relevance. The airgrams could transmit both the summary and operational statements described above. The statements will have much greater appeal if put into a more usable and attractive format, for example if issued as separate reports (on white paper, as attachments to a transmittal airgram). If the digest service is contracted, of course, one can imagine a special periodical bulletin which would replace the airgram series (and supplement the Development Digest).

(4) USAID officers ought to be directed to present the digested material to appropriate practitioners in the country.

(5) Wider circulation out of AID/W of both the digests and the research reports is also possible. A greater number of the original reports could be distributed automatically to a select group of Missions which have demonstrated interest. Further, selective translation into other languages should be considered.

(6) All contracts could require both contractors and monitors to concern themselves with **dissemination and report on** utilization results, including single and multi-country conferences with LDC practitioners.

(7) The appointment of an economist, familiar with research needs and limitations, to direct the ERS staff is urgent. The job must be given the prestige it deserves. Continuity in this position is essential, and will help to compensate for the seemingly inevitable rapid turnover of project monitors in PPC.

(8) Contract monitors and their supervisors ought to give higher priority to the research program. Alternatively, the ERS staff should include full time positions for additional economists, who could take over the monitoring function. As mentioned, part of the job could be contracted.

(9) Meetings sponsored by AID/W with contractors could be summarized in "minutes" and distributed widely.

(10) Bimonthly seminars, compulsory for heads of offices involved with decisions having economic content, as well as for Agency economists, ought to be instituted in AID/W. The results and implications of research and other economic investigations would be presented.

(11) Probably the most important step to improve LDC utilization would be greater LDC involvement in the research program. As noted earlier, a "sector strategy" is currently being developed for social science research, one that will put more emphasis on LDC and international research and will hopefully provide more direction and continuity than has prevailed to date. Proposals for reorganization, together with the new research and institutional grant emphases, will also lead to an organization pattern which may be quite different from that now existing.

APPENDIX

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE
on the

UTILIZATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE CENTRALLY FUNDED ECONOMIC RESEARCH PROGRAM (ERP)
(Repetitive pages 2b,2c,3b,3c are deleted)

Country _____

Respondent _____
name _____
position _____

Collaborators (if any) _____
name (1) _____
position _____
name (2) _____
position _____

RELEVANT PERIOD

You may not have been in the country throughout the period when the reports were available. Distributions and influences may have occurred before your arrival and escaped your attention. Therefore, please indicate the period for which your answers apply. If you have collaborated with others in preparing these answers, indicate the period covered collectively.

Period _____ to _____

I. UTILIZATION BY USAID

A. Individual Research Reports

Listed here are titles of selected reports from six ERP contracts. The reports were selected on the following criteria: (1) the contractor considers them of superior quality; (2) the findings are relevant to most countries, even though the study may have focussed on one country experience; (3) they are easily available on request and have been cited in the ERP airgram series; (4) they were released within the last five years. If any ERP reports should have been widely distributed and read, we would expect these to be the ones. For convenience, an abbreviated title is shown on the list. The full title is given in the appendix.

Contractor

BROOKINGS

NPA

Contract Title (abbr):

Transportation

Development Planning

Report Title (abbr):

Strategy for Mobility
(Wilfred Owen, 1964)

Transport Investment
(Gary Fromm, ed. 1965)

Highway Investment
(Wilson, et al, 1966)

Transport and Goals
(Haefele, ed. 1969)

Transport Planning
(J.R.Meyer, ed. 1970)

Development Strategies
(Douglas Paauf, 1970)

The Planning Approach
(D.Paauf & J.Fei, 1968)

Trade and Growth
(Hicks & McNicoll, 1968)

Capital Inflows, Asia
(Paauf & Cocksou, 1966)

Literature AG- Planning
1964-1965

1. Were you and your collaborators aware of it?

No

Yes

2. Has it been read?

By you

No

Don't remember

Skimmed

Parts

Thorough

By collaborator (1)

No

Don't remember

Skimmed

Parts

Thorough

By collaborator (2)

No

Don't remember

Skimmed

Parts

Thorough

By others in USAID

No

Don't know

How many (estimated number)

Skimmed

Parts

Thorough

3. Do you have any copies now?

Your office and/or your collaborators' offices

No

Yes

Elsewhere in mission

None

Don't know

Yes

Number (estimate)

Don't know

Report Title (abbr):

Strategy for Mobility (Wilfred Owen, 1964)	Transport Investment (Gary Fromm, ed. 1965)	Highway Investment (Wilson, et al, 1966)	Transport and Goals (Haebele, ed. 1969)	Transport Planning (J.R.Meyer, ed. 1970)	Development Strategies (Douglas Paauw, 1970)	The Planning Approach (D.Paauw & J.Fei, 1968)	Trade and Growth (Hicks & McNicoll, 1968)	Capital Inflows, Asia (Paauw & Cookson, 1966)	Literature AG. Planning (J.F.Gittinger, 1966)
---	--	---	--	---	---	--	--	--	--

4. From where did the copies come? (check more than one if appropriate)

From AID/W

Requested by USAID	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Unrequested delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>								

From contractor

Requested by USAID	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Unrequested delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>								

From other source

Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>								
------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

5. If you and/or your collaborators have read it:

What is its professional quality?

Good	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>								

How much influence on your general thinking (not mission specific)?

Large	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Small	<input type="checkbox"/>								
None	<input type="checkbox"/>								

What is its relevance to the mission?

Very relevant	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Somewhat relevant	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Irrelevant	<input type="checkbox"/>								

How much influence on mission policy and practice?

Large	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Small	<input type="checkbox"/>								
None	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Hard to say	<input type="checkbox"/>								

Are the findings presented in understandable and operationally useful form?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>								
No	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>								

6. Ever discussed in Director's Staff Meeting, or equivalent?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>								
No	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Don't know or remember	<input type="checkbox"/>								

7. Have you ever discussed it with any Mission officers?

No	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>								

(The following list should only be checked after reading the narrative for Sec.II.A on p.5)

Complete distr. list attached	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Almost complete list attached	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Partial list attached	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Distr. made, but no memory	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Distr. probably not made	<input type="checkbox"/>								
No distribution	<input type="checkbox"/>								
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>								

I. B. Overall Research Contract

We are asking here for an assessment of the results of the entire contract, including, in addition to the reports, the consulting and training effects. These answers will be in addition to Part I.A., or, if most of the individual titles are unfamiliar but the contract results are not, in lieu of it.

Contract:

	Brookings	NPA	Yale	Wisconsin	Williams	Harvard
1. <u>What is its relevance to the mission?</u>						
Very relevant	---	---	---	---	---	---
Somewhat relevant	---	---	---	---	---	---
Irrelevant	---	---	---	---	---	---
Don't know	---	---	---	---	---	---
2. <u>How much influence on mission policy and practice?</u>						
Large	---	---	---	---	---	---
Small	---	---	---	---	---	---
None	---	---	---	---	---	---
Hard to say	---	---	---	---	---	---
Don't know	---	---	---	---	---	---

C. ERP Summary Series

This is the airgram series which PPC has sponsored for the last five years. The first (#1) is dated 10/6/66; the most recent (#63) is dated 3/30/71. Individual airgrams usually summarize the most recent findings under a contract. Occasionally an airgram lists recent titles from all active ERP contracts.

1. List USAID offices (or officers) on the current distribution (or circulation) list, and check if the office retains them on file.

	Filed?		Filed?
1. _____	—	4. _____	—
2. _____	—	5. _____	—
3. _____	—	6. etc.	—

2. Have you read the airgrams?

	<u>You</u>	<u>Collaborator(1)</u>	<u>Collaborator(2)</u>
None or very few	---	---	---
All of them	---	---	---
Something in between	---	---	---

3. How would you and your collaborators evaluate the airgram series?

Outstanding	---	---	---
Generally useful	---	---	---
Occasionally useful	---	---	---
Not useful	---	---	---

4. Should airgram series be continued?

Yes, at more frequent intervals	---
Yes, at present rate	---
Discontinue summaries	---
Discontinue lists	---
Discontinue both	---

II. UTILIZATION BY OTHERS

A. Distribution of Individual Research Reports

For each title in section I.A., attach a list of the persons or offices outside of USAID which received a copy (copies) from USAID, or from AID/W or the contractor upon request from USAID. Indicate those cases in which the recipient requested the copy (rather than a USAID officer taking the initiative). We realize that some USAIDs do not retain this information, and that your memory and that of your collaborators may not provide answers on some or all of the titles. Do what you can without an extraordinary search of the files. Informed guesses are acceptable. For each title, however, check the appropriate box in the breakdown included at the bottom of page 3 of this questionnaire.

B. Confirmed Cases of ERP Influence on Host Country Policies and Practices

If you know of cases in which one or more of the listed reports, or overall contracts, were influential in shaping policies, please give a one paragraph summary description. Consider not only the impact on the host government but on universities, other donors, etc. Check the appropriate boxes below.

Contract:

	Brookings	NPA	Yale	Wisconsin	Williams	Harvard
Case or cases summarized (attached)	—	—	—	—	—	—
None summarized, but may exist	—	—	—	—	—	—
Apparently there are no cases	—	—	—	—	—	—

C. Known Requests for Reports

List below the titles of any economic reports (whether or not financed under ERP) for which the Mission has received large orders, and show the requesting office.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Requesting Office</u>	<u>Supplied?</u>	
			Yes	No

III. VIEWS ON ERP

Comment briefly on (1) the ERP Summary Series, (2) the ERP research reports, (3) the ERP contracts, and (4) possibilities for improvements, particularly as regards utilization of results. Your comments are valuable to us, but consider this section optional.

LIST OF FULL TITLES OF REPORTS

Contractor The Brookings Institution
 Contract Title Transportation and Economic Development
 Contract Period 1962-1970

Reports Strategy for Mobility: Transportation for the Developing Countries
 Wilfred Owen, 1964 (book).
Transport Investment and Economic Development
 Gary Fromm, ed., 1965 (book).
The Impact of Highway Investment on Development
 George W. Wilson, et al., 1966 (book).
Transport and National Goals
 Edwin T. Haefele, ed., 1969 (book).
Techniques of Transport Planning
 John R. Meyer, ed., 1970 (book, several volumes).

Contractor National Planning Association
 Contract Title Development Planning and Planning Assistance Criteria
 Contract Period 1962-1970

Reports Development Strategies in Open Dualistic Economies
 Douglas S. Paauw, 1970 (a summary of the findings of the contract, and of the final report, also published in 1970, entitled The Transition in Open Dualistic Economies, by Douglas S. Paauw and John C. H. Fei (book, two volumes); if the respondent has read either "Strategies" or "Transition" the appropriate answer is yes).
The Planning Approach to Economic Growth
 Douglas S. Paauw and John C. H. Fei, 1968.
Foreign Trade and the Growth of the Dual Economy: A Study of the Philippines 1950-1966
 George L. Hicks and Geoffrey McNicoll, 1968.
Planning Capital Inflows for Southeast Asia
 Douglas S. Paauw and Forrest E. Cookson, 1966.
The Literature of Agricultural Planning
 J. Price Gittinger, 1966.

Contractor Yale University (Economic Growth Center)
 Contract Title Quantitative Study of Economic Structure and Growth
 Contract Period 1962-1970

Reports A Summary of Major Findings of Economic Growth Center Research
 Staff of the Center, 1967.
A Note on Luxury Imports, the Savings Rate, and Welfare
 Albert Berry, 1967 (Discussion Paper 38).
Currency Devaluation in Developing Countries
 Richard Cooper, 1968 (Discussion Paper 72).
Urban Unemployment and Economic Growth in Africa
 Charles R. Frank, Jr. 1968 (Center Reprint No. 120: appeared in Oxford Economic Papers, Vol. 20, No. 2, July 1968).
Technological Transfer, Labor Absorption and Economic Development
 Howard Pack and Michael Tadaro, 1969 (Center Reprint, appeared in Oxford Economic Papers, Vol. 21, No. 3, November 1969).

Contractor University of Wisconsin
Contract Title Study of Regional Cooperation in South and Southeast Asia
Contract Period 1964-1970

Reports Economic Interdependence in Southeast Asia
Theodore Morgan and Nyle Spoelstra, eds., 1969 (book based on the Bangkok conference of February 1967).
Final Report: Economic Interdependence in Southeast Asia
Theodore Morgan et al., 1970 (final contract report, bearing the same title as the previous volume).
A Quantitative Study of Entrepreneurship and the Socio-Economic Determinants of Development in Asia
Peter Bell, 1967.
The Accuracy of International Trade Data: The Case of Southeast Asian Countries
Seiji Naya and Theodore Morgan, 1967.
The Case Against the Infant Industry Argument
Robert E. Baldwin, 1966.

Contractor Williams College
Contract Title Import Substitution and Economic Policy in Economic Development
Contract Period 1964-1972

Reports Import Substitution as^{an} Industrialization Strategy
John H. Power, 1966 (appeared in Philippine Economic Journal, 1966).
Measuring Protection in a Developing Country: The Case of Pakistan
Stephen R. Lewis, Jr. and Stephen E. Gusinger, 1966 (appeared in Journal of Political Economy, October 1968).
Import Demands and Import Policies in Brazil
Paul G. Clark and Richard Weisskoff, 1967.
Excess Capacity in Underdeveloped Countries: The Case of Pakistan
Gordon C. Winston, 1968.
The Import Substitution Strategy of Economic Development, A Survey of Findings
Henry J. Bruton, 1970 (Summary of contract results to date).

Contractor Harvard University (Center for International Affairs)
Contract Title Comparative Studies of Resource Allocation and Development Policy
Contract Period 1967-1971

Reports Rural Public Works and East Pakistan's Development
John W. Thomas, 1968.
Planning Educational Systems for Economic Growth
Samuel Bowles, 1969.
The Green Revolution: Generations of Problems
Walter P. Falcon, 1970.
Taxation and Development: Lessons from Colombia
Richard Bird, 1969.
Targets for Development
Hollis B. Chenery, 1970.

SUBSEQUENT CHANGES IN THE PPC RESEARCH SYSTEM

Alexis E. Lachman

October 9, 1971

Since the presentation of the paper Utilization of Economic Research to A.I.D.'s Spring Review for 1971, PPC has taken a number of steps designed to improve the dissemination of PPC-sponsored research:

- The appearance of the ERP airgrams has been made more attractive by preparing the substantive summary on white paper and attaching it to a transmittal airgram. This immediate, minor modification may well be temporary, pending more substantial changes proposed in Recommendation (3) of the Paper.

- The attached statement "PPC Proposals for Increased Dissemination and Utilization of Research Results" was formulated as a follow-up to the Paper. It was submitted to the RIGC, which welcomed it. The Proposals, representing a guide for action by PPC on its research contracts, are especially responsive to Recommendations (1), (3), and (6) of the Paper. From among the Proposals, the following actions are already under way:

A compilation in PPC of a basic mailing list of development-oriented institutions has been made.

Authors have been instructed to prepare abstracts [normally one page] of their research papers.

The possibility of contracting with a special writer to prepare summary operational conclusions of research papers is being investigated.

Contractors have been requested to make specific proposals for new dissemination/utilization efforts, taking into account PPC's Proposals, which involved placing considerable responsibility on contractors. PPC is reviewing their responses.

- The appointment of a research adviser to the AAA/PPC and AA/PPC is expected this month. This action, consistent with Recommendation (7) of the Paper, was initiated before the Spring Review.

- Finally, at the first meeting of government research directors in the field of development, organized by the OECD Development Center in June, 1971, the U.S. representatives suggested that the Center undertake a study of research dissemination, and offered to give favorable consideration to a request for financial support.

It would be misleading to apply the post hoc, ergo propter hoc formula to the actions which have followed the Spring Review. Unquestionably PPC was ready to seek improvements in the dissemination of its out-of-house research. What it apparently needed was a spur and some suggestions. The Paper provided both at an opportune moment. Certain suggestions were adopted at once; others have not - or not yet - been followed. One - Recommendation (5) - has been modified and expanded, placing responsibility for dissemination on the contractors rather than on A.I.D. - but at A.I.D. expense. However, this is only a beginning: the reverberations of this Evaluation Paper are likely to continue in PPC, and to widen their circle to include other offices.

Attachment:

PPC Proposals for Increased Dissemination and Utilization of Research Results

1. Dissemination of papers by contractor at AID expense:
 - Contractor to handle all mailings to non-AID recipients (with emphasis on LDC institutes, professionals and key officials) on basis mailing list to be developed by AID for each contract. (PPC is collecting present mailing lists of Harvard, Yale, etc., for its contracts. Each contract will have a supplemental list tailored to the subject matter.)
 - Papers to be mailed by contractor after review by monitor for quality and relevance.
 - Each research paper to have an abstract (normally one page) prepared by the author.
 - Contractor will arrange translation of country studies as agreed; hopefully this can be done by cooperating LDC institute.
 - Contractor (or AID) will arrange translation of other studies after AID review.
 - Contractor will prepare a synthesis paper (or "handbook", if appropriate) at end of each contract.
2. Dissemination of summary "operational conclusions" of research papers:
 - These special summaries, aimed at busy LDC and aid officials, should be prepared by special editors (hired on contract) or by AID monitors. (PPC is investigating the possibility of using the NPA Development Digest staff to prepare an experimental "AID Research Digest" (limited to social science initially) for distribution as a supplement to the Development Digest, which would then replace the ERP airgram series.)
 - Broader summaries or survey articles, encompassing the results of related research, should be prepared when appropriate and included in the Development Digest, the "Research Digest", or the ERP series if used.
3. Conferences on research results:
 - Conferences with LDC officials and professionals should be built into each research plan.

- As appropriate in the individual case these conferences can be (a) single country, regional or international, (b) focussed on AID research only or on a general topic, (c) sponsored by the contractor, AID, a local research institute, regional organizations, foundations, etc., (d) financed by AID in whole or in part.
- A professional conference in the U.S., larger than the usual AID review session, should normally be planned for the end of a research contract or phase.

4. Consultations by researchers:

- Upon completion of in-country research the contractor should consult with LDC and aid agency officials and professionals (individually or in seminar form).
- When the research results seem applicable, qualified researchers should be used for consultations in non-research countries (monitors to report on such opportunities toward close of research contract or phase).

PPC/PDA:GLEhmann
July 8, 1971