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I. THE BATTELLE PROJECT IN BRAZIL

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### Introduction and Background

The PDP II project in Brazil is in the early planning stage. Battelle staff have made two preliminary visits to the country to meet with people who may be interested in submitting proposals for the core project and other population activities. Brazilians have visited Battelle's office in Washington, D.C., to explore possibilities for funding. Specific proposals, however, have not been written. For this reason, it is especially difficult (and perhaps premature) to evaluate the project at this time. Nonetheless, the occasion does provide the opportunity to observe and assess how Battelle approaches a country where it has had little previous experience.

Under the PDP I contract, Battelle's activity in Brazil was limited to partial support for a national meeting of the Brazilian Association of Population Studies (ABEP), which was held in São Paulo on October 13-17, 1980. The ABEP is an interdisciplinary organization. Formed in 1977, it has approximately 250 members from Brazil and other nations. (There are between 80 and 100 demographers in Brazil.) Persons from all the major governmental and research institutions in Brazil, including the Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning (CEBRAP), the Foundation for the Analysis of Data in the State of São Paulo (SEADE), and the Center for Regional Development and Planning (CEDEPLAR), were represented at the conference in October. Also attending were representatives of the universities of Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro. Under PDP I, Battelle contributed \$12,080 to fund the conference. The allocation covered support for a round table on population policy and selected participants in two methodological sessions. In addition, the project picked up some of the costs for the final publication of the document on the conference that was distributed to 1,000 researchers and policymakers.

The ABEP does not receive support from PDP II. The Association's request for funds from Battelle for a conference in August 1981 on family types and fertility in LDCs was not approved, primarily because a preponderance of North Americans and Europeans was proposed as participants. Sam Taylor, the social development attaché in the USAID's mission in Brazil, has made it known that he is highly dissatisfied with the organization because, it is reported, some of the members are opposed to family planning. A staff member of the externally-funded Brazilian Society for Family Welfare (BEMFAM),\* the family planning association of Brazil,

Funding comes from the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

believes that some of the leaders of the ABEP do not support family planning. (This person belongs to the ABEP.) Elza Berquo, executive secretary of the ABEP and the principal investigator for the PDP I contract, feels that this view of the ABEP is unfounded. According to Dr. Berquo, there is open discussion of all views at ABEP conferences, but the membership is generally supportive of--and does research on--family planning. Some members, however, are critical of birth control programs that are not intended to be integrated either with other health programs or with social programs to improve people's economic status. These persons place BEMFAM in this category.

There appears to be considerable friction between family planning activists and the social science research community in Brazil. Because of this disagreement, the PDP II program in Brazil may emerge as more of an advocacy than a research effort.

The AID's social development attaché is strongly committed to BEMFAM. The person who monitors Battelle's project in Brazil was once employed by the association. Although she is highly committed to her work in population and spent 13 months in Brazil when she worked for BEMFAM, she has had no technical training in demography and has little research experience. Her potential to generate new contacts in the research field and to monitor technical projects is, accordingly, limited.

Battelle gave to the team a list of people to contact in Brazil. Few on the list are social scientists. In addition to BEMFAM staff and a physician who is a consultant to the Ministry of Social Welfare (and also a member of the Board of BEMFAM), there are only two social scientists: an economist, who is a dean at the prestigious Vargas Institute (Funcacao Getulio Vargas; FGV), and a demographer, who works at the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the country's census bureau. The two social scientists were unavailable for interviews in Rio. (The former was out of the country, but subsequently was interviewed in Washington. The latter was judging a beauty contest, and AID/Brazil could not arrange a confirmed appointment during the team's anticipated three-day visit.) The attaché's view was that other social scientists could not be substituted for these two persons. This and the fact that Battelle's list was short suggest that the Institute's and the AID mission's contacts with social scientists are limited. The ABEP's contacts were not initially on the list provided by Battelle, but they were added at the request of a member of the evaluation team.

### The PDP II Core Project

Battelle does not typically begin with an explicit written strategy for each country that describes in detail the institutional infrastructure, the political climate, the status of current research in population, and relevant population policy issues. All this information would be useful

in developing a rationale for the core project.\* (It has been included only in the strategy for Sudan.) It seems that the approach is to rely on informal networks--contacts made earlier, and contacts with AID intermediaries who are working in the country and can provide assistance (staff from the RAPID project and from Research Triangle Institute (RTI)). From this pool, a likely candidate emerges who can develop, with Battelle, the core project. This is how the process appears to be proceeding in Brazil. Battelle staff have met several times with Manuel Costa, the director of the Special Projects Division at the IBGE, to discuss the development of a core project. Costa, a demographer, was trained at the London School of Economics (LSE) and is a founding member of the ABEP. He maintains good relations with BEMFAM and is an adviser to the Parliamentarians Group for Population and Development Studies (GPEPD), which was formed in May 1981. In their trip report, dated May 11-18, 1981, Gilley and Micklin describe the Parliamentarians Group:

The group is composed of federal and state congressmen and municipal councilmen representing various political parties who have signed a resolution to disseminate scientific studies on population and development, to participate in seminars and meetings to discuss population and development issues, and to promote the development of family planning programs through lobbying efforts and legislative projects . . . . BEMFAM, an IPPF affiliate, has been designated as technical adviser for family planning issues. The proposed work plan expects membership to include 100 federal congressmen and 15 senators, and 80 state congressmen representing 10 states, by the end of 1981, when the first national meeting will be held (p. 2).

Costa would like to form a new association that would concentrate on population and policy development. As Costa envisions it, the organization would provide support for research on policy-relevant topics of concern to the parliamentarians. Costa does not regard this group as competition for the ABEP, because it would be more broadly based than the ABEP (the membership would include politicians, family planners, and researchers) and would be primarily concerned with population policy. The new association would hold seminars and issue publications, including a journal for a general audience. It would be the institutional base for Battelle's core project. (Initially, the proposed core project was to be based at the Funcacao Getulio Vargas, where Costa is a professor (and an employee of the IBGE). Costa now feels that operating as a part of Vargas would be too limiting, that the new association would always need the

Since this evaluation began, Micklin has asked the staff to develop country strategies. (This was one of the recommendations in the report on the PDP I evaluation and was incorporated into the PDP II contract.)

Institute's approval and that it could not employ researchers from the outside on the project.)

The core project, as it is envisioned by Costa, would consist of studies on trends in education and population, sanitation and population, population development and mortality, and population and income distribution. (Staff at BEMFAM feel that this last issue is too sensitive to discuss in such a forum, but Costa feels that it is too important to exclude.) It has not been determined who would do the research. Costa has proposed that the new association publish a demographic atlas that is based on new census data. The atlas would contain more graphs than tables, and it would be written simply. The prospective audience would be policymakers.

Lacking an explicit strategy, the team found it difficult to evaluate the core project. Because a review of research on Brazil's population was not available and because there was no discussion of policy concerns, the team could not determine whether the proposed research topics were the most relevant. Also, an assessment could not be made because the researchers who would be involved have not been identified. It is impossible to anticipate what the quality of the work will be. The team could not conclude that Costa is the best person to coordinate the core project because it was able to interview few people and was unable to investigate thoroughly the possibilities of using other institutions. The team was unable to get an appointment with Mario Henrique Simonsen, the director of the Graduate School of Economics at the FGV and a highly distinguished economist. Thus, this institutional possibility also could not be assessed. Earlier, Battelle had talked with Simonsen, who was to have contacted some of his students about participating in a core-project activity. Appointments to meet these persons were not arranged. This suggests that Battelle and AID have few contacts in Brazil's research community.

The principal centers of population research in Brazil (and their many projects) were listed in a recent issue of the ABEP Bulletin (April and June 1981). They are:

- Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning (CEBRAP);
- Center for Regional Development and Planning (CEDEPLAR);
- Center for Human Resources, Federal University of Bahia (CHR);
- Department of Population Studies (DESPO), IBGE;
- Foundation of Information for the Development of Pernambuco (FIDEPE);

- Special Group for Demographic Analysis (GEADE); and
- Program for Studies in Demography and Urbanization (PRODEUR).

Battelle staff are positive about Costa and the social development attaché. Harriet Presser interviewed Costa in Washington. Apparently, Costa himself is vague about the core project but enthusiastic about the new organization that he would like to form. Costa was asked whether the anticipated benefit of flexibility of a new organization would be offset by a loss of credibility, and indeed of respectability, which would attach to a core project based at an established institution such as Vargas. Costa replied that he does not anticipate such problems.

Costa was available at Battelle for only a few hours; he was on his way back to Rio after a visit to New York. It is questionable that staff can have much input when visits to Washington are so brief and more time is not spent in the country. The entire project is to be completed early in 1983. Given the situation at this time, this would appear to be an unrealistic target.

#### Other Opportunities

The team asked others who were interviewed what they would suggest as activities that Battelle could undertake in the future. Staff at BEMFAM would like to secure Battelle's support for seminars and workshops (co-sponsored with local institutions) at which the results of the Contraceptive Prevalence Survey (CPS) could be presented and the implications for BEMFAM activities could be discussed. These kinds of seminars, they feel, would give them the scientific status they lack. BEMFAM does not do social science research, and it does not feel that it would be appropriate to focus on population and development issues. An occasional workshop on these issues would, however, be possible.

There is a newly formed group of parliamentarians in Brazil. Battelle has been in contact with some of the leaders of this group and has talked with Senator Eunice Micheles about Battelle's core project. As stated in the trip report, the Senator agreed to act as a political commentator for a proposed symposium on the core project.\* Sam Taylor, the social development attaché, envisions a major role for Battelle: assisting BEMFAM with research and providing written support for the Parliamentarians Group. The evaluators disagreed that provision of the proposed

Cynthia Gilley was a translator and guide for Senator Micheles when the Senator visited Washington.

assistance to BEMFAM would constitute proper application of Battelle's mandate to make social science research policy-relevant. They also did not agree that the USAID should be promoting advocacy rather than working with the social science institutions.

Roberto Alcantaro, a physician on the Board of BEMFAM and adviser to the Secretariat of Social Assistance, Ministry of Social Welfare, is involved with programs and does not do research. He feels, however, that research aids his work. He would like to see more research on abandoned children in Brazil. It is estimated that there are two million such children in the country.

Elza Berquo, a demographer at the Brazilian Center for Analysis and Planning and an officer of the ABEP, indicated that the ABEP could use Battelle's funds to conduct seminars and workshops on population and to publish and disseminate the papers presented at those conferences. She thinks that criticism of the ABEP's seminars is just. They are, she indicated, too academic and should be more open to planners. The ABEP plans to include more planners as participants. Funds from Battelle for research are not needed, Dr. Berquo said, because the ABEP receives money from the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and a variety of Brazilian institutions (e.g., the Financiadora de Estudos e Projetos (FINEP), the Ministry of Planning, and the National Council of Pesfuita (CNP), which is the most important research council in Brazil). Dr. Berquo is concerned about the AID's restrictions on the kind of population research that can be funded. It is because of these restrictions that the ABEP will not request research funds from Battelle.

### Conclusions

It appears that many researchers and several institutions are involved in population activities throughout Brazil, but none of the institutes is being seriously considered for the core project. It seems that the direction of the PDP II project is being influenced by family planning people at BEMFAM with whom earlier contacts were established and by the social development attaché who is opposed to supporting organizations that employ social scientists who are critical of BEMFAM's activities. (The attaché's approval is required to implement the project.) Organizations other than BEMFAM (which does not do social science research) do not appear to be acceptable. To find an institutional base for the core project, Battelle may have to turn to a new organization. This may or may not be a solution, because the quality of the research of an unknown organization would be questionable. This raises a major issue which, the team feels, needs to be addressed: Should Battelle give its funds to family planning activists to strengthen their advocacy positions or to other more established--and less activist--institutions that do social science research? Whichever way Battelle chooses to go (and the team

differs in its opinions about this subject), a clear rationale needs to be developed and fully described. A strategy paper is needed that identifies the institutional alternatives and describes the complex politics of Brazil. (The country has no official population policy.) The Battelle project is progressing slowly in Brazil, perhaps because there is no clear strategy. It is doubtful that the project will be completed by early 1983.