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SADCC Technical Support Grant

The Regional Training Council (Swaziland)

Mid-Term Evaluation

Prepared for the U.S. Agency for International Development under contract number (AID Project 690-0215.45)

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SADCC Technical Support Grant - Regional Training Council
(AID Project 690-0215.45)

Mid-Term Evaluation

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Basic Project Identification Data

1. Country: Southern Africa Regional Program (Swaziland)

2. Project Title: SADCC Technical Support Grant (Regional Training Council)

3. Project Number: 690-0215.45

4. Project Dates:

   a. First Project Agreement: 6/1/84
   b. Final Obligation Date: FY 90 (planned)
   c. Most Recent PACD: 5/31/90

5. Project Funding:

a. AID Bilateral Funding):	US$ 2.9 million
b. Other Major Donors:	none direct *
c. Host Country Colunterpart Funds:	US$ 0.627 million
Total	US$ 3.527 million

6. Mode of Implementation: various host country and AID direct contracts. Major contractor: NASPAA

7. Project Designers: The Government of Swaziland
   USAID/Swaziland

8. Responsible Mission Officials:

   a. Mission Directors: Robert Heusman
      Roger Carlson

   b. Project Officers: Leticia Diaz
      Peter Capozza
      Jan Rockliffe-King

9. Previous Evaluation: February, 1986

* Complementary technical assistance and program support is received from several donors, most significantly the EEC and GTZ.

SADCC Technical Support Grant - Regional Training Council
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Mid-Term Evaluation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This summary follows the organization of the full report, wherein can be found additional detail to support the evaluation findings and recommendations listed here.

The report presents the results of a mid-term evaluation of the April, 1988 amendment to AID's technical support grant to the SADCC manpower development sectoral unit, the Regional Training Council (RTC) in Swaziland. This amendment added $ 1.5 million in grant funds and extended the PACD to May, 1990. The evaluation was conducted in September and October, 1989. In accordance with the terms of reference, the evaluation focus was on the institutional development of the RTC as manifested in its sustainable capacity to fulfill the SADCC manpower development mandate.

RTC Background

Manpower development is a sectoral responsibility of major importance to SADCC since most member nations suffer severe shortages of appropriately prepared personnel for key productive and service activities. The RTC's mandated role is to support and coordinate programs of manpower development within all SADCC sectors as well as to develop its own portfolio of projects addressing cross-sectoral needs.

For most of its history, however, RTC performance has been constrained by, among other factors, weak institutional capacity, a lack of staff continuity, and, consequently, marginal program performance.

The purpose of the AID grant extension was to provide institutional support to the RTC, primarily through technical assistance in management, to complement promised Government of Swaziland (GOS) staff and the provision of technical advisors by the EEC. The timely combination of these resources gave promise of facilitating accelerated RTC institutional and program development.

In April, 1988, the then principal secretary of the GOS Department of Economic Planning and Statistics (DEPS), who served also as RTC Chairman, died unexpectedly. As a consequence, the RTC lost his valuable experience and leadership. Moreover, the Swazi RTC director, named in late 1987, was diverted to the additional role of acting principal secretary of

DEPS. No other senior personnel have been appointed by the GOS; the staff positions of planning officer and administrative officer remain vacant, their leadership roles filled by donor-funded advisors.

Evaluation Findings

Findings of the evaluation, summarily listed, include the following:

RTC Program Performance

1. Of 41 RTC projects initiated or supported since the RTC's inception, only 11 have reached the implementation stage. Delays in the project pipeline have been a consequence of past weakness in RTC institutional capacity, problems with other sectors, and inherent difficulties in processes of SADCC decision making.

2. Speeding up the pipeline has been made a major program priority by the RTC. Staffing, principally advisors, is now strong and systems for project monitoring and follow-up have been introduced. As a result, we expect significant program acceleration in the coming months.

3. While the current RTC advisors, both management and technical, provide the capacity to greatly improve RTC program performance, there remains limited potential for transfer of knowledge to permanent Swazi staff, currently limited to two junior planning officers.

4. The cumbersome RTC decision structure, keyed to meetings of officials in which decision must normally emerge by consensus, also inhibits timely and relevant program outputs.

5. RTC networking and collaboration with other SADCC sectors has been ineffective through most of its history but is showing recent signs of improvement.

6. The institutional base has been established for a substantial improvement in RTC capacity to manage its programs and to coordinate manpower development in other sectors.

Project LogFrame Analysis

7. Planned project inputs from AID and the GOS have been provided without serious constraint with the notable exception of an adequate GOS full-time staff complement.

8. Project outputs are, in most cases, being achieved or show promise of being achieved by the PACD. Of particuar note are a comprehensive workplan keyed to the framework of the grant extension design, the introduction of new management systems and procedures, and new initiatives in program monitoring and sector coordination.

9. The grant extension will go far toward achieving the project goal of improving RTC institutional capacity as reflected in significant achievement of most of the planned

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purpose level indicators (EOPS). There is a lag in program accomplishment, largely due to the loss of momentum in the wake of the former Chairman's death. The current level of activity is high, however, and there is a realistic workplan to accomplish most of the intended program targets.

10. The logic of the project LogFrame linkages is valid; AID institutional support, in concert with EEC and GTZ program support, has played a critical and effective role in enabling the RTC to function as an institution, albeit still dependent on advisors filling senior staff roles.

Evaluation Recommendations

Selected recommendations of the evaluation include the following:

RTC Staffing

1. The Government of Swaziland should move promptly to resolve the RTC director situation to ensure that there is a fully-functioning, full-time director who is available to provide effective leadership and policy direction for the RTC.

2. The Government of Swaziland should fill the key vacant RTC positions of Planning Officer and Administrative Officer.

3. AID should give its full support to the concept of converting the RTC to a SADCC Commission, permitting regional hiring and funding of RTC staff.

RTC Operations

4. RTC management should expand efforts to involve the junior Swazi planning officers in the substantive program work of the RTC to prepare them for an enhanced leadership role in the future.

5. In its negotiations with donors for support of the MRU or similar autonomous program units, the GOS should assure that these units remain under the overall administrative and program direction of the RTC.

6. The RTC should improve its links to private sector training activities and technologies.

7. The RTC should take more initiative in fostering coordination among its donors.

8. The RTC should give high priority to completing an update of the 5-year SADCC manpower development strategy.

9. The RTC should document all of its emerging systems and procedures.

AID Decisions: Budget and PACD Issues

10. USAID/Swaziland should continue its close and productive working relationship with the RTC for the life of project support.

11. AID should focus *program* support to the RTC on strengthening its linkages with and support to training institutions in the region.

12. The grant amendment PACD should be extended 16 months to September 30, 1991.

13. The remaining project budget, as of May 31, 1990, should be directed to the categories of long term technical assistance, RTC/MRU institutional networking, staff development, and mission management.

14. AID should intensify its discussions with all involved departments of the GOS to firmly encourage the government to both resolve the problem of an available full-time RTC director and to fill the previously created position of senior planning officer.

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SADCC Technical Support Grant - Regional Training Council
AID Project 690-0215.45)

Mid-Term Evaluation

I. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings and recommendations of a mid-term evaluation of the 1988 extension of the AID Technical Support Grant to the Regional Training Council, the manpower development[1] sectoral unit of the Southern Africa development Coordinating Commission. The evaluation was conducted on location in Swaziland between 18 September and 7 October, 1989.

In accordance with the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, the focus of this report is on the institutional and managerial effectiveness of the Regional Training Council to carry out its strategic manpower planning and development mandate. The evaluation will be used by AID to help make decisions about the remaining life of the technical support grant, now scheduled to end in May, 1990.

The two-year project extension, authorized in April 1988, added $1.5 million in grant funds for the Regional Training Council. The Government of Swaziland commitment was $500 thousand, primarily in operational support.

This report is organized into three sections. Section I reviews the background and context of the AID grant and its rationale. Section II presents the major findings of the evaluation in terms of overall RTC performance and of specific progress against the input, output, and purpose targets of the grant extension. Section III presents recommendations to AID and the RTC growing out of the evaluation.

Annexes provide a list of person contacted during the evaluation and the evaluation Terms of Reference. recommendations.

The evaluators recognize with appreciation the full cooperation and support of the RTC and USAID/Swaziland during the course of the evaluation.

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[1] The term "manpower" generally is used in the SADCC region to denote what is termed more inclusively "human resources" in many other parts of the world. In this report we have held to SADCC usage.

II. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE AID TECHNICAL SUPPORT GRANT TO THE RTC

Historical Context

Since its establishment in 1981, the Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference (SADCC) has initiated varied programs of economic development in response to widely perceived regional needs and opportunities. From the beginning SADCC affirmed that training should be an integral part of the activities of each of its program sectors. This recognition led to the specific designation of a manpower sector and its assignment to the Government of Swaziland (GOS). Accordingly, the GOS created the Regional Training Council (RTC) in 1981 with a mandate to identify, coordinate, and support SADCC human resource development programs of regional impact. The RTC was placed in the GOS Department of Economic Planning and Statistics (DEPS), whose Principal Secretary doubled as the RTC Chairman.

Manpower development is a sectoral responsibility of major importance to SADCC and to the region, unique in its potential significance for all of the SADCC sectors. The lack of sufficiently educated, trained, and experienced manpower is recognized widely as a major development constraint in Southern Africa. Most SADCC nations suffer severe shortages of appropriately prepared personnel for key productive and service activities.

While each of the SADCC sectors is authorized to develop training programs tailored to meet its own project needs, it is intended that these programs be planned and implemented in coordination with the RTC. In addition, the RTC manages its own portfolio of projects and studies addressing cross-sectoral needs. The development of regional information resources for manpower planning is a major agenda.

For much of its history, as documented in reports of SADCC, donors, and the RTC itself, RTC performance was constrained by weak institutional capacity, manifested in a lack of staff and the general inability to convert SADCC manpower strategies into a coherent and effective action program.

Several factors have inhibited RTC performance. In broad terms, operational cooperation between SADCC and it members and between the members with each other is influenced by the flexibility of SADCC's organizational structure and procedural guidelines, the manner in which responsibility for project funding (including negotiation with donors) is decentralized to the members, the lack of a centralized technical staff to facilitate coordination and decision making, and the purely voluntary level of obligation characterizing cooperation among SADCC members. These realities represent a particular constraint on the RTC for which active coordination with other sectors is critical for achievement of its mandate.

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Consistent with SADCC intent for sectoral units, technical and administrative capacities to carry out manpower coordination have been dependent on the Swazi Government. Until recently, however, an understaffed DEPS was unable to assign any full-time staff effort to RTC affairs. Prior to 1987, the RTC had no independent office or permanent administrative staff. Consequently, it depended on the performance of donor-funded technical assistance personnel who substituted for rather than developed RTC legitimacy and capacity as a SADCC institution. Most of these advisors had technical mandates but were obligated by necessity to fulfill managerial and operational functions.

Meanwhile, in January 1986, SADCC approved an ambitious 5-year manpower strategy, a mandate given operational definition in a workplan prepared under the original AID technical support grant to SADCC (a portion of which was specifically for RTC support). Both the strategy and the workplan were products of expatriate technical assistance and direct application of donor expertise. Thus, as noted by one observer in 1986, the RTC had a detailed road map but no engine to drive itself.

The SADCC manpower sector strategy of 1986 addressed three priority goals.

1. Provide or train the skilled manpower needed by other SADCC sectors;

2. Offer training in fields where economies of scale suggest regional initiatives rather than the pursuit of individual country programs; and

3. Reduce member states dependence on foreign training facilities by strengthening local institutions so that they can serve regional training needs.

Lacking adequate implementation capacity, however, the RTC was unable to convert this mandate into a coherent and effective action program. Increasingly, other SADCC sectors developed their own manpower development programs and, contrary to SADCC guidelines, solicited donor funding for these programs.

At the mid-1986 SADCC Manpower Symposium the RTC's SADCC and donor partners jointly issued a renewed challenge to the GOS to develop the organizational and staff capacity to fulfill its RTC mandate.

The RTC at the Time of the Grant Amendment (May, 1988)

In the 18 months between the 1986 Manpower Symposium and the design of the AID grant amendment, several key events improved prospects for RTC institutional development and provided a basis for targeted AID institutional support. At the symposium, the GOS made a high-level commitment to appoint a full-time Swazi Director and staff for the RTC. In February, 1987, the government established five positions and, in July, named a director at the undersecretary level. Subsequently support staff were added and scopes of work developed for three mid-range positions for which a process of recruiting began.

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Meanwhile, with funding and technical assistance made available through the 1984 AID technical support grant as well as other donor funding, the RTC accelerated the pace of its program activity. Major activities conducted with AID support were a comprehensive regional training resources inventory, several studies of manpower needs and development in priority SADCC sectors, and the creation of a Management Resource Unit (MRU), a program unit under RTC direction with responsibility to plan and implement selected management development activities in the region. AID support also helped the RTC to convene manpower sector committee meetings and technical meetings. These meetings are a major point of coordination between the RTC and other SADCC sectors. Certain of these meetings also provide an important venue for donor coordination.

As the AID grant amendment was designed in early 1988, the stage was set for a major step forward in RTC performance and institutional development. Building on the findings of a 1986 evaluation of the original technical support grant, as well as subsequent consultant reports focusing on RTC management and organization, AID grasped a timely opportunity for renewed institutional support to complement program assistance that would be available to the RTC from other donors. The commitment of the GOS to provide a reasonable core staff complement to the RTC was an essential factor. The combination of GOS, AID, and other donor commitments gave promise of ushering in a period of accelerated RTC institutional and program development.

As the period covered by the grant extension began an unforeseeable tragedy occurred when the RTC Chairman died from a sudden illness. Not only was his effective leadership and vision lost to the RTC, but the recently-appointed full-time RTC Director became acting principal secretary of DEPS, severely reducing his availability for RTC duties. Thus, in effect, the RTC lost its only full-time senior staff member shortly after the long, ultimately successful, struggle to gain this critical staff asset.

Not long thereafter, the MRU Director, a SADCC national funded under the 1984 AID grant, left Swaziland for a regional World Bank position. This individual had served informally as a key advisor to the RTC Chairman and a valuable resource to the work of the Council. His loss added to the unexpected step backward that occurred in the wake of the grant amendment's initiation. For the following year, the work of the RTC heavily depended on the EEC-funded training advisor and two junior Swazi program staff who maintained the core program, though, of necessity, in a largely responsive mode. The continuity of this advisor's presence, however, was an important factor in the rapid productivity of the management and program advisors who came on board in 1989.

Rationale and Purpose of the Grant Extension

The Regional Manpower Development Component of the 1984 AID technical support grant to SADCC authorized US$ 1.4 million of institutional support for the RTC. The original PACD was May 31, 1988 but this was extended in late 1987 to December 31, 1989.
The current amendment further extended the life of the RTC component until May 31, 1990 and added $1.5 million additional funding to "complete the task of strengthening RTC

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institutional capability .... to fulfill its mandate to be a manpower planning, coordinating, and development resource unit to all SADCC sectors."

Specifically, the purpose of the grant amendment is to develop the RTC's institutional capacity to identify, support, and coordinate manpower development programs of regional impact and benefit. The expected end of project status (EOPS) emphasizes

- an effective and recognized manpower development coordinating role for the RTC in all SADCC Sectors;
- a demonstrated RTC capacity to collect, analyze and disseminate information on regional manpower needs and training resources;
- RTC capacity to identify and mobilize financial support for manpower programs of regional significance;
- effective RTC mobilization and management of donor resources, both technical and financial, for its activities;
- RTC documentation and communication of its SADCC coordinating, information management, and program roles; and
- effective RTC working relationships with national and sectoral manpower contact points in other member states.

The major elements of institutional capacity reflected in the EOPS are a greater role for the RTC in the manpower development aspects of SADCC programs and the development of organizational and staff competence to develop manpower strategies, plan programs accordingly attract resources, and manage those resources to achieve program objectives. The project paper emphasizes that managerial leadership is the key factor in assuring the success of the RTC. Thus a key purpose of contracted technical assistance and donor agency advisors is to provide on-the-job training to RTC staff to build sustainable institutional identity and capacity.

Planned outputs of the grant amendment thus were directed at the task of building RTC planning, programming, and implementation capacity. Virtually everything that the RTC does within its SADCC mandate is served by enhanced institutional capacity. Project outputs addressed this purpose through a focus on

- staff development by use of long-term advisors, short-term consultancies in management and organizational development, and staff development activities;
- RTC capacity to plan -- that is to define its role, organize to fulfill that role, set program objectives, and manage resources to achieve them; and
- selected project support to build RTC capacity to identify and perform studies and manage information that supports its mandate and gives opportunity to expand its role in priority SADCC sectors.

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The design of the grant extension did not presume that the RTC would achieve self-sufficiency in the space of two years, particularly in technical and program support requirements. At the same time, the project paper assumed the continued availability of international donor resources beyond the life of the AID grant. Indeed, an expected outgrowth of the grant was that a more visible and capable RTC organization would be more likely to attract expanded resources.

In sum, the intent of the AID grant extension was to reach the point where an adequately staffed RTC could plan its program, attract resources, and manage these resources effectively. An important element of this capacity is RTC Secretariat understanding of and planning for its future staffing and organizational needs.

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III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

It's beginning to seem like its going to make progress.

- RTC staff member

The findings reported here are based on examination of the extensive history of available internal and external RTC documents and reports, combined with interviews with RTC staff, USAID and other cooperating donor personnel, and representatives of the RTC client or user organizations within SADCC and the region. A list of persons interviewed is attached to this report as Annex 1.

We present our findings in three sections: first, a descriptive analysis of RTC performance and overall program effectiveness; second, an analysis of project progress against the specific input, output, and purpose indicators provided in the design of the grant extension; third a summary assessment of the sustainability of the RTC as an institution in terms of its ongoing SADCC manpower development role.

Regional Training Council Program Performance

As noted above, the RTC was established by the Government of Swaziland with a mandate to identify, support, and coordinate manpower development programs in the SADCC region. This mandate is crucial to the success of nearly all SADCC initiatives because the lack of human resources in critical skill categories is a major constraint to the implementation of both national and regional development programs in the region. It is obvious that for such a wide and important mandate to be executed effectively, the RTC must possess organizational capability and staff competency for effective program planning and implementation. The long-term SADCC goal of regional self reliance in manpower development and training will depend on the supply of appropriately trained personnel; this requires well conceived and effectively implemented manpower development programs.

While each SADCC Sector is authorized to develop manpower development and training programs tailored to meet its own projected needs, these programs are supposed to be implemented in coordination with the RTC. In addition, the RTC manages its own portfolio of projects addressing cross sectoral needs. An evaluation of RTC program performance, therefore, must review how the RTC has performed in terms of (1) managing its portfolio of projects, and (2) coordinating manpower development initiatives from other SADCC Sectors.

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RTC Projects

According to the RTC's own recently designed progress chart for monitoring manpower programs, 22 cross-sectoral projects have been developed since the inception of the RTC. Out of all these projects, only seven have reached the implementation stage. [2] These are:

- The RTC Scholarship Program - United Kingdom, India, Portugal, the USSR, and Austria;
- Ophthalmalic Assistance Training in Malawi;
- Technical Teaching at Malawi Polytechnic Institute;
- The Management Resource Unit (MRU);
- Portuguese/English language training;
- The Training Resources Inventory, Phase I; and
- Mananga Agricultural Management Centre Scholarships, Phase I.

The rest of the RTC-initiated programs are still at various stages of development, for example, project conceptualization; consultants contracted; consultants' report submitted; workshop or technical expects meeting held; approval of RTC Committee awaited; project rejected or not fully approved by the RTC; project submitted for funding; funding approved; memorandum of understanding signed; and so on.

As can be deduced from the above, the performance of the RTC in moving projects to the point of implementation and impact has been far from ideal. Projects tend to languish in endless study and discussion phases. The internal reasons for this state of affairs have been identified as mainly the lack of adequate RTC staff and institutional capacity and the lack of systematic and organized mechanisms for program monitoring. External factors include weakness in other cooperating sectors, the cumbersome nature of SADCC decision making, and the complexity of dealing with 17 donors, each with its own procedural requirements.

The future, however, holds promise. A very effective (on paper) program performance monitoring system, with clear and elaborate guidelines, has been devised. This system provides for flow charts that indicate the different stages of the project cycle. This should become an effective management tool for the program office. The next stage being envisaged to further build on the project monitoring system is to computerize this information.

The RTC staff situation also has improved and there is significant promise of improved performance. An organizational chart has been devised and is being implemented in terms of

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[2] Of 19 *sectoral* projects supported by the RTC, four have reached implementation. RTC control over the progress of these projects is especially limited due to the role of the originating sector unit.

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defining the roles and responsibilities of all staff, permanent and advisory. The organization structure has three distinct sections: the Office of Administration, the Office of Program, and the Management Resource Unit (MRU). This organizational structure is illustrated in Figure One where it is compared to the structure envisaged in the AID grant amendment design. As can be seen, the two structures are functionally equivalent.

The program office, which is responsible for program implementation and monitoring, is further divided into three sections according to the SADCC sectors: one section deals with the sectors of agricultural research, food security, fisheries, forestry, livestock production and animal disease control, and soil and water conservation and land utilization; the second section comprises the energy conservation and development, mining, and transport and communication sectors; the third deals with the manpower, industry and trade, and tourism sectors.

To support this structure, clear job descriptions have been drawn for program staff containing guidelines for

- dealing with feasibility studies;
- screening and monitoring of contracts;
- liaising with external donors;
- liaising with other SADCC Sectors; and
- monitoring and implementating projects.

Two program sections are each staffed by one GOS assistant planning officer and one EEC-funded advisor. The strategy is for the advisors to work closely with the GOS officers on a counterpart basis so that, at the end of the advisors' contracts, the Swazi staff will be in a position to carry on the job on their own. The third program section has no GOS officer. It is covered by the AID-funded senior management advisor, Dr. Sabai, and the EEC-funded training advisor.

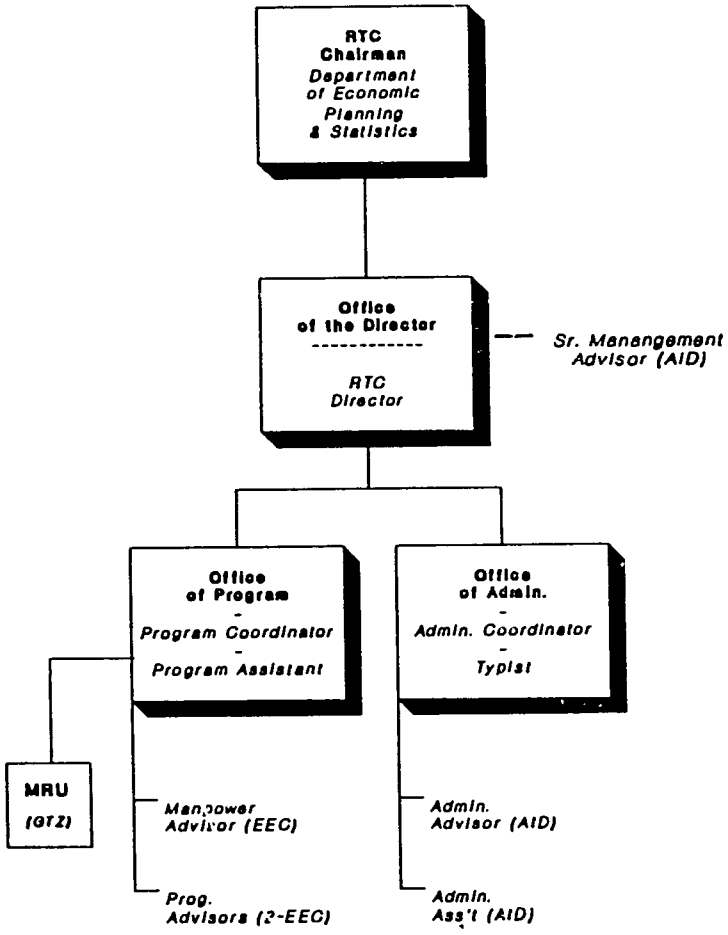
The new life breathed into the RTC is due in large part to the efforts of the senior management advisor, who joined the RTC in April 1989, and the work of the EEC training advisor, who has been on board for three years. The absence of a fully available director for the RTC since the director's diversion to the role of acting principal secretary of DEPS has placed these advisors in a position where they are virtually running RTC affairs - advisors without anyone to advise. While we affirm that they have done commendable work in enhancing the present institutional capacity of RTC, the frequent unavailability of the director may limit the impact of this progress for the long term.

A notable positive development is the RTC's move from the government building housing DEPS to their own offices, rented by the GOS. This has added a sense of identity to the RTC and reflects a commitment by the GOS to this SADCC responsibility.

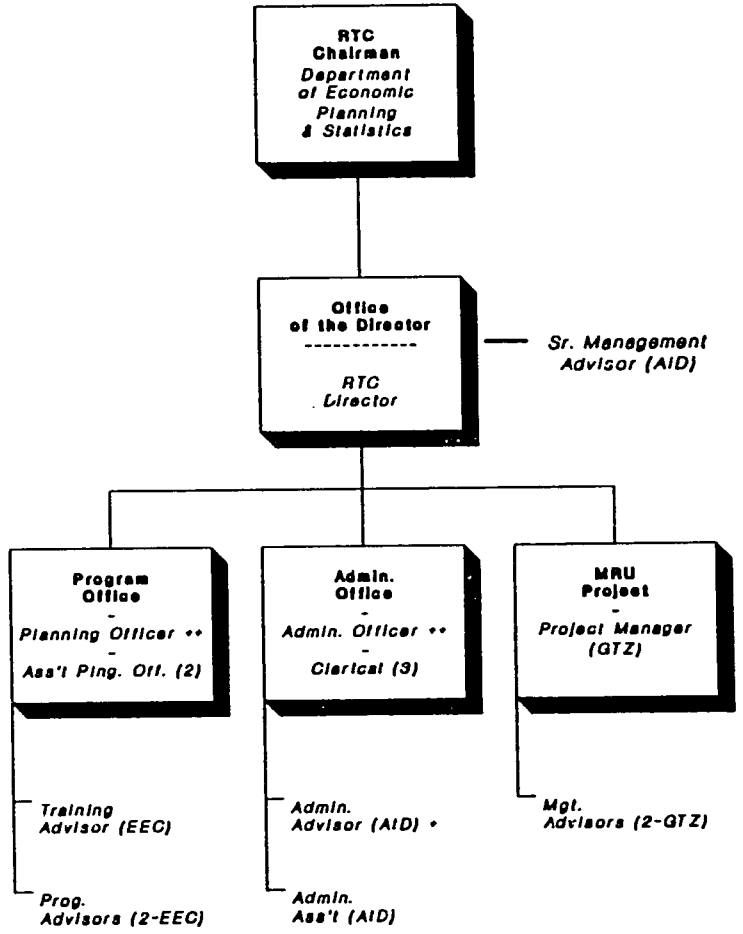
The inability of official RTC Committee meetings to make decisions and to give clear directives to the RTC Secretariat is another factor that has inhibited effective implementation of RTC projects. The SADCC tradition of reaching decisions by consensus, instead of by majority, gives rise to delays in approvals and other needed actions at various stages of the project cycle on account of one or two member states' dissension. Sometimes political factors intervene to

Figure One

RTC Secretariat
As In Grant Amendment Design



RTC Secretariat
As Now Structured



** Indicates currently vacant position

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complicate or delay what should be purely technical decisions. This, at times, has tended to frustrate RTC staff and deadened enthusiasm for new initiatives.

The MRU program unit has been making steady progress. After the departure of the former AID-funded project manager for the World Bank-sponsored UNIDEL project, a new project manager, J.P. Msimuko, was recruited regionally. His post now is funded by GTZ, the German aid agency, in a smooth transition from the former AID support. While an indicative operational plan has been drawn which outlines a number of programs to be undertaken by the MRU, there remain a number of policy issues related to GTZ funding of the MRU which the RTC must resolve. At the time of the evaluation, a senior official from GTZ came from Germany to hold discussions with the RTC on finalizing the GTZ agreement with the GOS. The integration of the MRU within the RTC structure is still in a developing stage. It is important for the institutional development of the RTC's role in SADCC that the MRU project be closely consolidated within the RTC overall program and that it remain clearly under RTC overall direction.

Sectoral Initiatives

The second set of programs of the RTC involves coordination of manpower development and training initiatives from other SADCC sectors such as agriculture, mining, energy, and transport and communication. This collaboration requires the RTC to work with manpower sector coordinators in important functions such as:

- conceptualization and design of programs;
- implementation of programs;
- identification of sectoral manpower needs; and
- support in discussions with prospective donors.

For this to happen, communication and networking between the RTC and sector coordinators is essential in order to establish and articulate these roles as well as to gain the confidence of each other.

Our findings however, suggest that meaningful collaboration has not, until recently, taken place. Sectoral manpower and training needs surveys and studies as well as the formulation of manpower projects have been undertaken with marginal involvement of the RTC. In a number of cases, the RTC has only been approached with requests for funding such projects in one form or another. This lack of coordination has often resulted in duplication of activities and sub-optimal project design, especially in terms of efficient use of scarce resources. In other instances, new and redundant institutions have been established when similar institutions already exist in the region offering relevant services.

Worse still, this situation has resulted in a lack of up to date information concerning some of these sectoral manpower initiatives and hence the inability of the RTC to monitor and review performance.

We were informed that the SADCC Secretariat recently addressed this issue and called for better coordination and more active involvement of the RTC in sectoral manpower development projects. This reaffirmation of the key role of the manpower sector adds urgency to the task of RTC institutional development to meet its growing mandate.

The reasons for the past lack of RTC-sector collaboration are varied. On the one hand, the RTC is insufficiently staffed as discussed throughout this report. On the other hand, there are sectors which have adopted the stance of resisting RTC involvement, taking the view that the RTC is not capable managing this role. Thus they have gone ahead to establish their own manpower training and development units in order to be self sufficient. Other sectors have questioned the necessity of submitting projects to RTC after they have already passed through the scrutiny of sectoral ministers.

The picture is not all negative. We were informed by an agricultural research sector (SACCAR) manpower development and training officer that improved collaboration was now taking place between SACCAR and the RTC and that SACCAR was keen to see such collaboration developed further so that the RTC would be involved in all the stages of SACCAR's manpower development programs. There are concrete examples of other sector cooperation as well, for example the RTC's comprehensive overview of training needs in the mining sector.

In many respects, the future looks brighter. The RTC, with effective direction from the senior management advisor and program advisors, has deliberately worked out mechanisms to improve collaboration and networking with the sectors. A number of meetings and workshops have taken place between the RTC advisors and several sectors to discuss their manpower projects. These meetings have helped to build a relationship of mutual confidence between the sectors and the RTC which is crucial for future collaboration. The Swazi program staff of the RTC are gradually being drawn into these networking activities as they gain experience and confidence.

To facilitate project coordination and monitoring, a flow chart has been developed indicating the different stages of the project cycle. The RTC program staff will use this tool to ensure effective monitoring and follow-up of sectoral projects.

A workshop to be attended by sector coordinators and the RTC Secretariat has been planned for November, 1989. This workshop will offer an opportunity for the two sides to elaborate and agree on new guidelines for collaboration and networking as well as to articulate and reassess the roles of the RTC in sectoral manpower development initiatives.

It is our view that the stage is now set for the RTC to undertake its mandated responsibilities effectively, assuming present trends continue. However, long term sustainability still depends on full-time availability of the RTC director and on filling the senior positions of the planning officer and administrative officer.

Project LogFrame Analysis

The design of the technical support grant extension followed the format of the AID Logical Framework. Subsequently, the RTC used the structure of the design and its indicators of achievement as a basis for its operational workplan for the January 1989 to May, 1990 period. USAID/Swaziland has used the purpose and output indicators of the design as a basis for its semi-annual implementation reports. This shared use of objectives and progress indicators, keyed to the AID grant extension design, facilitates dialogue on issues of RTC performance and provides a useful and relevant basis for evaluation.

Project Inputs

The AID supplement of $1.5 million in the grant extension (added to nearly $500 thousand remaining from the RTC's $1.4 million share in the original grant) was directed toward technical assistance and other staff support (49 %), a training resources inventory project (9 %), mission management (8 %), and operations support (6 %) with the remainder designated for meetings, evaluation, contingencies, and other items. The GOS contribution of $500 thousand was designated primarily for operations, salaries, and meetings. The rate of expenditure has been well behind schedule for reasons discussed elsewhere in this report and the availability of promised budget resources has not been a constraint.

The following table illustrates expenditures as of the last report prior to the beginning of the grant extension (3/31/88) and to date (9/30/89) against the total technical assistance grant of $2.9 million.

	LOP Budget (AID Funds*)			Expenditures	
	Orig	Amend	Total**	3/31/88	9/30/89
Technical Svcs.	708	860	1770	724	840
Staff Dev/Trng.		70	70		1
Mission Mg't/Eval.	***	150	226		146
Equipment	95	90	215	50	71
RTC Operations	201	120	250	148	153
Meetings	268	60	219	***	79
Contingency	128	150	150	24****	
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TOTAL	1400	1500	2900	946	1290

* in $000
** line items do not add to combined budget due to adjustments made later to reflect actual expenditures.
*** included in different line item
**** later reclassified

The stated focus of the USAID assistance under the grant extension was to transfer management capabilities and responsibilities to the RTC staff. The intent was to link all

technical and management advisors to specific core staff of the RTC Secretariat. This arrangement was designed to support transfer of knowledge and the establishment of RTC program and management capacity not dependent on donor-funded staff in line management or operational roles.

It was assumed in this regard that the GOS would fill the five staff positions to which they were committed, including a full-time director, two planning professionals, one administrative professional, and one support staff. In fact, the GOS provided a director, two junior planning officers, and three clerical staff. In the wake of the untimely death of the then RTC Chairman in April, 1988, the full-time RTC director was named acting principal secretary of the GOS Department of Economic Planning and Statistics. As a result of this major responsibility, which continues to the present time, he is only able to devote a fraction of his time to the RTC and often is unavailable at important times.

In effect, then, the RTC still has little regular *senior* staff input from the GOS. As important as other staff and budgetary inputs of the Government are, this gap in permanent senior staff remains a major constraint to the achievement of the institutional goals of the grant extension, notwithstanding the substantial organizational and programmatic improvements that are occurring as a result of the work of donor-funded advisors, assisted by junior Swazi staff.

Concern regarding the staff issue has been raised by the SADCC Secetariat on several occasions. The RTC director has reqested the senior management advisor to draw up a staffing requirements analysis reflecting both current needs and the demands of addressing the broader RTC mandate of the future. This analysis will form the basis of a request to the GOS for action on the approved but still vacant senior planning officer position (GOS grade 20) as well for approval of additional program positions for the RTC.

Outputs

The grant extension for the project listed 12 outputs. For purposes of discussion they are clustered here into seven categories.

1. *Staff and Office Arrangements (Project Paper Outputs 1 and 4)*

The PP specified a functioning GOS-funded full-time RTC staff complement of at least four persons established in their own office. The RTC did, in fact, move to their own office in April, 1989 with rent fully paid by the GOS (although rent support was included in the AID budget). The Swazi professional staff complement, as noted above, consists only of two full-time junior planning officers plus the part-time director. This is not an adequate base on which to build the necessary staff capacity free of advisors in operational and management roles. Meanwhile, all the advisors envisaged by the PP are in place except the AID-funded administrative advisor who now is being recruited. While these "advisors" are accelerating the pace of RTC administrative and program activity, they have no senior level counterparts to advise. Thus they still are playing the role of substitutes for the missing senior staff while endeavoring to train the junior staff to pick up greater program responsibility.

2. *Adequate Administrative, Monitoring, and Coordination Procedures (Project Paper Outputs 2 and 3)*

Progress against these outputs is good. Under the direction of the AID-funded senior management advisor, several systems and procedures have been documented or are in the process of development with local consulting assistance. Among these is a well-conceived training program that includes on-the-job mentoring, institutional courses, and tailored programs. General management, project management, human resources management, communications, the formulation and marketing of manpower programs, and computer use are among the training topics detailed for each position.

Other initiatives include automated systems for financial and other project information management and reporting, job descriptions for program staff, communications procedures, and flow charts for project implementation. A handbook of administrative, personnel, and operational procedures is in the works. In-house workshops will be held to familiarize staff with Handbook content. Staff meetings have been introduced to improve coordination within RTC staff and with the MRU program unit.

The senior management advisor has given major attention to these issues under delegation from the RTC director. In our view, his systems and procedures, only now being implemented, are appropriate and well-designed. They represent a major contribution to RTC management continuity.

3. *RTC Plans for Program and Future Organization and Staffing (Outputs 8 and 9)*

The RTC has yet to update the 5-year SADCC strategic manpower development plan of 1986. RTC advisors, however, recently prepared a discussion paper, "Future Roles of the RTC: Strategy for the Next Three Years." This paper, which will be discussed in meetings of the RTC contact points and sector coordinators later this year, raises important and policy issues and provides an excellent basis for the strategy update.

Earlier this year, RTC staff participated in a series of MRU-guided workshops to develop a comprehensive workplan for the period of the grant extension. Previous RTC workplans were used for little more than required monitoring of expenditures against the AID grant. The new plan is keyed to project design outputs but incorporates all RTC activities, including those funded by other donors, and will serve as a broad management tool. The plan includes a detailing of activities needed to achieve each output as well as timelines and budgets. It will provide a good basis for setting priorities and monitoring progress toward management targets. Its preparation also served as a useful staff and organizational development activity.

Preparation of a post-grant organization and staffing plan is scheduled for the first quarter of CY 1990 and will be based on AID decisions about possible extension of the PACD of the grant.

4. *Meetings, Seminars, and Workshops Conducted and Brochures prepared to Support Networking and the Dissemination of Manpower Information (Outputs 7 and 10)*

The AID technical support grant to the RTC has funded a variety of sector committee meetings considered by SADCC and the RTC as a critical "engine" of SADCC development. A meeting of the RTC with SADCC manpower ministers was held in July, 1989 and, in accordance with SADCC guidelines, will be held annually in the future to discuss strategic manpower issues and links to other SADCC sectors. A major meeting of the RTC with its contact points in other SADCC countries will be held in October, 1989 to develop a memorandum of understanding regarding improved mechanisms for coordination. This will be followed by a sector coordinators seminar at the beginning of November. Ten direct missions have been carried out to other sectors to provide technical support or exchange information. Only one technical experts meeting has been held -- for a local government study -- reflecting the slow pace of program implementation to date.

The RTC has not yet published a newsletter or brochure although some manpower status reports have been distributed to other sectors and the manpower contact points. Bids from local contractors for preparation of a quarterly newsletter and brochures describing the scholarship and other programs are now under review by the RTC. Publication of the first newsletter is expected within two months. Meanwhile, the MRU has produced a well-designed descriptive brochure.

5. *Update and publication of the Inventory of Training Institutions (Output 6)*

In 1986 the RTC commissioned the Social Science Research Unit (SSRU) of the University of Swaziland to develop an inventory of regional training institutions. The goal of the inventory was to facilitate the exchange of students in the region, reduce expenditure on overseas training, and stimulate the establishment of additional training resources in the region. The inventory was approved by the SADCC manpower ministers and published in 1988. It has been distributed widely in the SADCC member countries. The grant extension provided funds for the RTC to further contract the SSRU for continuous updating of the inventory. The RTC also plans to develop plans for marketing and distribution of the inventory and its updates. To date, progress against this output has been limited to preparation of terms of reference and negotiations with the SSRU about the terms of their contract. At this point, it is not clear whether the SSRU will be able to perform this task satisfactorily and alternative contracting options are being explored.

6. *Studies in areas of Manpower Planning, and for Manpower Supply and Demand in Priority Sectors (Outputs 5 and 11)*

Specific funding was provided in the grant extension for studies in these areas. To support manpower planning, there is need for a systematic analysis of the manpower and training requirements of all SADCC projects. This is as much a matter of coordination as of the performance of studies per se and, as discussed elsewhere, represents a major unaccomplished RTC mandate, despite the undertaking of a few relevant studies.

Plans to develop a prototype manpower demand data base -- initially in trade, transportation, and agriculture -- remain largely undone. A study of manpower demand for the transport sector was completed and activities are scheduled for a study of manpower requirements in the industry and trade sectors and for a sectoral workshop on manpower forecasting.

7. *Management Training Activities in Marketing, Interregional Trade, and Transportation (Output 12)*

The Management Resource Unit has completed several project planning and management training workshops in the region. A workshop to address training needs for the industry and trade sectors is planned later this year. The MRU now is staffed as anticipated with a regionally-hired project manager and an expatriate advisor, both funded by GTZ, and should be in position to move these activities forward in the future under the direction of the RTC. Addition of a second GTZ-funded management advisor is planned.

In summary, at the current time -- two-thirds of the way into the AID grant extension -- progress against planned outputs is satisfactory, particularly in light of the time lost in the wake of the former RTC Chairman's death. Much of the five months since the arrival of the senior management advisor has been used to set a firm base for both administrative and programmatic progress. There is every reason to expect an acceleration of RTC outputs during the remaining life of the grant extensi n. If the RTC Secretariat can carry out its own operational workplan for the period, and we believe that it can, it will accomplish, or in the case of some program outputs, be well on the way to accomplishing all of the project outputs except that of a full staff complement. That output, although beyond the control of the Secretariat, remains most critical to achievement of the project purpose.

Project Purpose and End of Project Status (EOPS)

The purpose of the grant amendment is to improve RTC institutional capacity to identify, support, and coordinate manpower development programs of regional impact and benefit. The major elements of that capacity are a greater role in the manpower development aspects of SADCC programs and the development of organizational and staff competence to develop manpower strategies, plan programs accordingly, attract resources, and manage those resources to achieve program objectives. The project paper affirms that managerial leadership is the key factor in assuring the success of the RTC.

Six purpose level indicators (EOPS) were set forth in the design.

1. *The RTC is playing a regionally recognized coordinating role in the manpower and training elements of all SADCC sectoral projects*

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Even when certain manpower activities are delegated to individual sectors, these are within SADCC's overall manpower strategy and RTC involvement is mandated from the stage of conceptualization onward. As the program of each SADCC sector grows, the importance of the RTC "added value" role of examining the manpower implications of these programs increases accordingly.

The desired level of consistent and recognized RTC contribution to the SADCC sectors will not be achieved by the PACD of May, 1990. For a complex set of reasons, including the RTC's historically poor program performance, a go-it-alone attitude in some sectors, and the far from satisfactory state of RTC coordination with the sectors, the RTC is not now recognized as a significant factor in the manpower and training activities of SADCC. Indeed, the RTC sometimes is considered an unnecessarily complicating factor that delays implementation of projects rather than facilitating them.

Much planning and implementation of manpower surveys, studies, and projects therefore is done outside of RTC control or even awareness. Often the design of these activities is severely flawed and their focus parochial; there is, indeed, the need for appropriate RTC assistance.

For the first time, the RTC now has the technical expertise to engage the other sectors effectively. Thus the Secretariat has much improved capacity to contribute to substantive issues in the design, implementation, and evaluation stages of sector projects. In the months ahead the RTC can expect to make significant and visible progress on both the program and sector-coordination fronts. If the present complement of staff and technical assistance personnel is able to carry out presently planned activities and initiatives without major interruption, the RTC will take important steps toward fulfilling its intended role. Its own initiative will be supported by clear SADCC direction to all sectors to avoid trends toward duplication of manpower development activities.

2. *The RTC has a demonstrated capacity to organize, and manage collection, analysis, and dissemination of useful information on regional manpower needs and training resources*

As described in the output discussion, progress toward this EOPS has lagged. Plans for production of Phase II of the Inventory of Regional Training Facilities have lagged but progress now has been made to the point of negotiations with the study contractor, the SSRU (University of Swaziland). Their performance has been poor and the RTC is assessing options for contracting at least part of the needed services for the inventory update elsewhere.

Progress on a manpower needs database also is limited to date but activities to move this program along have been scheduled in the remaining grant period. Here again, it is reasonable to expect visible movement toward achievement of this objective by the PACD but an incomplete record of actual accomplishment.

3. *The RTC is identifying, documenting, and mobilizing financial support for manpower projects and programs of regional significance*

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The RTC has good relations with major donor partners. It benefits from the presence of a USAID mission and a representative office of the EEC located in the same building as the RTC Secretariat offices. There has been a continuous and constructive interaction between these donors and the RTC for several years. GTZ is another major donor, especially for staffing and programs of the MRU. While their interest in supporting the RTC institutionally is limited, they are a resource for program funding, especially in the management training area. Overall, the RTC has proven able to mobilize funding for its activities and currently obtains program funding from, in addition to the above, ODA, CIDA, CFTC, and the Netherlands with additional pledges from India, the Soviet Union, and Austria for its scholarship program. Indeed, the pace of funding -- over $10 million in commitments from 17 donors -- is well ahead of the pace of implementation to date.

One aspect of the RTC mandate is to help mobilize funding for manpower projects of other sectors. It has not yet played this role to any major degree, in large part because the sectors have been able to attract funds without recourse to the RTC. As the RTC strengthens, it should be able to play a funding mobilization role if necessary. In sum, this EOPS should be achieved.

4. *The RTC is attracting and effectively managing donor resources, both technical and financial, for current and planned SADCC manpower activities*

Except for the lack of an administrative advisor, the RTC has an effective complement of long term technical assistance resources and these individuals are playing a very constructive role. The AID-funded and regionally hired senior management advisor has served by delegation as the *de facto* director, at least in terms of day-to-day policy implementation. Three EEC advisors for manpower planning and liaison with the SADCC program sectors are providing program leadership and helping to build the capacity of the two Swazi planning assistants on the RTC staff. These are the first RTC advisors chosen in part, on the basis of *sectoral* expertise. The MRU, as planned, has two advisors, one a SADCC national, on board. An administrative assistant, funded by the AID grant, provides accounting and other operational support.

These personnel, plus the administrative advisor now being recruited, represent all the long term technical assistance anticipated in the grant amendment and all that is required for the life of the grant.

The senior management advisor and training advisor, by delegation from the RTC director, provide effective management of the work of the program advisors and short term consultants. They have drafted a paper, "Guidelines for RTC Consultants," which contains basic information on the SADCC and the RTC, general guidelines on SADCC and RTC policy, requirements for consultant output, and criteria for bankable proposals.

The RTC also has adequate financial resources for its currently planned program. As it increases its demonstrated capacity to develop and manage programs of recognized importance, it should be able to attract the additional resources needed for an expanded mandate. In recent months, for example, the RTC has received scholarship funding pledges from several countries

and obtained support from the EEC for a major new project to develop the Mananga Agricultural Management Centre.

The RTC is improving its ability to cope with the complex demands of multi-donor reporting. Further progress on this front should be an important task of the administrative advisor when hired. The RTC also is providing adequate managerial oversight of the technical assistance personnel, largely through the direction of the senior management advisor.

5. *The RTC is documenting (in its planning outputs) and articulating (in regional meetings) its SADCC coordinating, information management, and manpower program roles*

The RTC produces and disseminates updated status reports on manpower development in the region. Its activity in attending and contributing to various regional meetings is increasing. It has a comprehensive workplan which spells out planned activities aimed at achievement of its goals. High priority has been given to moving from an overemphasis on repeated studies toward implementation activities with more impact. This EOPS target should largely be achieved by the grant PACD.

6. *The RTC has effective working relationships and regular communications with national and sectoral manpower contact points in SADCC member states*

The RTC contact points in member countries constitute, together with the RTC Secretariat itself, the substance of the network of the manpower sector of SADCC. But liaison with manpower contact points has been an historic RTC weakness. One reason is that these individuals all hold positions in their own governments and tend to view their RTC responsibilities as secondary. It is rare for any initiative to originate with a contact point or even through a contact point from a SADCC sector though their intended role includes acting as channels for the articulation of needs for project development from other sector units. An October, 1989 workshop in Swaziland will examine the issue of how to improve the usefulness of these contact points.

Upgrading this line of contact will be supplemented by an increase in direct missions to SADCC sectors to discuss manpower issues and improve coordination of manpower planning at the program conceptualization and implementation stages. RTC presence at various meetings and workshops of other sectors is another way to become informed and make contributions. As these activities grow, and as the capability of the RTC assistant planning staff to play a full role in such activities adds to the presence of the advisors, RTC performance against this target should approach satisfactory levels by the PACD.

Overall, the project extension will go far toward achieving the project goal of improvement in RTC institutional capacity as reflected in significant achievement of most of the planned purpose level indicators. There is a lag in program accomplishment, largely attributable to the loss of momentum after the former Chairman's death. Currently, however, the level of activity is high and there is a realistic workplan to accomplish most of the intended programs.

The major reservation is that institutional capacity must still incorporate a staff in which all the senior roles of leadership, direction, management, and technical contribution are played by donor-funded technical assistance. In the absence of these resources, the RTC has minimal existing or potential institutional capacity.

Project Assumptions and LogFrame Linkages

The logic of the RTC project extension design was uncomplicated. Essentially it argued that direct institutional support to the RTC through funding of technical assistance and limited operational support would provide opportunity for permanent RTC staff to learn from experience and on-the-job training so as to be able to carry on the management of the RTC and its programs on their own.

To provide this institutional strengthening, the specific project outputs emphasized staff development, planning capacity, and selected project support. The intent was that an adequately staffed RTC could plan and implement its program and prepare for the staff and other resources to do so in the future.

This logic was and is valid and the AID support, planned to have deliberate complementarity with more program-oriented assistance from the EEC and, to lesser extent GTZ, has played a critical role in enabling the RTC to function as an institution.

There were only three major assumptions underlying the project design. The first, that SADCC member states continue to cooperate for their mutual benefit has been fulfilled. The second, that donors continue to support the RTC also has been fulfilled. The third, that the GOS commitment to the RTC be illustrated by increased budgetary support and filling of established RTC staff positions has only been partially fulfilled.

The GOS has met and exceeded its commitment to budgetary support for RTC operations and has provided excellent rented space for the RTC beyond its financial commitment. It also has maintained regular payment of its SADCC contribution.

The GOS has not fulfilled its commitment to provide senior staff to the RTC. This remains a major constraint to sustainable RTC institutional development and is the major hindrance to full achievement of the outputs and purpose of the grant extension.

Sustainability Analysis - Development of the RTC as an Institution

A report on sustainability growing out of an AID Washington workshop in 1987 concluded:

> Those in developing countries are more likely to continue development efforts if they are responsible for them from the outset and have a sense of ownership of what is being done. Such responsibility and commitment is partially an institutional issue and depends on who has control and ownership of the results. (Experience)

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tells us that donors often play such a dominant role or retain sufficient controls over activities that those within the countries think of them as donor activities, feel little ownership of proposed activities and changes, and may not exercise the responsibility they possess. [3]

To some degree, the GOS and its donors have been caught in this kind of dilemma for much of the history of the RTC. In framing the design of the project amendment to the RTC, USAID/Swaziland had the very specific intention of building host country responsibility for, commitment to, and ownership of the SADCC manpower development mandate. The support provided, whether institutional, operational, or program, was directed toward this objective.

The diversion of the RTC director, when combined with the difficulties faced by the GOS in providing other senior staff, has severely limited progress toward this goal. It is important to note, however, that with the present staffing and organizational structure, the RTC is developing and documenting important institutional systems, procedures, and capabilities which are part of the sustainability solution. The RTC shows every promise of at long last establishing a recognized role for itself in SADCC manpower planning and development. In short, it will achieve or move well along toward achievement of all the purpose indicators of the grant extension except that it will be contracted and donor-funded staff instead of GOS-funded Swazi staff that provide the leadership. [4]

In late 1988, the SADCC Secretariat issued a memo titled "From Project-based to Coordinated Sector Planning" calling for improved sector planning and intensified intersectoral cooperation. The mandate of the RTC to *guide* sectoral manpower development, not simply intervene when requested, was reaffirmed. Then, in early 1989, the SADCC Council of Ministers proposed expansion of the mandate for manpower development to include primary and secondary education (foundation training) where economies of scale make regional planning appropriate. While the RTC already has addressed basic training in a project to upgrade regional science and mathematics teaching, this SADCC proposal implies a potentially large program expansion.

In recognition of the growing mandate of the RTC and of its crucial importance for regional cooperation, the Council of Ministers also initiated consideration of the conversion of the RTC to a SADCC *Commission*. The significance of this status is that responsibility for funding and staffing the RTC would devolve upon all the SADCC member states, not just Swaziland. Staff could be recruited regionally and at competitive SADCC salary scales. Performance of the RTC would not then be dependent on the limited human resource endowment of the Swazi civil service. Also, pressure for improved sector performance would not be weakened by bilateral political sensitivities as generally is the case with national sector

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[3] AID/ST/RD, "Increasing the Sustainability of Development Assistance Efforts: Lessons Learned and Implications for Donor Agencies," Washington, DC, November, 1987

[4] Of the total of 17 posts defined in the RTC organization -- including the MRU and all long term advisors -- 15 are now occupied and 11 of the 15 are from the SADCC region. But of these 11, only six are professional staff and, of these six, three are donor-funded and one, the director, is not now able to serve full-time.

units within SADCC. Were a Commission to emerge, citizens of the region now providing leadership to the RTC as technical advisors would be available as permanent staff, performing much the same roles.

The Commission idea has not yet been presented to the SADCC heads of state pending further study and detailing of the proposal. Moreover, the attitude of the Swaziland government to the idea is not yet clear. But the demands and costs of the manpower sector are high and the GOS may well ask whether the benefits to it are commensurate with the requirements. The Commission arrangement would relieve the GOS of much of its RTC recurrent cost obligation while retaining Swaziland as the base for the manpower sector and its role of providing the Chair for the sector commission.

Were it possible to project with certainty the transition of the RTC to a Commission, it then could be argued more confidently that the institutional development now taking place in the RTC would have assured continuity. In fact, it only can be said that this is a likelihood and that, even so, a period of several years probably will pass in the transition. How to guarantee continuation of a revitalized RTC and its performance through that transition is a major concern as long as that performance depends largely on temporary, contracted staff who are funded by donors with bounded time horizons.

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IV. EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings presented above, we present the following recommendations for consideration by AID and the RTC. Of most importance is the question of adequate RTC permanent staff to ensure survival of the RTC as an effective SADCC institution. With regard to implementation, we emphasize several operational items that already are receiving RTC attention but which we believe will be especially important for future performance. For AID, our recommendations relate primarily to the use of remaining project funds and the timing of the grant's ending.

RTC Staffing and Institutional Permanence

1. *The Government of Swaziland should move quickly to resolve the RTC directorship situation to ensure the availability of a fully-functioning, full-time director to provide effective leadership and policy direction.*

The only major constraint to achievement of the grant purpose is the lack of senior full-time staff in the RTC. Of most importance is a well-qualified director who can, in fact, serve full-time. It is critical that this person be in place soon (preferably by release of the present director from other duties) to share fully in the current administrative and program initiatives of the AID and EEC-funded advisors. Most importantly, an active director is needed to establish direction, set priorities, and provide continuity of leadership into the future.

The role of the director is enlarged by the current realities of the RTC's placement in the GOS. The RTC's "home", the Department of Economic Planning and Statistics (DEPS) is in the Prime Minister's Office. Consequently there is a lack of specialized ministry interest and support for the RTC as normally exists in a sectoral ministry. The Swaziland minister for high level SADCC affairs is the Minister of Finance. He is also unable to be much involved in RTC operational concerns. There is, then, a serious lack of informed, high-level support for the RTC in the GOS structure.

The GOS previously committed itself to providing a director at the deputy or undersecretary level. Sixteen months have passed since the fulfillment of that commitment was upset by the loss of the late RTC chairman and assignment of dual roles to the RTC director. It is past time to correct this deficiency.

2. *The Government of Swaziland should fill the vacant positions of Planning Officer and Administrative Officer.*

A major role of the EEC-funded technical advisors as well as the AID-funded administrative advisor (to be hired) is to transfer knowledge to permanent counterparts in the RTC. At this point, the only counterparts are junior planning officers. Sustainability of RTC program performance after the departure of the EEC technical assistance (whose contracts end

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in late 1990) depends especially on the planning officer who is supposed to direct the RTC program office. This is the first priority in the two vacant senior staff positions.

This position also is critical because of the growing portfolio of RTC program and networking activity arising from recent initiatives. More staff will be needed to cover the extensive demands of effectively addressing the total RTC mandate in all sectors.

It should be of no concern to AID whether these senior staff positions are filled by Swazis or by persons from elsewhere in the region. If the GOS and SADCC can come to some understanding about a transitional phase to commission status, perhaps staff could be hired under contract to the GOS or SADCC. But they should be regional and they preferably should be locally or regionally, not donor, funded.

3. *AID should give its full support to the concept of converting the RTC to a SADCC Commission.*

The demands of a major sectoral unit responsibility in SADCC are difficult to fulfil with the human resource limitations, competition for scarce resources, and civil service constraints within any single national government. The GOS is no exception. The Commission concept, permitting regional hiring of RTC staff at competitive SADCC salary scales, offers the best long-term solution to the staff needs of the RTC. The Commission structure has proven its merit in SADCC experience with, for example, agriculture research (SACCAR in Botswana) and transport and communications (SATCC in Mozambique).

The Commission concept for the RTC has been formally put up for discussion by the SADCC Council of Ministers. A favorable resolution of this issue should be encouraged by AID in its discussions with RTC and SADCC officials. AID also should support any interim arrangement that allows for regional recruitment and funding of RTC staff.

RTC Operations

4. *RTC management should continue efforts to involve the junior Swazi planning officers in the substantive program work of the RTC to prepare them for an enhanced leadership role in the future.*

While this issue is addressed effectively in the new RTC training plan, we emphasize the importance of making these staff feel that they are an important part of the total program of the RTC and understand its goals and priorities. This means that they need to be part of strategy determination as well as to receive additional preparation in technical knowledge relevant to the sectors for which they have responsibility. The RTC program advisors have an important responsibility to transfer knowledge to these staff; RTC management should monitor this process carefully.

5. *In its negotiations with donors for support of the MRU or similar autonomous program units, the GOS should assure that the MRU remains under the overall administrative and program direction of the RTC.*

As a semi-autonomous unit with its own funding source, the MRU need not be subject to all the reporting and accountability requirements of a regular RTC program initiative. As currently placed in the RTC organizational structure, the MRU reports to the RTC director rather than to its program office. It is important that this line of accountability be actively maintained and that the MRU report through the RTC to SADCC and to donors. The RTC also has a proper and necessary role to play in the appointment of MRU advisors and approval of their contracts.

As a part of the RTC, the resource of MRU capabilities should be available to the RTC beyond the core program now funded by GTZ. A good example was set by the MRU's guidance and assistance in the preparation of the RTC workplan. Other points of potential synergy include monitoring systems, institutional strengthening strategies, consultant rosters, and direct consulting services.

6. *The RTC should adhere to the process of holding regular monthly staff meetings.*

The process was initiated in May but has not been maintained consistently. Such meetings provide an important opportunity for involving all staff (including the MRU) in issues of importance. Meeting content should address strategy and program issues as well as administrative matters. Staff meetings should be held at least monthly.

7. *The RTC should improve its links to private sector training activities and technologies.*

Under joint Nordic country/SADCC initiative, there is a growing regional focus on the productive sector as an engine of growth and development. Although the manpower sector role is defined to facilitate technology transfer, the RTC has not yet been involved in this three-year old initiative. It is important to facilitate links between the sectors and important training initiatives not only in the public sector or training institutions but in the private sector as well.

One way to do this is to make a deliberate effort to link with associations of training that exist in several SADCC nations including Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. These organizations exist to strengthen private and public sector information exchange in the field of training. As such, they bring together suppliers and consumers of training and are an important resource for knowledge about the latest in training technology, most of which originates in the private sector. The RTC contact points could play a role in this and would themselves benefit from a role in these associations.

8. *The RTC should take more initiative in fostering coordination among its donors.*

Coordination between AID and the EEC is exemplary as manifested in the complementarity of their assistance to the RTC and by the regular pattern of informal discussion between AID and EEC representatives in Swaziland. But the RTC has many other donors who do not have a regular presence in Swaziland. The RTC should make an effort to organize donor meetings when representatives of their donors pass through Swaziland. This is especially important at the present for the GTZ as a major supporter of the MRU.

One objective of these consultations should be to find ways to simplify and coordinate donor accountability procedures. Satisfying the particular requirements of its many donors is a very demanding task for the RTC staff.

Another opportunity for coordination is the upcoming (early 1991) EEC evaluation of their technical support to the RTC. USAID and the EEC should share the findings of their respective evaluations and plan their response with the same coordination that characterizes their current assistance.

9. *The RTC should give high priority to completing an update of the 5-year manpower development strategy.*

A good beginning has been made through the RTC staff discussion paper addressing important policy and operational issues. Subsequent to the meetings of the contact points and sector coordinators in October and November, 1989, the RTC should place strategy revision high on its list of priorities.

10. *The RTC should document all of its emerging systems and procedures.*

Through most of its history, it appears that very little of RTC systems and procedures was documented. To the extent that such systems were developed. knowledge of them often departed with the consultants who introduced them.

Currently the senior management advisor is introducing a number of systems and procedures covering administrative matters and program monitoring. A handbook covering these systems is planned. We emphasize the importance of documenting these excellent innovations for the RTC so that they will have greater chance of sustainability in the possible absence of the senior management advisor.

11. *The RTC needs to improve allocation and management of its clerical resources.*

These persons appear to have a low level of motivation, initiative, and productivity. They often are unwilling or unable to provide typing and other support to the RTC's Swazi staff members. There is need for clearer standards of performance backed by better supervision of the RTC clerical office. There needs also to be a clearer policy on whether professional staff will have typing support or are to do their own text entry to computers. At present there are perceptions of discriminatory access to clerical services that favor the advisors.

AID Decisions: Budget and PACD Issues

12. *USAID/Swaziland should continue its close and productive working relationship with the RTC for the life of project support.*

The mission's familiarity and close working relationship with the RTC provided a very positive manifestation of RTC-donor relations, as attested by RTC leadership. In times past, the mission project manager has served as a management and even technical advisor to the RTC. As the RTC's own cadre of staff and advisors has grown, the role of the AID project manager had appropriately changed to that of providing advice and counsel as needed and helping specifically with AID grant management concerns.

As time passes, the effort devoted to this role (as distinct from the demands of internal AID grant management) should further decrease but the role of a well-informed AID project officer will remain very important. It is probable that the current project manager, Jan Rockliffe-King, will complete her term in Swaziland in 1990. If this happens before the grant ends, a qualified replacement should be assigned the RTC liaison role.

13. *AID should focus program support to the RTC on strengthening its linkages to training institutions in the region.*

The RTC is not yet playing a visible role in assisting management training institutions in the region with capacity-building, client and business development, or networking services. The MRU has drawn up a plan to work with management institutions of various types to help identify their strengths and weaknesses and to develop appropriate institutional strengthening strategies. One objective is to utilize institutions for local consulting services, not simply draw individual experts away from them to provide services.

AID project funds for the MRU should be redirected to support of this initiative which would precede the management development projects previously proposed in the grant extension but, as yet, unimplemented. The MRU institutional strengthening initiative should be seen as a model for the RTC to follow in its linkage with institutions in other sectors.

14. *The grant amendment PACD should be extended 16 months to September 30, 1991 on a no-cost basis.*

Institutional development takes time. Under optimal circumstances, the time horizon of the 1988 grant amendment might have been sufficient. In reality, the time lost in recruiting the senior management advisor and the *de facto* loss of a full-time director have delayed progress. With momentum now reestablished, a high value return on AID's investment can be expected in the months ahead. It would be counterproductive to cut this off as soon as May, 1990.

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An extension, once approved, also would allow for the hiring of an administrative advisor for a contract in the 18-24 month time frame. This improves the likelihood of a superior candidate who will have time to focus on the task at hand. In our view, at such time as both a Swazi administrative officer and the AID-funded administrative advisor are on board, the AID-funded position of administrative assistant should be phased out.

15. *The remaining project budget as of May 31, 1990 should be directed entirely to the categories of long term technical assistance, RTC/MRU institutional networking, staff development, and mission management.*

At present, over US$ 1.5 million remains of the total grant of $ 2.9 million. By the PACD of May 31, 1990, an estimated $ 1 million will remain. In accordance with the terms of the grant amendment, support for operations, meetings, and equipment should end. The RTC has shown that it can now fund these items with GOS budget support, SADCC funds, or donor funds it can obtain elsewhere.

16. *AID should intensify its discussions with all involved departments of the GOS to firmly encourage the government to both resolve the problem of an available full-time RTC director and to name a senior planning officer.*

For reasons emphasized throughout this report, successful development of a sustainable RTC depends on a qualified full-time director. In the absence of a director, the withdrawal of donor-funded advisors would leave a vacuum, all good intentions notwithstanding. The benefits of continued management assistance and staff training will only bear lasting fruit if there is a full-tim, fully-available director. This is consistent, moreover, with the conditionality of the 1986 grant amendment.

In view of the political complexity of resolving the DEPS principal secretary vacancy and its direct impact on the RTC directorship, the prompt assignment of a senior planning officer to the RTC would do much to fill the gap. Such a senior staff person should have the capability of serving as deputy director and filling many of the functions of a director if necessary. Suggestion of this temporary compromise, however, does not reduce the emphasis of this report on the importance of filling all three senior staff positions in the RTC - director, planning officer, and administrative officer - on a permanent and full-time basis.

Based on its discussions with the GOS, AID should consider whether action on recommendations 13 and 14 above should be made conditional on the GOS resolving the director or senior planning officer positions or both.

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ANNEX 1

Persons Contacted

ANNEX 1

Persons Contacted

Swaziland

Elliot Bhembe	Director, Regional Training Council
M. T. Sabai	Senior Management Advisor, Regional Training Council
Ethel Shongwe	Assistant Planning Officer, Regional Training Council
Thembie Zwane	Assistant Planning Officer, Regional Training Council
K.D. Wagner	SADCC Training Advisor, Regional Training Council
Philip Galjaard	Advisor for Transport, Communications, Energy, and Mining, Regional Training Council
Vicky Migochi	Administrative Assistant, Regional Training Council
Anthony Crasner	Manpower Advisor, European Economic Community
J.P. Msimuko	Project Manager, Management Resource Unit
Hans Meyer	Management Advisor, Management Resource Unit
Roger Carlson	Director, USAID
Jan Rockliffe-King	Project Officer, USAID
Jim Bednar	Program Officer, USAID
Mary Huntington	Deputy Director, USAID
Leticia Diaz	Chief, Office of Human Resources and General Development, USAID
Phindile Mkhonta	Department of Economic Planning and Statistics, Government of Swaziland
Dennis M. Wachinga	Manpower and Training Officer, Southern African Center for Cooperation in Agricultural Research (SACCAR)

Max Mwanahibe	Executive Secretary, Association of Management Training Institutions in East and Southern Africa

Botswana

E.L. Setshwaelo	Regional Director, Institute of Development Management
Richard Betz	Academy for Educational Development
John Roberts	Assistant Director, USAID
Barbara Belding	Human Resources Development Officer, USAID
C.J.G. Hove	Project Officer, SADCC Secretariat

ANNEX 2

Evaluation Terms of Reference

PIO/T No.: 645-0215-3-80055

ATTACHMENT I

SCOPE OF WORK FOR MID-TERM EVALUATION
SADCC TECHNICAL SUPPORT GRANT - REGIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL
690-0215.45

I. BACKGROUND

The lack of skilled human resources is a major constraint to the implementation of the national and regional development programs in the SADCC region. From its beginnings, SADCC has affirmed that training should be an integral part of all major projects in all program sectors. This recognition led to the designation of a manpower sector and its assignment to the Government of Swaziland. Accordingly, the GOS created the Regional Training Council (RTC) to identify, support, and coordinate manpower development programs of regional impact, an agenda that is at the core of the SADCC agenda.

While each SADCC sector is authorized to develop training programs to meet its own project needs, these programs are to be planned and implemented in coordination with the RTC. In addition, the RTC manages its own portfolio of projects and studies that address cross-sectoral needs.

The RTC was placed in the Department of Economic Planning and Statistics (DEPS). Its operations are served by a Secretariat consisting of DEPS staff augmented by donor-funded technical assistance personnel. For most of its history, however, the RTC has suffered from the lack of permanent DEPS staff, and has depended on donor-funded technical assistance personnel who have substituted for, rather than developed, RTC legitimacy and capacity as an institution. Although RTC performance fell behind SADCC and donor expectations, it has managed some significant individual projects including an inventory of regional training resource, pilot projects in management development, a series of sectoral training needs studies, and a scholarships and awards program. Recently both its portfolio of projects and the momentum of its activities has increased.

The RTC has been given the challenge to develop the organizational and staff capacity to fulfill its mandate. In this connection in 1984 AID and the Government of Swaziland undertook the SADCC Technical Support Grant - Regional Training Council (690-0215.45) to provide support to the RTC. The project was amended in 1988 with the purpose being to improve the RTC's institutional capacity to identify, support and coordinate manpower development programs of regional impact and benefit.

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The primary elements of the project extension are the provision of long term technical assistance to the RTC, support for manpower projects and studies including Phase II of the Inventory of Regional Training Institutions, staff development and training, and support for operating costs and meetings.

End of Project Status

By the PACD of May 31, 1990 it is expected that the following conditions will have been achieved:

1. The RTC is playing a regionally recognized coordinating role in the manpower and training elements of SADCC sectoral projects.

2. The RTC has demonstrated capacity to organize and manage collection, analysis, and dissemination of useful information on regional manpower needs and training resources.

3. The RTC is identifying, documenting, and mobilizing financial support for manpower projects and programs of regional significance.

4. The RTC is attracting and effectively managing donor resources, both technical and financial, for current and planned SADCC manpower activities.

5. The RTC is documenting (in its planning outputs) and articulating (in regional meetings) its SADCC coordinating, information management, and manpower program roles.

6. The RTC has effective working relationships and regular communication with national and sectoral manpower contact points in SADCC member states.

Twelve project outputs which will result in these end of project conditions are also anticipated:

1. A functioning GOS-funded full-time RTC staff.

2. Adequate RTC internal administrative control and project monitoring procedures.

3. Clear reporting relationships and division of responsibilities among RTC staff and project units.

4. The RTC and its units established in one separate office.

5. A prototype study of manpower supply and demand for selected categories of skills in three priority sectors (trade, transport and agriculture) leading to the development of a permanent manpower database.

6. Inventory of training institutions updated and published regularly.

7. Newsletters and brochures regularly published by the RTC.

8. Annually updated three-year strategic and annual workplans for RTC operations in support of the SADCC manpower strategy.

9. An RTC organization and staffing plan for the two or three year post-grant period that defines anticipated staffing needs and roles and includes a resources plan to finance staff needed to meet program objectives.

10. Meetings, seminars, and workshops organized and conducted including training resource inventory discussions, technical experts meetings (TEMS) to review studies and projects, and networking meetings to disseminate manpower information.

11. Studies performed in the areas of manpower planning.

12. Management training activities completed in marketing and interregional trade; and port, rail, and road transportation.

Article I: Title

SADCC Technical Support Grant - Regional Training Council
690-0215.45
Mid-Term Evaluation

Article II: Objective

The contractor will provide an individual with skills and background in management, manpower planning and development, and evaluation to be a member of a two-person team which will review the progress of the Regional Training Council under the SADCC Technical Support Grant in relation to the stated project purpose, and the achievement of the end of project status.

The individual will perform these services in coordination with a SADCC national of similar background and experience who will be hired under a separate

contract. Together the team will undertake the scope of work described in Article III. The individual provided under this contract will serve as team leader and will have primary responsibility for production of the final report.

Article III: Statement of Work

In conformance with the goal and purpose of the project paper amendment the mid-term evaluation will examine the institutional and managerial effectiveness of the RTC and the development of the Swazi staff. This will involve a process evaluation, including organizational and systems analysis. It will look at the broader questions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of project outputs and inputs as well as unanticipated effects. The evaluation will recommend changes in the project elements necessary to achieve the project purpose. Using project baseline data, records, correspondence, documents, interviews and indicators the evaluators will assess progress towards target objectives as indicated by the End of Project Status and the Project Purpose in the logical framework. Progress will be compared to the baseline conditions at the start of the project extension (June, 1988) as well as to the EOPS.

The evaluators will perform the following activities:

A. Review the appropriateness, timeliness and quality of project inputs (GOS and USAID). They will assess the validity of the assumptions stated in the logical framework, and provide a descriptive analysis of the project status relative to the inputs. They will identify problems and make recommendations for overcoming them.

B. Review project outputs, noting whether a logical relationship exists between inputs, outputs and output assumptions. Quantify progress made towards achieving output indicators and provide an explanation of areas where project outputs either exceeded or fell short of projections. Recommendations for overcoming shortfalls should be included.

Are activities described in the Project Paper being carried out? What has been the impact of these activities in relation to project outputs and EOPS? Which activities described in the RTC's Life of Project workplan would most contribute to achieving the project purpose within the remaining Life of Project?

C. Review the project purpose and assess the extent to which project inputs and outputs are, or are not, leading to the achievement of that purpose by the project assistance completion date (PACD). Should the PACD be extended?

Are the initial logical framework assumptions still valid? If not, what modifications should be made and what implications do these changes have for the Project? How has the RTC improved as an institution and in its ability to carry out its SADCC mandate? To what extent can improvement be attributed to the Project? Should the PACD be extended?

D. Review any constraints which may have hindered Project progress and, where possible, recommend future actions to remedy such constraints.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CONSULTANT

Senior Development Management Specialist (Team Leader): The consultant should have an advanced degree in management or a related field. He should have at least ten years experience in management, organizational development, and manpower as well as in project evaluation. Excellent analytical and writing skills are required. Previous work with a similar SADCC institution would be an advantage. Experience in developing countries is essential.

Article IV: Reports:

The evaluators will debrief USAID and the RTC on their findings and recommendations three days prior to completion of the consultancy. Prior to his departure the team leader will present USAID with a draft evaluation report.

When USAID/S and the RTC have reviewed and commented on the draft report the contractor will produce a final report and transmit twenty copies to USAID/Swaziland.

Article V: Relationships and Responsibilities

The Senior Development Management Specialist will coordinate his work through USAID/Swaziland Human Resources/General Development Officer and USAID/Swaziland Evaluation Officer.

Article VI: Terms of Performance

Work will commence on or about September 11, 1989. Work is expected to end on or about October 13, 1989.