

PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

1. BACKGROUND DATA:

A. Project Number and Title:	515-0242-A-00-8548-00 Central American Peace Scholarships Program (CAPS I) (Cooperative Agreement)
B. Implementing Agency:	Fundación Nacional de Clubes 4-S (FUNAC)
C. PACD: Original:	June 30, 1990
Revised:	December 31, 1994
D. Amount Obligated:	\$4,223,991.07
E. Total Expenditures:	\$4,223,991.07

Project Goal

Contribute to the formation of more effective manpower resources to ensure the leadership and technical skills needed for a pluralistic development.

Agreement Goal

The goal of the Agreement was to enable the National Foundation of 4-S Clubs to assist USAID/Costa Rica to carry out, effectively and efficiently, a major portion of the latter's high school program under the Central American Peace Scholarship Project (CAPS, Project 515-0242).

Another objective was to include further acquaintance with the principles of democracy and free enterprise, facilitating the transfer of relevant, appropriate technologies, and generally promoting understanding and friendship between the peoples of Costa Rica and the U.S.

Project Description

Like other countries' CAPS training programs, USAID/Costa Rica's CAPS program had short-term technical training and long-term academic training, but unlike any other CAPS program, it had an intermediate (high school) program unique to the Costa Rica program.

This Agreement enabled FUNAC to identify and select high school students of talent and/or leadership potential to receive training in the U.S; priority was given to the students from rural areas. FUNAC in collaboration with the National 4-H council in the United States managed the training program. The U.S. training consisted of (1) an introduction and orientation to U.S. life and culture, (2) homestays of nine or more months duration with families throughout the U.S., which enabled them to participate fully in the life of the family, their secondary schools to which they attended as regular students, and their "adopted" communities and (3) an evaluation and debriefing session which enabled them to more fully comprehend their U.S. experiences, as well as to prepare for the adjustment of returning to Costa Rica.

In addition, before departing for the U.S., participants attended an intensive six to ten week of English language and cross-cultural training program in Costa Rica, followed by a one week "orientation" at the 4-H center in Washington, D.C. The students then spent nine months living with a host family, attending school, participating in community activities, and working on projects with 4-H clubs. Upon return to Costa Rica they met for a week at the FUNAC training site for re-entry and evaluation activities.

Major Outputs and Accomplishments

This project has contributed significantly to the Mission goal to "enhance sustainable access to the resources needed by the disadvantaged in order to participate actively in the economy".

The project facilitated the training of approximately 780 rural high school students, for a period of nine months or more in the U.S. Upon completion of their programs, these students have participated actively in their communities (4-S club, community development associations, women's development leagues, sports federations, cooperatives, etc.). The multiplier effect was tremendous because, as leaders, the participants were able to share their ideas in classrooms, community organization and aserve as role models and counselors to their colleagues, neighbors and friends.

Other Accomplishments

Knowledge of the English language which enabled the trainees to get better jobs, to continue toward higher education studying for careers that involved English skills, e.g., teaching English as a second language and translating from English to Spanish and viceversa.

Higher Education Aspirations. The scholarship opened new doors for most of the trainees, who then wanted to continue toward higher education. Before their training program many had planned to end their formal education after completing high school, their experience in the U.S. was the major factor in their decisions.

New attitudes about themselves. The experience helped trainees to become more confident and secure with themselves, more independent and responsible, more sensitive to others and more assertive in fighting for their own rights.

Overall Status

This program was highly successful in achieving its objectives.

Lessons Learned

The screening and selection process of the participants, and the selection criteria used facilitated the success of this CAPS High School Component.

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