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**EVALUATION OF CRS FOOD AND
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN ECUADOR**

FINAL REPORT

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SUMMARY

In April, 1983 a team evaluated CRS's program in Ecuador, using a participatory methodology. CRS and USAID personnel, counterparts and campesinos talked about the program and accompanied the team on visits to various project sites. Some personnel began planning immediate changes in the program as a result of this process.

The team observed two very different aspects of the program: community development projects and PL-480, Title II Projects. The development projects are based on community organization and group development through successive problem-solving experiences, facilitated by community "promoters" CRS assists intermediary promotion agencies to finance and implement projects based on this approach, which CRS is attempting to formalize in a model describing the group development process. The program appears reasonable in light of CRS's goals and resources and should be strengthened and expanded, with emphasis on the practical refinement of the model, its more systematic and measured application and the evaluation of its effectiveness.

CRS sees little relation between its development program and food distribution (the "relief program"). The team, however,

found apparently important development effects of food which CRS should consider in planning future community-organization projects. These include food as a catalyst for initial community coalescence around a common problem, as capital for project financing, and food as a laboratory for teaching nutrition, hygiene and group skills in rural schools.

The team also observed anti-development effects of food programs, including dependency, passivity, a 'give-me' attitude and, in sierra communities, the undermining of community-work traditions. These negative effects are attributed primarily to a lack of staff to give thoughtful consideration to the best ways of using food, and a lack of complementary physical and human inputs which must be provided if a high quality program is to be achieved. If this situation is not changed, there is little justification for continuing current MCH and School Feeding programs.

Adequate planning and preparation for food use was evident in day-care centers and the pilot FFW project. The OCF centers should be strengthened by providing teaching aids and training and should be expanded to rural areas. The FFW project shows how food may be used effectively in CRS's community development program and could be expanded to additional, non-sierra sites.

CRS and USAID should consider projects to:

- 1. Improve the quality of existing food programs,**
- 2. Expand the day-care portion of the OCF program to rural areas,**
- 3. Develop alternatives to the current MCH program and,**
- 4. Make SF a learning experience by increasing student participation and incorporating health/nutrition education and school gardens into the program,**
- 5. Support community-inspired development activities.**

They should also consider the possibility of monetizing Title II food to capitalize community-development projects.

I. BACKGROUND

The War Relief Services was founded 40 years ago to provide humanitarian assistance to victims of World War II, and became a highly specialized organism for channeling materials and food from the United States to Europe. After the enactment of Public Law 480 in 1954 providing for the donation of U.S. food surpluses to developing nations through private voluntary agencies, War Relief changed its name to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and established offices in many countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America to manage PL 480 donations. These origins strongly affect CRS's view of its principal function - to respond to the needy, especially through food donations.

CRS has operated in Ecuador since 1955, under a contract with the GOE which stipulates conditions for the duty-free import of food and other commodities for distribution to the needy. This distribution has been handled since 1965 by Caritas/Ecuador, under contract with CRS. Caritas was a direct outgrowth of CRS's food program and was specifically structured to handle port operations; customs clearance; inland shipping; empty container sales; end-use checking; field reports; port and inland loss claims; warehouse management; processing and repacking; and

program publicity. At its height in 1975, this two-tiered system distributed 4,226 tons of food per year to over 179,562 people.

In the early 70's, CRS/South America began to question its role as mere distributor of food. It was concerned that the food might be changing traditional dietary practices, displacing locally grown foodstuffs and promoting large scale mendacity. Food programs also began to look like a permanent dole, with no end in sight and no lasting improvement in the living standards of the recipients.

At the same time, AID began to promote the use of food as a "development resource". The 1970 Checchi evaluation of PL-480, Title II suggested, as a first priority, the "targeting" of food on the most nutritionally vulnerable. Second priority was given to food-for-work, with a clear call to find creative ways to promote development using food. School feeding was accorded third priority, and other programs were discouraged. AID encouraged PVO's to adopt these priorities by providing funds to train and equip them for nutrition programs targeted on pregnant/nursing women and children under two. CRS/Ecuador received a grant from USAID in 1971 to undertake such a program. A nutritionist helped establish MCH centers equipped with scales and nutrition-education materials around

the country. Evaluation of the project found the centers operating as planned but could not detect nutritional improvement. At the same time, CRS secured funds which financed the formation of a Projects Office in Caritas to promote socio-economic development through the design of community-level projects for which CRS could seek funding through its New York headquarters.

AID/W awarded CRS/NY a Development Program Grant in the mid 70's to enhance its capability as a development organization. As a result, CRS/Latin America increasingly came to believe that food donations did not serve development objectives but also to appreciate the institutional resistance to modifying structures which had evolved specifically for food distribution. Almost all CRS Country Directors in Latin America share these feelings. However, CRS directors in Asia and Africa still depend heavily on food programs, which remain the top priority for most of CRS's central administration.

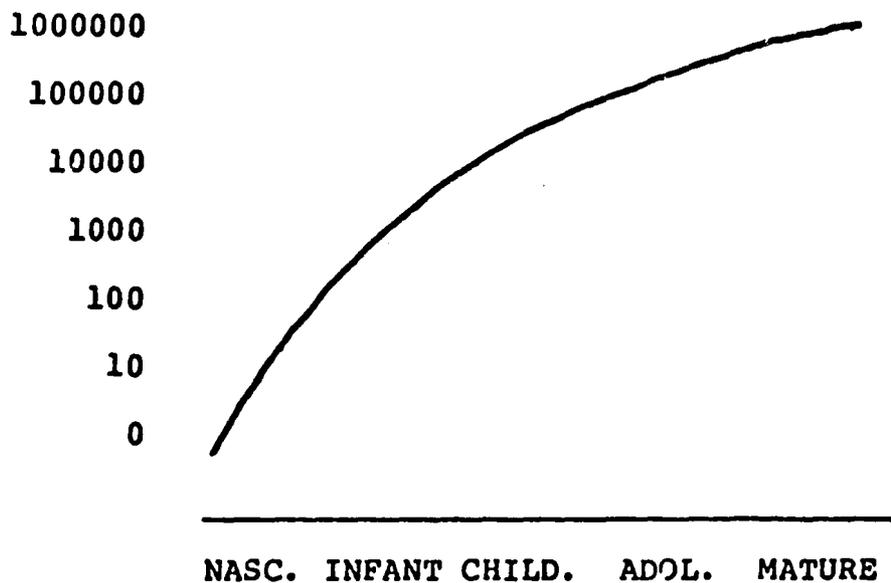
In the late 70's, CRS/Ecuador began to feel that Caritas' (now Promoción Humana or PH) Projects Office was not operating as expected. First, there was a significant difference of opinion as to what "human promotion" meant. The PH director tended to view the Office's activities in spiritual terms while CRS wanted development projects based on felt community needs. Second,

the mere formation of a Projects Office did not alter PH's basic purpose as a conduit for food and charity.

Finally, in the late 70's, CRS/South America began to define its view of an iterative process of community development. CRS believes that people facing a problem must first become aware of the problem, then try to understand its causes and finally attempt to solve it. The solution usually requires the formation of a group to undertake actions to change the situation. Group evaluation of the effectiveness of such actions leads to either the re-definition of the problem, the restructuring of the group, or the modification of the actions intended to solve the problem (or all three). The process is ideally repeated until the problem is solved.

CRS believes that groups mature as they initiate and repeat this process. Each successful iteration reinforces skills in problem identification, organization, resource acquisition and management and evaluation. It also builds solidarity and confidence which help the group to continue self-help activities, to link with other groups, and to make demands on the society as a whole. The repetition of the process applied to ever more complex problems should ultimately lead to an economically productive community venture, a community's "historic project". It can be inferred from the above that CRS/Ecuador defines development as "problem solving capacity".

CRS believes that the process and the formation of groups is spontaneous but that, without external support, many nascent groups languish or may even be suppressed. CRS has, therefore, devised for itself the role of patient, interested supporter of community groups, with special emphasis on the early phases of group development. (A hypothetical curve might relate group development to the capability to manage resources. repetitions of the process as below.)



CRS is also aware that, as a foreign agency with relatively scarce resources, its role in supporting such groups is necessarily limited. The intense, direct participation in problem definition and group formation and the funding of large-scale projects is seen as beyond its capacity, and CRS, therefore, does not consider itself an "operational" agency. However, the role of patient, concerned financier for initial,

small-scale community activities is felt to be legitimate and useful, recognizing that groups need successful experiences with such institutions before being able to approach others, such as banks or the state, later on. Therefore, once other, local agencies directly involved with rural communities assist in group formation/organization, CRS stands ready to help them refine and fund a variety of activities, from the smallest training courses up to projects worth \$10,000 - 20,000.

In summary, CRS/Ecuador originally defined its role as food distribution and organized itself and CARITAS accordingly. It subsequently re-defined its role as community development and re-organized both itself and PH. This report summarizes CRS's latest effort to evaluate its performance in Ecuador and provides an opportunity to reflect on the appropriateness of its efforts. The evaluation team reviewed CRS documents, exhaustively interviewed CRS personnel and collaborators, and visited 28 project sites in eight of the 13 provinces where CRS is active (Appendix A) during April, 1983 to answer CRS's and USAID's questions concerning the Ecuador program (Appendix B) and make suggestions for the future.

II. CRS OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

A. CRS's overall goal in Ecuador is to contribute to the

achievement of the historic projects of the rural poor by promoting private, self-help community activities.

This definition contains several key terms.

Contribute. As noted above, CRS does not conduct development programs on its own. Rather it (1) responds to the needs of rural communities through local agencies and (2) supports such agencies. CRS calls this dual role "accompaniment".

Achievement. This is the process by which a community brings its own or outside resources to bear on its problems. CRS believes that the organization of the poor in "popular organizations" to increase their mutual assistance and political/economic leverage is of central importance in this effort.

Historic projects. These are popular organizations' attempts to eliminate or reduce a barrier to economic viability, i.e. to solve a basic problem which has historically impeded the development of their communities, eg. a lack of land, water, roads to get production to market, etc.

Rural poor. CRS concentrates its limited resources on the poorest areas of Ecuador: the inter-Andean communities with lowest income and least access to social and economic services.

Private. CRS works primarily through non-governmental agencies. Although CRS has frequently collaborated with government agencies to support community-inspired projects, its preference for private agencies derives from its conviction that they are often highly motivated, flexible and provide the continuity of policy and action in rural communities which may be lacking in government institutions subject to changing administrations, personnel and policies.

Self-help community activities. This refers to CRS's basic conviction of the importance of helping communities help themselves. CRS tries to support the development of community organizations which can mobilize the resources and commitments necessary to embark on historic projects. This approach differs fundamentally from community-development efforts which stress mobilization of community resources but do not sufficiently recognize the importance of community institutions. Community institution-building does not mean the construction of local schools or health posts, but the formation of local groups to carry out the development process described above.

B. CRS' strategy for achieving its goal has four elements.

1. To Develop Institutional Capacity to "Promote" Popular Organizations.

"Promotion" of popular organizations is the patient accompanying of groups learning the process of community and organizational development. It involves 'sit-down' work with the group until it decides to undertake some activity and then a slow walk at the pace of the group as the activity is implemented.

The style and methodology of the promoter, accompanying the group is of foremost importance. Ideally, the promoter should be from the community and selected by it. He should facilitate group decision making by motivating individuals to meet and examine their situation, by providing information and by asking provocative questions. He needs two sets of skills. The first is management of group dynamics. The promoter must be able to motivate people, and yet not direct them; he must be willing to move at the pace of the group without losing the conviction that something useful can be done at a slower pace than he might wish. (Although no human promoter can be totally nondirective and each person brings his own opinions and experiences to the group-development process, these are important to the group because they represent a different set of experiences which may not be readily available from group members.)

The second set of skills is technical and depends on the problems which the group defines as most important. The promoter cannot be simply a motivator, but must possess at least some of

the technical ability necessary to implement the plans proposed by the group. If the promoter does not possess this ability, he must know how to acquire it elsewhere. This means that he must receive constant technical training and information on technical resources available from other sources.

As noted earlier, CRS does not directly promote campesino groups and has, therefore, sought out or stimulated the formation of national and local agencies to undertake this work. In the mid 70's, it established relationships with organizations such as the Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progreso (FEPP) and the Central de Servicios Agrarios (CESA) which had their own staff of promoters and promotion methodology but few resources to facilitate group learning through the execution of a project. CRS frequently provided resources and accompanied the intermediaries and communities through project implementation.

As these intermediaries matured and became more proficient promoters, they also became better able to acquire resources and thus relieved, in part, the need for CRS assistance. This has been the case in Chimborazo and Cotopaxi provinces, which were areas of CRS concentration during the 70's. CRS believes that it is no longer needed in these provinces and, as its projects in these areas have been closed, has sought out intermediaries in other sierra provinces such as Cañar, Carchi and Imbabura.

While some of the more mature promotion agencies do operate in these provinces, their level of activity is low and it appears that they are not presently interested in increasing it. CRS has, therefore, concluded that promotional efforts in these new provinces will have to be undertaken by local or regional agencies, which are currently few and very weak. CRS supports these organizations by sponsoring seminars to select promoters and to teach and practice promotion methodologies and skills (group dynamics and motivation, problem analysis and critical reflection). Experienced promoters from mature agencies such as FEPP or CESA are usually contracted to conduct such seminars, often with the participation of CRS's community-organization expert. Three examples of these efforts follow.

Carchi.

About a year ago, CRS contacted the PH director in Carchi and, under his auspices and in collaboration with FEPP, trained 45 community representatives, first in community organization and guinea pig raising, then in project writing. Several months later, CRS received projects from several communities which had participated in these exercises, many of which reflected a basic concern of the mainly female participants: potable water. Meanwhile, the PH director became aware of the need for ongoing promotional work and has discussed short-term funding for a

staff promotor with CRS. CRS expects that this diocesan promotion office will grow rapidly and that a large project might be undertaken there next year. CRS expects to work closely with the PH director, accompanying his work and sharing experiences from other provinces, to help him carry out promotional work most effectively.

The Azogues Rural Integrated Development Project.

In Cañar province, CRS helped design and finance an ambitious rural development project sponsored by the Diocese of Azogues. A seminar, financed by CRS, was held in August, 1981 for 30 potential promoters nominated by their respective communities. One of the facilitators for the seminar was a CRS staff member.

Three male and three female promoters were selected to work in the three geographic/ethnic areas of the province (highland mestizo, highland Indian and coast). They worked for almost a year in 4-6 communities each, trying to apply the precepts learned in the seminar while meeting weekly as a team to evaluate efforts and results.

CRS staff have visited the diocese frequently to review project implementation with the Bishop, the PH director and the promoters. They have attended meetings with campesinos and promoters, helped guide the development of the various elements of

the project (including promotor selection and training and a revolving fund) and helped inculcated attitudes appropriate to effective promotion among project personnel. CRS' next effort will be to move the promotion team away from the Church and into the hands of the communities themselves.

Manabí Community Development Clubs.

Sister Teresa Lopez arrived in Manabí 16 years ago and was placed in charge of CARITAS' food program. She found it to be little more than a charity and suspended it. She and others then began to rebuild the food program according to a community development model, limiting the food to specific groups at specific phases of development. About 40 women's clubs have been formed and have undertaken a variety of projects, including wells, water catchment ponds, savings programs, road building and repair, sanitation projects, and a maternal/child health program involving food distribution.

CRS has assisted this effort by providing funds for community level training in technical matters and in community organization (nearly half of CRS's "micro-fund" training monies have gone to Manabí in the last three years). CRS has also established a provincial tool bank to support community work projects. However, CRS believes that its most important input (and

the most difficult to describe) has been the constant discussion with Sr. Teresa, which has been instrumental in changing her attitudes and work modes to promote greater community autonomy ("less paternalism").

In addition to these activities, CRS attempts to link other development efforts around the country. It sits on the board of United Brethern, shares methodologies and experiences with other agencies and participates as an external evaluator in some of their projects. It holds workshops around the country for campesino representatives to share experiences and plans to sponsor similar workshops for diocesan directors and promoters. CRS aims to facilitate the formation of campesino consortia and ultimately envisions these consortia taking over the promotion function now performed by intermediary agencies.

It should be noted that CRS cannot always develop promotion capacity when and where it might wish. Several constraints force CRS to respond to targets of opportunity, especially during the conception and gestation of intermediary agencies. These constraints are discussed more fully in Section III.

Another concern is that CRS' short-term budget support, especially for intermediary staff, may leave such agencies 'high

and dry' when financing ends, thus jeopardizing CRS' initial investment if the agency cannot absorb these personnel costs. While this concern is logical and merits CRS and intermediary attention, experience has shown that the mere existence of an active intermediary agency attracts further resources, especially from charitable donors and volunteer agencies, so that its institutional continuity is almost always assured. For example, FEPP was born in a tiny office of the Episcopal Conference but now has its own quarters and a large, internationally diverse portfolio of donors; the national PH office just received a grant of \$400,000 from Miserior of Europe; the Azogues PH office utilizes Spanish volunteers in its work and through them, taps Spanish charities.

CRS has undertaken the following projects to develop institutional promotion capacity.

DESCRIPTION	DATE	VALUE IN \$(000)	
		TOTAL	CRS
1. PH Projects Office	1973-78	28	20
2. Atocha Int.Dev.Project	1975-	297	48
3. Munera Fund Raising Camp.	1977-79	42	32
4. PH Training Dept.	1977-80	371	15
5. PH Women's Promotion Dept.	1979-80	120	4
6. FEPP Printing Press	1979	6	5
7. Azogues Int.Dev. Project	1981	970	31
Total		1,834	154

2. Community Motivation, Organization, and Training.

The creation and strengthening of intermediary promotion agencies leads to community organization work as described in 1 above. As a result, CRS is asked by promotion agencies to support various activities (including seminars, training courses and initial, small-scale projects) in communities which are becoming organized. CRS provides money for seminars or commodities, food, used clothing and/or tools. The communities' experience in such activities provides them with new skills in organization, management and resource acquisition as well as confidence and solidarity. More ambitious projects may then be undertaken until the group is ready for its historic project. CRS accompanies communities in this process as a sympathetic, critical financier, frequently participating in group discussions central to the development process and in the evaluations which each group undertakes during and after each project.

CRS has undertaken the following activities in motivation, organization, and training.

DESCRIPTION	DATE	VALUE IN \$(000)	
		TOTAL	CRS
1. Provincial Tool Banks	1975-82	24	24
2. Atocha Int.Dev. Project	1975-	297	15
3. Ilapo Water Project	1976-79	204	26

4. San Juan Water Projects	1977	93	27
5. San Pedro Fishing Coop.	1977	93	27
6. Small Activities Dev. Fund	1977-79	123	15
7. Los Langos Water Project	1979	36	16
8. Micro-funds (training)	1979	6	6
9. Micro-funds (training)	1980	6	6
10. San Martin Alto Cattle Pr.	1981-83	13	6
11. Macará Chicken Raising Pr.	1981	2	2
12. Azogues Development Proj.	1981-	970	10
13. San Juan y Sarapamba Water	1981-82	58	11
14. Micro-funds (training)	1981	8	8
15. El Hato Water Project	1982	23	7
16. Electrification Chambag Gr.	1982	8	5
17. Micro-funds (training)	1982	7	7
18. FEPP Community Mills Pr.	1982	76	17
19. Carchi Pig Raising Proj.	1982	13	3
Total		2,060	238

3. Support for Historic Projects.

As a result of the activities described in 1 and 2 above, CRS receives project proposals from communities which have 'graduated' to the level of historic projects. The local promotion agency's effectiveness is evidenced by the quality of the group's organization and of the project presented. CRS often helps polish a project before forwarding it to potential donors, usually through CRS/NY. If funding is secured, CRS and the intermediary monitor project implementation, participate in group evaluation of the project and provide reports to donors until the project is terminated with an external evaluation, conducted by CRS or contracted third parties, and a final report. When its resources are inadequate to fund a worthy project, CRS tries to help the community secure funds elsewhere. CRS has supported the following historic projects.

DESCRIPTION	DATE	VALUE IN \$(000)	
		TOTAL	CRS
1. Atocha Int.Dev. Project	1975-	297	99
2. El Galpon Cattle Project	1978	27	9
3. Tolontag Agr. Dev. Proj.	1979-81	79	53
Total		403	161

4. Food Projects.

CRS finances the community development activities noted in 1 through 3 above with grants from international donors. These grants have shrunk in recent years to the point where, in 1982, new grants were only about equal to office operating expenses. On the other hand, CRS manages in-kind donations worth about \$2,000,000, including PL-480 food, used clothing and medicines. Although CRS does not utilize these donations in the projects noted above, they represent about 95% of the total value of its available resources and can be (and sometimes are) utilized in development efforts.

CRS and Promoción Humana currently operate four categories of food programs: Maternal /Child Health, Other Child Feeding, School Feeding, and Food for Work, as summarized below.

These programs are definitely a mixed blessing for CRS. Food has been (some would say is) CRS's reason for being, the determinant of its basic structure, the justification of much of its operating budget and the cause of not insignificant amounts of

paper work. Yet food distribution is often not so much a discrete program with a set of coordinated inputs and results as a continuous charitable activity, often distorting CRS's self-proclaimed role as development agency. At worst food is viewed by its detractors as destroying traditional values (weakening the minga system) and creating dependency without resolving the causes of the hunger it seeks to alleviate.

In order to free itself from this burden, CRS delegates virtually all day-to-day Title II operations to Promoción Humana, reserving for itself the minimum planning, reporting and supervisory functions required by AID regulations. While PH derives a major part of its budget from food-distribution contracts with the Ecuadorean Government and from the sale of empty food containers, it devotes an absolute minimum of effort to auditing food use (two end-use checkers try to visit each distribution site once a year) and virtually no effort is made to control the quality of programs. Several possibilities for utilizing food more effectively arose during the evaluation, all of which can be summarized as: improve program quality to make food distribution points more effective centers for the development of Ecuador's human capital (see IV below).

III. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND DESIGN

A. Criteria for Project Selection. CRS tries to use the following criteria to allocate resources among its non-food

CRS TITLE II FOOD PROGRAMS (U.S. Fiscal Year 1983)

<u>Program</u>	<u>Value**</u>	<u>Beneficiaries</u>	<u>Distribution Points</u>
MCH	\$186,672	25,000	155 MCH centers operated by PH in the provinces* of Loja, Manabí, Guayas, Azuay, Cotopaxi and Pichincha
OCF	198,983	7,110 2,540 450 900	73 day-care centers 35 orphanages 8 hospitals 12 reformatories in the provinces of Loja, Pichincha, Azuay, Guayas, Imbabura, Cotopaxi, Manabí and Esmeraldas.
SF	195,968	13,000	183 public and mission schools in jungle provinces of Pastaza, Morona-Santiago, Napo and Zamora-Chinchi
FFW	41,923	2,500	10 small community development projects in the province of Manabí
Total	\$623,546	51,500	476 sites

* Ecuador has 20 provinces, including the nearly uninhabited Galapagos Islands.

** Estimated from CCC price of \$110/MT of NFDM and 1st quarter 83 bill of lading for WSB, SFRO, SFBulgur, ICSM and VO.

projects. The team, however, believes that they could be effectively applied to food programs as well.

1. Group Stimulating.

The project should require group action at the local or regional level. A choice might be between a potable water project where two communities use the same source of water, and a credit project for a few farmers in a single community. The water project would require an organization of water users in both communities to allocate the water between them and manage its use. Credit to purchase seeds would benefit the farmers, and might require their organization, but the use of credit and the generation of capital to repay the loans are basically individual actions. If these two projects were presented, other things being equal, CRS would choose the former.

2. Increased Organizational Development.

CRS tries to improve the capacities of local communities to organize themselves and their resources. This often means that new organizational skills must be learned, conflicts among community members overcome, trust in their leaders increased, or that technical abilities to conduct specific projects must be demonstrated. Given the choice between a project to build an

irrigation canal subsequent to the previous installation of a potable water system and a project to extend a water system by installing household connections, CRS would choose the former. An irrigation canal usually requires substantial resources and complex linkages with governmental agencies regulating water use, while the extension of an existing water system would utilize previously acquired organizational skills.

3. Geographically Focussed.

As noted above, CRS tries to utilize its limited resources in Ecuador's central highlands. Within that region, CRS tries to work where community organizations seem most fragile and yet of high priority to the agencies through which CRS works. The following table presents the locations of CRS-supported projects over the last 10 years. (All locations except Manabí are highland.)

DESCRIPTION	DATE	LOCATION
1. PH Projects Office	1973-78	Quito
2. Atocha Int.Dev.Project	1975-	Cotopaxi
3. Provincial Tool Banks	1975-82	National
4. Ilapo Water Project	1976-79	Chimborazo
5. San Juan Water Projects	1977	Chimborazo
6. San Pedro Fishing Coop.	1977	Manabí
7. Small Activities Dev. Fund	1977-79	National
8. Munera Fund Raising Camp.	1977-79	Quito
9. PH Training Dept.	1977-80	Quito
10. PH Women's Promotion Dept.	1979-80	Quito
11. El Galpon Cattle Project	1978	Cotopaxi

12. FEPP Printing Press	1979	Quito
13. Los Langos Water Project	1979	Chimborazo
14. Micro-funds (training)	1979-82	National
15. Tolontag Agr. Dev. Proj.	1979-81	Pichincha
16. San Juan, Sarapamba Water	1981-82	Cotopaxi
17. San Martin Alto Cattle Pr.	1981-83	Chimborazo
18. Macará Chicken Raising Pr.	1981	Loja
19. Azogues Develop. Project	1981-83	Cañar
20. El Hato Water Project	1982	Carchi
21. Electrification Chambag Gr.	1982	Chimborazo
22. FEPP Community Mills Pr.	1982	National
23. Carchi Pig Raising Proj.	1982	Carchi

A second geographical consideration arises when natural disasters affect other areas of the country. At such times, CRS tries to assist in these areas, using the criteria noted above to select specific projects, where possible.

4. Small Subsidies Rather Than Large Grants.

Despite the great poverty of highland communities, the concept of self-help implies that CRS only help communities to organize to help themselves and not supply large amounts of money and equipment as gifts. In addition, at least 25 percent of the cost of a project must be provided by the community itself. This is essential to create the organizational discipline necessary to for the community's future management of its own resources after CRS's assistance ends.

5. Institutional Compatibility.

CRS tries to identify local agencies which share its development

philosophy. The motivation and ability of the persons responsible for the institution (PH director, bishop, agency personnel, etc) is a major factor in determining compatibility

B. Food Projects.

Food distribution sites are selected by diocesan directors from requests submitted by eligible institutions or centers. Guidelines for selection are established by PH in consultation with CRS and criteria for selection include need, commitment of personnel, and sufficient number of recipients. ("Need" is subjectively appraised by diocesan director.) In the FFW pilot, a community promotor and work plan are also necessary. The diocesan office and recipient organization sign a contract defining food use and ration levels, number of beneficiaries, location of site and disposition of empty containers. Church affiliation is not a criterion and neither CRS nor PH participate in site selection except in FFW.

Rations are determined by CRS and PH based on published nutritional studies (not recent) which indicate an average, national protein and calorie deficiency. Standard rations are calculated to fill this gap, but it must be recognized that not all children suffer the same deficiency and that many centers, especially SF and OCF receive food from other sources. CRS and PH

cannot calibrate the ration size for each center and thus we can conclude that Title II food is more of an institutional subsidy than a nutritional intervention. Dietary traditions are considered in determining ration composition and the team's field observations indicated that the foods are well accepted.

C. Barriers to the Implementation of CRS's Strategy

1. Interagency Conflicts.

There are a fairly large number of agencies working in rural communities which frequently compete for campesino clients.

Religious Groups. The team was told that protestant groups have become quite active in some campesino communities. In Chimbo-razo Province, representatives of Catholic agencies estimated that about 40 campesino communities have accepted resources in the past year from protestant evangelicos who do not necessarily consider the organizational maturity of the recipients as a criterion for donations. This may not be factually true, but competition among religious groups is, in places, tense and tends to divide campesinos, who had formerly been members of unified communities, into competing factions.

Political Parties. These groups are especially active before elections. One party may acquire the support of one group of

community leaders, while another may secure the support of others. Both may then try to outdo each other in making promises to the community to get elected. This could be beneficial should promises be kept, but they rarely are. What often remains in the community are suspicions about the true intent of one leader or another and what led him or her to affiliate with a particular party.

Development Agencies. Numerous public and private development entities operate in rural Ecuador. Many survive on the basis of the number of communities they serve or the number of services they provide. Being able to claim a certain number of client communities, water systems, kilometers of road, etc. means bigger budgets and job security for the personnel of such agencies. Competition to claim achievements sometimes leads to a lack of cooperation among agencies (who will get the credit?) and often to misleading criticisms of one agency by another in order to keep campesino clients for itself.

The types of competition noted above may benefit communities with sufficiently astute leadership to bargain with outside groups and acquire resources for the community at little or no cost. However, in many instances, the suspicions and misrepresentations engendered fragment the community, thus reducing its ability to mobilize its own resources in the future, and often

create dependency on external agents. Such competition reduces the likelihood of local consensus as to what should be done politically and economically to achieve development, and CRS' work is often complicated by these competing social forces.

2. The 'give me' attitude.

Many attempts to re-distribute wealth from one sector of society to another, or from wealthier countries to poorer ones have created the expectation among the poor that their problems will be solved by someone else, usually the government. Food programs, if not handled properly, can create this dole, or 'give me' attitude, which makes CRS's work difficult. If a CRS-supported agency attempts to promote selfhelp in a community which has been receiving free food for several years, the value of self-help may not be evident. This 'give me' attitude seems quite prevalent in rural Ecuador; indeed, it is often justified by the miserable conditions in which people live. But it is probable that resources can be mobilized in nearly every community for a project of benefit to all. It also seems probable that, where no community participation to mobilize these resources exists, the implementation of such projects is often half-hearted and maintenance is not considered a group responsibility. Finally, without participation, little or no problem-solving skills are developed to attack other problems in the future.

3. Saving Souls vs Satisfying Needs

CRS works through and tries to strengthen agencies affiliated with the Catholic Church. This has carried with it the conflicts resulting from recent intense debate within the Latin American church regarding its proper role in situations of poverty and social injustice. One side claims the Church should counsel patience with the problems of the world and the leading of a moral life. Another believes the church should struggle against the social evils of the world.

CRS/E is more comfortable with the latter belief, but is embedded in an institution in which many people are clearly devoted to more traditional activities. While this is advantageous inasmuch as many of these people are highly motivated and persevere in very difficult situations, conflicts within church-supported agencies complicate matters for CRS. Decisions must be made in nearly every instance of CRS collaboration with these agencies about the proper balance between traditional and modern religious actions.

4. Lack of community resource-management institutions.

In the Ecuadorean Sierra, the tradition of community work (the minga) still exists, and people expect to contribute some of

their time to community projects. However, this tradition appears to be weakening, and large public-sector efforts to create more modern forms of community organization have not been particularly effective. Some such efforts have resulted in theft and fraud due to ill-prepared communities and irresponsible public officials. CRS-supported efforts at community organization must overcome this weakened tradition and show that local self-help activities can be worthwhile community investments.

A more serious problem is a lack of laws and institutions to encourage communal production. Experience in other countries has shown that if such institutions cannot be maintained, if they are subject to attack (the communal store, for example, is often vigorously opposed by private store owners), one of the fundamental pillars of community organizationthe association of people to conduct productive activities- is weakened.

5. Shortage of funds.

CRS's recent emphasis on community development has meant that it has had to search out resources other than food and used clothing. But CRS's enthusiasm for community organizations is not widely shared by larger development agencies, and the lack of alternative funding has been a problem.

Most large international donors (eg. World Bank, BID, USAID) are primarily interested in either the transfer of technology or the development of public institutions. Those interested in technology transfer view community organizations as a means to carry out a specific task, eg. to apply a technology to a particular problem. Those interested in public institutional development argue that community groups alone will never solve the problems of the masses of poor people, which can only be done through the income-redistribution and capital-mobilization capacities of government.

There are, of course, flaws in all development models and, theoretically, the strengths of one can offset the weaknesses of the other. CRS's approach presumes the existence of state agencies able to provide communities with necessary resources which they cannot mobilize themselves, but which they can tap when sufficiently developed. Other approaches assume that governments of developing countries are, or can be made, analogous to those of developed countries and endowed with capable, motivated people operating within creative bureaucracies. The challenge for CRS is to maximize the complementarities of various approaches while securing resources, usually from organizations such as OXFAM, Miserior, Brot für die Welt and IAF to support its particular approach.

6. Counterpart organizations, Responsive Mode of Operation. .

CRS has two principal functions: to serve as a bridge between donors and agencies working in rural communities and to create and promote methodologies of community organizational development. In both cases, CRS works almost entirely through intermediary agencies by responding to their requests for assistance in community development projects. In this, CRS differs from many development agencies which start out with some solution to a problem and look for places to apply it. CRS usually works directly with communities only if they have been organized into some sort of consortium, and then through the consortium and not with the communities themselves. This policy is dictated by CRS's limited staff and resources and by its desire to strengthen the intermediary agencies.

This policy is reasonable but creates difficulties for CRS. First, the intermediary agency or consortium may not be in complete accord with CRS' desires or views. CRS, therefore, finds itself responsible for the management of funds according to its philosophy, without being able to actually conduct projects itself.

Moreover, the responsive mode of operation can result in a 'scattered' set of projects, both geographically and institutionally, since CRS's response depends on the initiative of the proposer. This prevents CRS from concentrating its efforts to achieve larger-scale successes which could be useful in attracting greater resources in the future.

7. When to end the accompanying process.

CRS is committed to organizational development, and this is an on-going process. Specific projects, however, have beginnings and ends, and it is usually difficult to know when to 'graduate' a community to fend for itself with larger development agencies. If graduated too soon, the community may not be able to secure alternative sources of support for subsequent efforts and its development may slow or even regress. If graduated too late, resources which could have been used more effectively in other communities will have been wasted.

IV. OBJECTIVES VS. PERFORMANCE

A. Community Development Programs.

CRS/Ecuador has never formally described its development strategy as specifically as in the previous sections and has not yet systematically monitored its adherence to that strategy or assessed its effectiveness. Given this lack of prior evaluative

information and the limited time the team could spend in the field assessing CRS's impact in individual communities, it did not seem reasonable to attempt a detailed analysis of CRS's performance. The team observed four projects which appeared successful and one (Azogues) which appears promising within the context of CRS's three-pronged strategy. During the last ten years, CRS has been developing a community organization and group development model which, while guiding day-to-day operations, has not been rigorously applied. Thus, goals, indicators and information about project planning, execution and evaluation have not been consciously referred to the model. Nevertheless, CRS has now reached a point where this model should be formalized and used to predict and evaluate the results of its projects. Later in this section we suggest some indicators of CRS's programmatic adherence to its strategy and model and of their effectiveness. The above may seem theoretical, but we believe that until a development agency systematizes its operations in this manner, its fortuitous successes will be the product of gifted artists.

1. Field Observations.

Most communities visited by the team were in early stages of group development. Very few (Atocha, El Galpon and Tolontag) had reached the stage of historic projects, but none referred

to the historic project as such. All diocesan PH directors recognized the need for communities to undertake projects as a means to group organization, but none were aware of CRS's group development model. The team member from CRS/NY found the model very helpful in understanding CRS/E's work but indicated that it was unknown in New York. None of CRS's intermediaries were conversant with the model.

2. Thoughts for the Future.

One indicator of CRS' commitment to the development process noted above would be the extent of its reference to the group-development model described in I above and its use of the terminology noted in II, A in future project proposals, reports and other documents. Although the current CRS Director attended a CRS seminar on Base Groups in Development where much of this theoretical framework was developed, the terms and concepts describing the group-development model were not evident in the CRS documents which we reviewed and do not seem to have been explicitly applied in program planning and management. If these terms and concepts are utilized in future documents, it will indicate their relevance in planning, managing and evaluating projects, in shaping a strategic consensus among CRS staff and collaborators, and in communicating a coherent program to CRS/NY and other donors.

In addition, the enumeration and formal classification of projects can indicate how CRS actually implements its development strategy. CRS might consider and specify how much of its resources are or should be devoted to each of its three main areas of concern. This could be done via lists of past, current and proposed activities, noting which activities focus on institutional development, motivation/organization/training, or historic projects, along with the cost (including CRS and other contributions) and location of each. Ideally one should notice a movement of groups from one category of activity to another over time.

More complex process indicators could be developed for future program planning. For instance, knowing the average number of new projects arising from, say, 10 actively promoted groups at various stages of development would allow CRS to estimate the resources required by a given number of promoters.

For example, in Azogues we found that each promotor works with 5-6 communities. If each community undertakes a project every two years and Cañar has 6 promoters, one can expect $6 \times 6 \times 1/2 = 18$ new projects per year in that province. If all of these communities are at the beginning of the development process, their resource-management capacity is probably in the range of

US\$100-1,000, and it is unlikely that more than \$18,000 will be needed in Cañar per year. On the other hand, if all are fairly experienced and near CRS's project limit of \$10-20,000, then \$360,000 might be needed. These numbers are illustrative approximations which, if shared with the Azogues PH director, could be improved and used to guide decisions concerning number of promoters, their performance and need for further training, budgets, when to wean communities from their promotor, etc.

Indicators of effectiveness in the three development program areas might be the following:

A. Promotion.

- generation of new community organizations
- generation of high-quality projects by these organizations

B. Motivation, Organization and Training.

- complementary resources acquired
- projects satisfactorily completed on schedule
- necessary maintenance conducted
- books well kept
- more complex activities proposed/completed
- longevity of the organization
- evidence of increased political influence

C. Historic Projects

1. Improved economic situation
2. Increased access to services (eg. schools, potable water, health services, markets, production inputs)

B. Food Distribution.

The goal of CRS's food program is to "improve the nutritional and health standards of the Mother-Child population". The achievement of this goal would necessarily be measured by indicators of nutritional and health status, such as prevalence of malnutrition, number of malnourished recuperated, prevalence of preventible diseases, infant mortality, etc. With the partial exception of MCH, no data has been gathered on any such indicators, and it is impossible to demonstrate that the sought-after improvements have taken place. Moreover, we feel it may be unrealistic for CRS/PH to try to affect these parameters or to measure changes in them.

The team suggests instead that the food be used as an incentive to increase the quality of CRS's school and day-care programs and to develop low-cost, decentralized alternatives to the Ministry of Health's MCH program. (We include as "CRS programs" those day-care centers and schools which are not operated by CRS/PH but which receive Title II food as part of their on-going programs.) We offer our observations on the quality of existing programs and on how to improve it below.

1. Field Observations.

The school lunch program is very passive and the team feels that a major learning opportunity is being lost by not having the students order, prepare and serve the food, by not teaching nutrition or basic hygiene, by not increasing parental participation or fomenting school gardens. What lesson do the students learn from such a program? We suggest that the lesson is that the State (school) will provide without any effort by the students, hardly a developmental concept in terms of the group-organization model described in Section I. CRS should consider how the food can be used to encourage self-sufficiency.

Although the goal of an MCH program should be to deliver a food supplement to nutritionally vulnerable mothers and children, along with preventive health measures such as vaccinations, growth monitoring, health/nutrition education, etc, the MCH centers visited provided very little MCH care beyond food. In most centers, however, a women's group undertaking additional activities (eg. classes in literacy, crafts and group organization) had grown up around the program. In the provinces of Manabí and Cañar (which does not receive food), systematic efforts are being made to organize community projects through these clubs. In Imbabura, food was suspended several years ago, yet

the clubs continued to function (though none have undertaken major projects). This type of approach does fit the group organization model. Since the Ministry of Health has notified CRS that it will no longer process Title II food for PH-sponsored MCH centers, CRS should consider other forms of support to the women's clubs, possibly the development of local food supplements and support for more economically productive activities.

The evaluation team was most impressed with the quality of day-care centers. Most which we visited were urban facilities for children of lower-class, working mothers. All were clean with the children dressed in neat smocks, and toys were available. Most had periodic visits from doctors and some provided pre-primary education (similar to Head Start). We believe that such centers, which promote socialization among different sexes, races and ethnic groups, can lead to group-organizational experiences and the learning of social skills conducive to group-organization in the future. If pre-primary education could be provided in all centers and parental involvement and local support increased, the program would be very good indeed. If it could be extended to rural areas and weaned from reliance on Title II as well, it would be excellent. The team was impressed with the visible need for such rural centers.

The team was able to visit only one food-for-work site in Manabí because of flooding. CRS likes to think that food for work can be a catalyst for community coalescence around the solution of a common problem rather than simply building things. While we saw several non-FFW efforts to support this view, they were almost all (Manabí excepted) devoid of complementary inputs or promotional efforts to maximize the catalytic effect. Conversations with recipients in Manabí, however, indicated that the pilot project there, part of the strategy of community organization based on women's clubs noted above, had provided some complementary inputs, viz. tools and promotion. We feel that the use of food under such circumstances can be valuable. Without such inputs, however, food for work effectively amounts to building things, and, while this experience may have a place in the development process, an incipient group without support or promotion may dissolve rather than continue to grow as envisioned by the model.

The preceding paragraphs indicate a role for food in CRS's community-development program. Three factors seem to obstruct the fulfillment of that role. First, there seems to be too much food in relation to complementary inputs, both physical and human. Second, the tradition of food give-aways has obscured creative program alternatives, especially within Promoción Humana ('that's what we've always done - why change?'). Third,

both CRS and PH have invested a minimum of resources in food programs. A dearth of creative thought, travel, discussion, and expenditure guarantees that program quality will be mediocre at best.

CRS must change this situation if Title II is to be used to further its development objectives. CRS and PH must use food as carefully as money or any other resource to support community organization; they must decide, possibly with the advice of consultants, what constitutes quality in their food programs, how this quality can be attained and what indicators should be used to measure its attainment. They must provide complementary inputs and intensive supervision to insure that such quality is maintained.

2. Thoughts on the Future.

We heard several MCH and OCF center directors state that the quality of a food-distribution center was directly related to the number of other services provided at the center, i.e. to the degree to which food distribution was part of a program with a larger goal.

The challenge is to encourage such complementary activities in all centers and to select indicators of quality for these activities. We believe that such indicators can be, indeed should

be, simple and obvious and suggest the follow examples.

For OCF:

Are noses runny? Is the floor dirty? Is pre-primary education provided? Are there teaching and stimulation materials and are they effectively used? Are children vaccinated, washed, etc.? Do parents participate in center activities? Does the community support the centers, financially or otherwise?

For SF:

Do students wash their hands with soap before eating? Do they order food, cook it, and serve it to their classmates? Is there a school garden? What do students know about the relation of the food to their own growth, activity and health? Do parents participate? Does the community support the school, financially or otherwise?

For FFW:

Is there a promotor working regularly with the community? Are complementary resources provided (money, tools, etc.)? What is the community's next (non-food) project?

The list is not exhaustive and we encourage CRS and its collaborators to select from it and develop others which are best suited to measuring program quality. If CRS/PH periodically tabulated the answers to these or similar questions, overall program quality could be monitored and low quality sites could be identified for special attention.

V. UNINTENDED EFFECTS.

Having noted the difficulty of rigorously assessing the effects of CRS's community-development program, we believe it premature to consider whether the effects of this program have been intentional or not. On the other hand, the Title II program has a long history and represents the major resource managed by CRS and PH. The team observed a number of apparently unintended positive and negative consequences of that program which warrant consideration.

1. Positive consequences.

In almost all sites visited, we found that food was cited as a catalyst for group formation, whether the group was a mothers' club created at an MCH center or a community board which used food in a road-building project or the meeting of parents to prepare school lunches. The degree to which food was used effectively seems to depend on the individuals responsible for food distribution.

We also found that, once a group had coalesced around food (especially in MCH centers), other services and resources were often sought and acquired: training in literacy, basic bookkeeping, crafts, etc. or tools and materials to build roads, community centers or to install electricity or water systems. The

operation of these groups also often led to the acquisition and practice of new skills: public speaking, conduct of meetings, responsibility to others, acquisition and management of resources.

2. Negative Consequences.

The other side of the food-as-catalyst coin is that some groups are organized specifically to get food (just as CRS and PH were originally formed to distribute it) and, in some cases, appear to prefer that mode of operation to a problem-solving one. We found instances of highly evolved groups which had attached themselves to various resource-distribution agencies for as much as 20 years, taking food or money from one until another came along. We were also told that FFW has furthered the destruction of community self-help traditions (the minga) in some areas of the sierra. We suggest that the indiscriminate use of food can foment these phenomena, which do not lead to historic projects but rather to a low level of group subsistence and, ultimately, a developmental dead-end in that it creates an expectation that outside agencies will provide for community needs without concomitant effort on the part of the recipients.

We also found that the MCH program has encouraged subterfuge by requiring mothers to state that donated food is fed only to

targetted individuals within the family. In spite of such statements, careful inquiry revealed that, in all cases, donated foods were given to all, or at least other, non-targetted family members.

VI. COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

CRS has some areas of comparative advantage relative to other development agencies, most of which have been indicated in other parts of the report. They can be summarized as follows.

1. Focus. CRS supports important projects which would be too small or uninteresting for larger agencies. In addition, CRS's focus on community organizational development is an important complement to other development models emphasizing technology transfer and public institutional development. Very few of the larger development agencies have this focus.

2. Arm of the Catholic Church. CRS can at least potentially mobilize an extensive network of committed people in support of development work. This 'mystique' and the fact that many of these people often work for many years in the same area mean that the human resources available for CRS projects are sometimes quite superior to those available to other agencies.

3. Non-governmental. As private agencies, CRS and its counterparts may be more stable than government agencies, at least at the policy level. They are also better able to implement decentralized development programs more immediately responsive to the needs of individual communities than is sometimes the case with governmental efforts.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions have been stated in earlier sections regarding future directions. These are summarized below.

A. Development Program.

We feel that CRS's activities are appropriate to its goal and should be continued in the future. The classification of these activities and the periodic assessment of indicators as per Section IV will promote better program management in the future.

The team recognizes the importance of promoters and promotion agencies and reiterates the need to efficiently detect more 'spark plugs' to effectively play this role. We also believe that CRS should return to communities after project completion to assess their progress up the development curve.

Most certainly the resources available to CRS for this program are insufficient. We suggest a minimum of \$300,000 per year in new project funds once the \$877,000 backlog of unfunded projects is financed. The team believes CRS should consider raising additional funds locally, promoting direct solicitations by Ecuadorean bishops to their colleagues in developed countries and submitting a larger number of small project proposals (SDA's) to USAID.

We encourage greater use of consultants (possibly provided by AID) for follow-up assessments of CRS's actions subsequent to this evaluation, for technical assistance on specific projects and to help CRS to perfect the application and test the effectiveness of the group-development model and to promote it among associates, collaborators and communities themselves.

We also recommend that CRS:

- Organize meetings with the Bishops to tell them about CRS-supported projects and increase their commitment to these types of activities.

- Identify those dioceses most committed to CRS's development philosophy for priority consideration in future projects.

- Arrange interchanges of project personnel, especially the more active and effective personnel, to exchange views and ideas. This might be especially useful for Sr. Teresa of Manabí and Fr. Tamayo of Atocha.

- Introduce CRS collaborators, intermediary agencies and interested outsiders to the community-organization approach to development. An intern or scholarship program to enable interested persons to work with CRS or its collaborators might be useful.

B. Food Program

Our general recommendation for the food program is to upgrade its quality by providing complementary inputs. We consider the OCF and FFW activities worthy of gradual, carefully planned expansion to other areas. Specifically, CRS and PH should:

- 1) Upgrade SF to provide a learning experience for the students in addition to feeding. Students should participate in meal planning, cooking, serving and clean-up on a rotating, team basis. The food should provide a laboratory for the study of natural sciences and the practice of organizational skills. Parental participation should be maximized and planting of school gardens

should be encouraged to make the program self-sufficient within a specified period of time.

2) Day-care centers should be strengthened through development and application of teaching/stimulation aids. Training should be provided to teachers and directors on the use of these aids. Greater parental participation and self-sufficiency should be strongly encouraged, if not required. An experimental project should be undertaken to determine whether day-care centers can be established in rural areas.

3) The pilot FFW project should be evaluated by CRS and PH with reference to its impact on community organization and to the provision of appropriate complementary inputs, including group-promotion efforts. If results seem promising, FFW should be extended to additional (non-sierra) sites, with the careful provision of complementary physical and human resources.

4) Given the MOH's cancellation of the MCH feeding program, CRS and PH should investigate alternatives to that program to be implemented through the women's clubs.

5) CRS and USAID should consider mechanisms to monetize Title II food for capitalizing development projects.

VIII. POSSIBLE PROJECTS FOR USAID SUPPORT

Several areas of future CRS/USAID collaboration seem promising, given AID'S emphasis on institution building and CRS's focus on community development.

1. USAID could provide SDA grants to stimulate the development of community organizations around priority problems (eg. soil conservation, potable water, reforestation, agricultural credit, irrigation, small industries). Since the projects should increase organizational development as well as produce physical outputs, indicators of project success might include the proportion of campesinos participating in problem solving, the degree of shared leadership, the pace at which the organization moves through the development process, the amount of resources involved, and the number and adequacy of linkages established with other agencies. CRS and USAID might consider formalizing these arrangements in a memorandum of understanding regarding the types of projects to be funded, their location, sponsoring agencies, approximate amounts of funding, etc.

2. CRS and AID could develop OPG's with promotion agencies or community consortia to enhance their institutional development. One possibility is to build an irrigation canal through

the Ilapo Water Consortium in Chimborazo, an organization which has previously succeeded in installing and administering a portable water project linking 16 communities. Such a project would be interesting from several points of view. It would establish direct campesino control over finances with which the consortium could attract the services of public and private sector agencies, instead of waiting for them to come to their assistance. It would establish campesino participation in the design of the project and in the development of regulations for water use once the canal is complete. It could test the hypothesis that community control of such projects can lead to significant economies in their construction and the maintenance. Finally, it would involve the creation of more elaborate administrative structures in the Consortium and the incorporation of more communities, thus enhancing its organizational development.

3. Food-for-Peace Outreach Grants might be considered to:

- Upgrade SF activities to make feeding a learning experience and to make the program self-supporting.

- Extend the OCF program to rural areas and develop appropriate pre-primary education and stimulation aids and training to improve the program.

- Provide tools and other complementary inputs for expansion of the FFW project to other sites in Manabí and to other, non-sierra provinces.

4. An OPG might be considered to develop alternatives to the current MCH feeding program. Community production of weaning foods through existing women's centers might be attempted, perhaps based on CRS's efforts in Africa.

APPENDIX A

Evaluation Methodology

Very few people like to do things badly. Even those who do bad things try to do them well to avoid getting caught. If one is accused of doing things poorly, he defends himself by invoking factors beyond his control which made better performance impossible; "the budget was insufficient," "we've always done it that way," "the machine broke down." This defense is a tacit recognition that, in fact, the thing was done poorly.

Rarely do we disagree in our judgements of quality. Almost everyone can distinguish between good and bad, beauty and ugliness, outstanding and mediocre. What usually happens is that we get used to the bad and ugly and innured to the mediocre so that we cease to notice them and our situation becomes unchanging. When walking into a room for the first time, we notice the fingerprints on the wall; after two weeks in the room they are no longer seen.

Comparison is the key to changing these situations. If we constantly compare the results of our actions to those we agree are good, beautiful or outstanding, then we have no alternative but to adjust our behavior in order to achieve better results. On the other hand, if we consistently avoid comparisons, we persist in not doing things as well as possible.

A social program consists of a number of activities which are aimed at achieving given results. Of course, there is not absolute uniformity in the execution of these activities from one community to the next, and, if we compare them, we can expect to find that some perform better than others. For any given activity, or for sets of activities, there will be a spectrum of quality ranging from the outstanding to the really bad or even non-existent, and according to the above argument, most observers will agree on the relative merits of each.

I suggest that, if those responsible for activity (and its outcome) can compare their performance with that of others with similar responsibility, they will inevitably reach conclusions which will allow them to adjust their behavior to improve results.

If the objective of such a comparison is truly to improve the program (and not just to find fault), the following guidelines may be useful:

- Get together frequently with those who have similar activities and objectives.

- Interact in such a way as to promote the comparison of activities and results.

- Analyze the reasons for observed differences.
- Facilitate the exchange of experiences and informal instruction in methods.

Specifically, I suggest the following methodology for the CRS evaluation.

1. Select personnel from similar programs for a one-day workshop in which they explain what their particular activities are and what they accomplish.
2. Compare between activities those elements which seem critical for success and try to agree on those which make for high quality.
3. Discuss the various ways of achieving these elements.
4. Visit each activity site to see the implementation of the techniques and gain an appreciation of the quality of each.

David Nelson
Team Leader

APPENDIX B

Scope of Work

A. Goal: to form the basis for planning a new, five-year development program, including Title II and, possibly, OPGs, to be implemented by CRS and its counterparts with AID support. (Note that CRS implements its Title II program through Promoción Humana, but works with other local counterparts in a separate community development program in which USAID has not been involved.)

B. Purposes: to review and evaluate:

(i) the current Title II program and its potential for increased development impact and for self-sufficiency; and

(ii) CRS's community development program from the perspective of identifying areas of possible collaboration between CRS and AID in the future. This collaboration should complement Title II activities where feasible.

C. Output: a report in Spanish, with an analysis and appropriate recommendations regarding the following elements of both the Title II and community development programs.

(i) Importance and significance: what is CRS's program strategy, what problems are addressed, should the current strategy be re-considered or revised?

(ii) Planning/Programming: how are specific projects identified and designed to implement strategy; could this process be improved, if so, how?

(iii) Implementation/Administration: have individual projects met stated objectives, have anticipated results been obtained, have any unanticipated results been obtained, what principal successes or problems have occurred?

(iv) Should future projects be continued in the same vein as current ones or should changes be introduced?

(v) What new programs should be designed for presentation to USAID for funding?