

**Review of the  
CRS/Rwanda Title II  
Distribution Program  
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**I. Barker - Program Office  
J. Pirano - CRS Director  
M. A. ... - Admin Assistant  
D. Nelson - AR/FFPO**

## INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND

CRS began operating a PL 480 Title II food distribution program in Rwanda shortly after signing an agreement with the Government of Rwanda (GOR) on October 22, 1963. This agreement provides for duty-free entry of the commodities as well as CRS' exemption from GOR taxes. At the time of the review, CRS/Rwanda was the only voluntary agency in Rwanda functioning as a PL 480 Title II cooperating sponsor

The CRS/Rwanda Title II program's commodity distribution level approved for FY 1980 is 5,852.9 metric tons, valued at \$3.763 million\* consists of 798.3 mt. soy-fortified cornmeal, 1,302.1 mt. non-fat dry milk, 1,092 mt. soy-fortified rolled oats, 738.2 mt. rice, 674.5 mt. vegetable oil, and 1,247 mt. wheat flour. These commodities will be distributed to approximately 36,000 pre-school age children, 7,000 mothers in a pre-school nutrition project, 14,500 children enrolled in secondary schools, and 16,000 children attending post-primary school home economics and vocational training courses. 6,100 children and adults also receive Title II food in other child feeding and welfare programs. Although CRS/Rwanda's Annual Estimate of (commodity) requirements (AER) had provided for commodity distribution to 100 food for work participants, this project had not started at the time of the review, although a small food for work program was carried out by CRS in 1979. Prior to FY 80, the post-primary school feeding project was included under the food for work category.

As the CRS/Rwanda Title II program had not undergone an assessment by representatives of AID and CRS since its inception, (although CRS did conduct an in-depth evaluation of the pre-school nutrition program in 1975) a review was planned and a scope of work developed by the Regional Food for Peace Office (R/FFPO) in Nairobi. During January 14 through 23, 1980, a team consisting of AAO/Kigali's Program Officer and Administrative Assistant assigned to monitor the CRS/Rwanda Title II program, the CRS/Rwanda Director and the Assistant Regional Food for Peace Officer, (AR/FFPO) informally met with officials of the Government of Rwanda's Ministry of Social Affairs' Nutrition Bureau, and CRS administrative and warehousing personnel. The team also visited nutrition centers and post-primary training facilities located in Kamonyi (approximately 20 kms. southwest of Kigali), Shyongi (approximately 15 kms. northwest of Kigali), where PL 480 Title II foods are being distributed, as well as nutrition centers located in Kivumo (approximately 210 kms. northwest of Kigali) and Murunda (approximately 170 kms. northwest of Kigali), where Title II foods

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\*Est. commodity prices as of August 16, 1979 and ocean/inland transportation rates averaged at \$300 per mt.

are not distributed.

The review focused on three considerations: (1) policies of CRS, the GOR and AID as they impact upon the Title II food distribution program in Rwanda; (2) management of the program by CRS/Rwanda and; (3) the development, implementation and future of the discrete Title II projects being assisted by CRS/Rwanda. As the majority of the recipients are enrolled in the pre-school nutrition project, and are designated by the GOR, USG and CRS as the most vulnerable group, particular emphasis was placed on this aspect of the CRS/Rwanda assistance. Observations were also made on the operation of the post-primary and secondary school feeding projects, although to a lesser degree. Due to the brevity of time and considerable planning involved in travelling in Rwanda, the team did not attempt to visit nutrition centers, schools and other facilities throughout the country. Instead, field visits were made to centers selected because of their location in surplus or deficit areas. Upon the advice of the GOR Nutrition Bureau, the team also scheduled the field visits in order to observe two pre-school nutrition centers where Title II commodities are distributed as well as two centers where they are not distributed.

The review did not attempt a measurement of the impact of the CRS/Rwanda Title II food distribution program on the nutritional status of Rwandans. However, in the course of their inquiry to determine whether the program was meeting the PL 480 Title II objectives and objectives stated in the AAO/Rwanda's CDSS and CRS/Rwanda's Annual Program Plan, the team did conclude that the carrying out of such an exercise in Rwanda is feasible and pending agreement on a scope of work, should be conducted with all due speed. During the review, some empirical observations were developed which might further a subsequent nutrition evaluation.

#### I. Policy Considerations

As CRS has been established in Rwanda longer than its counterparts, the AAO/Rwanda and the GOR Nutrition Bureau, it is appropriate that CRS' policies vis-a-vis implementation of its Title II projects be discussed first.

Since its beginning with a small number of Catholic Missions in 1966, CRS assistance to the pre-school nutrition project, covering over 80 nutrition centers, has been found by the centers to be a major stimulus in the growth of support and interest in pre-school nutrition in Rwanda. CRS maintains that the continued increase in the nutrition

centers applying for Title II commodities and other inputs such as the growth charts, weighing scales and educational materials, shows recognition by local government and mission personnel connected with the health care infrastructure, that preventive health care and nutrition education as practiced by the nutrition centers in connection with Title II commodities distribution is an important factor in the well-being of mothers and children and economic viability of the family unit.

CRS/Rwanda also maintains that although education represents the single largest expenditure of the GOR, the government has been unable to provide full support to the student population. The percentage of the costs met by the GOR for each student (until this year, all secondary school students' board), averages approximately 30% of the total outlay. The remaining 70% must be met by the student, the school and outside assistance. Title II foods provided by CRS comprise the major portion of the meals secondary school students eat during the nine month school year. In consideration of Rwanda's economic situation and its position on the United Nations' list as one of the six least developed countries in the world, CRS feels that continuation and modest expansion of the secondary school program is justified.

Maintenance of the school lunch program reaching post-primary vocational education students is also justified, according to CRS, since it provides an incentive to attendance. Discussions with the administrators of both primary and secondary schools support these views. For instance, the administrator of one secondary school located south of Kigali informed the team that without the provision of donated food commodities, the GOR would be incapable of providing meals to the students, the vast majority of whom attend on a boarding basis due to the scattered nature of Rwanda's population. (There are few real villages.) Teachers at the post-primary education facility visited said that the Title II commodities, combined with locally grown foods often prepared by the students themselves, furnishes a nutritious meal to students who may live as far as three hours walk from the facility. One teacher interviewed said some students leave home (sometimes as far as 20 kms. away) and do not return until night fall. She indicated that without the lunch, they would be too hungry and exhausted to study.

CRS/Rwanda also believes that the distribution of Title II commodities to adult and child welfare cases, orphanages run by Protestant and Catholic Missions as well as hospitalization of the severely malnourished, demonstrates the compassion of the American people through charitable distribution of food to the institutionalized, the sick and handicapped. However, CRS carefully maintains a policy of according first priority in food distribution to pre-school age children and mothers.

The pre-school nutrition program is the most crucial intersection of CRS and GOR policy concerns. Prior to the establishment of the Ministry of Social Affairs Nutrition Bureau in 1975, CRS/Rwanda maintained a cordial but not intensive working relationship with the Ministry of Social Affairs. With the establishment of the Nutrition Bureau, CRS recognized that the GOR had invested in the office responsibility as overseer of all nutrition centers in the country, regardless of whether they were distributors of Title II commodities. CRS/Rwanda and Nutrition Bureau staff meet once monthly to discuss planning and administration of the pre-school nutrition project. CRS/Rwanda staff also encourage Nutrition Bureau personnel to make joint field visits. The CRS/Rwanda Director remarked that his counterpart in the Nutrition Bureau was an enthusiastic traveller and occasionally accompanied him on visits to the nutrition centers.

According to the CRS/Rwanda Country Director, CRS has, since the inception of the Bureau, maintained a clear policy that any nutrition center wishing to receive Title II inputs may do so as long as the center adheres to a procedure of: (1) enrolling only 1 child per family, (2) performing a simple physical examination on the recipient child as part of the enrollment procedure, (3) weighing and maintaining records on the child's progression according to the CRS Growth Surveillance System and (4) providing Title II commodities according to ration levels established by CRS and approved by AID.

CRS/Rwanda also points out that care is taken not to convey the impression to the Nutrition Bureau or to nutrition center personnel that the provision of Title II foods is the reason why recipients should be encouraged to attend the nutrition centers. Title II foods are seen as significant, but only one factor which should stimulate the mothers' attendance, with other factors being the opportunity to see the growth of their child through the weighing

and recording process vis-a-vis other children, as well as the chance to learn, through practical demonstrations, how to prepare more nutritious meals with locally available foods, start a kitchen garden and raise chickens and rabbits, two appropriate sources of animal protein. CRS personnel maintain that the most important aspect of their pre-school nutrition project policy is that Title II commodities are only supplementary to local foods, which recipient mothers and fathers must learn to properly provide their children.

GOR attitudes vis-a-vis CRS' role in post-primary, institutional and secondary school feeding are well established and government recognizes the major contribution CRS-provided Title II foods makes in supporting the secondary school population. Yet, the team did recognize in discussions with CRS, secondary and post-primary school personnel, that limitations on PL 480 assistance as well as CRS' own resources may occasion the need to consider whether the provision of Title II foods can keep in step with the GOR's expansion of vocational training centers and secondary school education indefinitely. As stated in their FY 80 Program Plan, CRS will closely monitor the GOR's planned expansion of secondary education and rural training schools in order to assess the implications of future involvement.

In accordance with CRS/NY's policy guidelines which emphasize the focus of country project activities towards one broad objective, i.e., the combatting of malnutrition, the Rwanda Program Director described how other aspects of the program relate to the Title II program. For example, the silo construction project begun in 1975, emphasizes the cooperative storage of farm production for use during the pre-harvest "lean season", thereby lessening the impact of local food shortages and subsequent nutritional deficiencies. In cooperation with the GOR, CRS/Rwanda has, through the pre-school nutrition centers, embarked on a sunflower seed demonstration program which, if successful, could result in the development of an indigenous oil seed production capability. This project in itself might make possible a future reduction of edible oil imports or allow farmers to supply oil for their own needs. The CRS Director indicated that the GOR is very interested and closely following the results of the oil seed project.

The GOR has started a health sector policy which gives priority to preventive medical care and promotion of sanitation and nutrition through education, increased immunization and mass medical treatment programs. The GOR recognizes that in furtherance of this policy, a key role is played by the Protestant and Catholic mission "centres de sante" located throughout the country, consequently, the great majority of the pre-school nutrition centers are located in mission health care

complexes. The missions also run many secondary schools and post-primary education facilities as well.

During the 1978 calendar year, the GOR subsidized warehousing and inland transportation costs of commodities to the secondary schools amounting to RWF 5.82 million or dollars 63.6 thousand. The GOR also paid the 1% "MAGERWA" bonded warehousing charge on Title II commodities amounting to RWF 2.84 million or dollars 31 thousand.

During the same period, pre-school nutrition centers using Title II foods contributed RWF 26.6 million or dollars 291.4 thousand to help defray warehousing and handling costs, transportation costs from Kigali to recipient centers, personnel costs at the CRS warehouse at St. Andre College, Kigali, and food-related personnel and supervision costs at the nutrition centers.

The communal administrations have also dramatically increased their interest and participation in the pre-school nutrition program. According to the CRS/Rwanda Director, in 50% of the pre-school nutrition centers, at least one monitrice's salary is paid by the communes, up from none in 1977. In CY 78 the communal contribution to monitrices' salaries amounted to RWF 3.64 million or dollars 39.8 thousand.

Recently, the GOR and most notably the President of Rwanda, has emphasized the need for the country to rely on local resources and talent to achieve development goals. He recently noted that while the participation of foreign donors was welcomed, Rwandans must learn self reliance. This does in no way mean that the GOR will terminate the role of the missions and voluntary organizations in health and nutrition programs, but within the policy-making level of the Nutrition Bureau, a pronounced attitude against the distribution of imported foods exists. It needs to be emphasized that the negative views of the Nutrition Bureau, particularly the Rwandan Director and FAO-provided Nutrition Advisor, have been known to the CRS, the AAO and AR/FFPO for quite some time prior to this review.

The Director of the Nutrition Bureau and his principal advisor have expressed repeatedly that the provision of imported foods to recipient mothers and children enforces an attitude of dependence, i.e., the mother may think that the child will grow only because it eats the imported food, and that the child also develops a taste preference for the exotic and locally unavailable commodities. The Nutrition Bureau Director maintains that external donors such as the USG should provide money to the GOR enabling them to buy locally produced foods for the nutrition program instead of having to depend on another country's

surplus production. Although the Nutrition Bureau has not embarked on a policy restricting nutrition centers from applying to CRS for Title II foods, they have been attempting to launch a program of establishing nutrition centers where imported foods are not provided except as therapy in cases of extreme malnutrition. Thus far, the Nutrition Bureau has established 10 pre-school nutrition centers where no imported foods are distributed. The review team visited 2 of them, both located in Catholic Mission health care facilities (observations and conclusions relative to the team's visits to the food and non-food distributing centers are described in the third section of this paper), and it was interesting that among centers personnel, attitudes for and against the distribution of imported foods seem to transcend boundaries of church and state.

CRS/Rwanda, in recognizing the Nutrition Bureau's primacy in developing the country's nutrition policy, encourages their participation in field assessments and also refers the centers to the Bureau for guidance on nutrition policy. However, CRS/Rwanda's Director and nutrition supervisors (one French and the other Rwandan) argue that despite the Nutrition Bureau's refusal to lend attribution to the role of CRS and Title II commodities, centers continue to apply for the assistance. CRS/Rwanda personnel are careful to recognize that the provision of Title II food is not, nor should it be the sole factor in the pre-school nutrition recipient's participation, but that the foods are seen as an important incentive to the parents' continued investment of time in the program. The team found that in centers where Title II commodities are distributed, these views were shared by the monitrices and administrators. By the end of FY 80, CRS/Rwanda anticipates that 86 centers will be receiving Title II commodities, weighing scales, growth charts and other inputs through CRS.

As stated in their FY 81 CDSS, AAO/Rwanda recognizes malnutrition as of the country's primary health problems, but also sees that the task of increasing food production and ensuring its availability to poorer Rwandans is difficult and will take considerable time. The CDSS also notes Rwanda's increasing population, limited arable land and the vagaries of the weather which have led to food shortages necessitating the importation of major amounts of food in 1974-75 and 1977

In furtherance of humanitarian purposes and also in support of Rwandan development objectives of increasing food production and improving nutritional standards, the AAO projected a modest increase in the PL 480 Title II program during the FY 81-85 planning period, with the major proportion of the increase to be reflected in the pre-school nutrition program.

Based on this review, the team believes that the CRS/Rwanda Title II program continues to play a significant contributory role in meeting humanitarian concerns as well as GOR and USG development objectives. Through the provision of Title II commodities only under a policy of emphasizing their supplementary role to local foods and in support of GOR-implemented nutrition education programs emphasizing practical demonstrations, the CRS program does meet the objectives of the AAO CDSS and AID Handbook 9 as they relate to pre-school feeding and nutrition education.

The contribution of Title II foods through CRS to the secondary and post-primary education programs in Rwanda also support the objective of encouraging recipient countries to provide a balanced diet to school age children. However, this statement must be tempered with the view by the USG representatives, that ultimately, CRS and the Ministry of Education will have to reach an understanding that Title II assistance may be limited in the future, and that the parameters of assistance in the secondary and post-primary education sectors needs to be defined. The AAO and R/FFPO are also satisfied that CRS/Rwanda and the USG agree that while the institutional and welfare feeding projects do perform a valuable humanitarian contribution to the Rwandan people, emphasis will continue to be given to meeting the nutritional priorities of pregnant and lactating mothers of pre-school age children.

The USG members of the review team have also expressed to CRS/Rwanda their concern that the policies of CRS and the GOR Nutrition Bureau regarding food aid are on a divergent course which could vitiate the contribution CRS has made in improvement of the well-being of Rwandans and USG development assistance objectives. The team feels that a professionally conducted study, conducted by qualified evaluators recognized by CRS and the USG, to determine the efficacy of Title II food aid vis-a-vis the economic and nutritional status of pre-school nutrition project participants may enable such differences to be resolved on a professional basis. Members of the review team agree that such a study cannot be realistically discussed with the GOR until all parties can agree on the development of a generic scope of work for such an evaluation.

In the meantime, CRS/Rwanda could perhaps lessen differences and underlying professional animosity felt by the Nutrition Bureau's Director and Advisor through the sharing of observations prepared by the CRS Regional Office in Nairobi following review of master growth charts prepared by each nutrition center following the Growth Surveillance

System. In any event, the AAO and R/FFPO believe that CRS/Rwanda should continue to go "the extra mile" to share the techniques of administration, education, surveillance of results, thereby keeping the lines of communication open.

## II. Management of Title II Inputs

In order to determine progress made by CRS in improving the management of Title II commodities since the last AAG/AFR audit in April, 1979, and in anticipation of proposed recipient and commodity levels for the FY 81 program, the review also focused on CRS/Rwanda's commodity management and reporting practices.

CRS/Rwanda has reinstated preparation of the commodity status and recipient status reports (CSR's and RSR's). This will enable CRS and the AAO to review participation in each project against approved commodity/recipient levels in the FY 80 AER. The CSR and RSR's have begun to reflect variations in recipient attendance which, if the reports continue to be submitted on a regular basis, may help to anticipate trends in recipient participation and more accurate planning of recipient requirements and commodity call forwards.

CRS/Rwanda reported some improvement in the quality of ex-ship tackle independent surveys being performed in Mombasa, but is still dissatisfied with the length of time in preparation and submission of the survey report. The AR/FFPO noted that CRS/Rwanda's present surveyor has not provided tally sheets along with the survey, warranting further inquiry into preparation of the survey. CRS and the AAO/Rwanda have been assured that the matter will be looked into by the Regional Food for Peace Office.

CRS/Rwanda did offer preliminary data based on arrival statistics for approximately 30% of the food received under the FY 79 AER, which showed that both marine and inland losses have significantly declined. The decline in marine and inland losses was attributed to improved packaging (particularly for the non-fat dry milk) and the freight for agreement to segregate all marine damaged (including ship's discharge packages and load them on a separate truck. Drivers are now required to sign for an intact shipment loaded at the port rather than for a mixed load of damaged and undamaged packages. According to CRS, marine losses have declined from 1.0% during FY 78 to 0.7% in FY 79, while inland losses have declined from 1.8% to 1.0% for an overall decline from 2.8% to 1.7%.

The backlog of unsettled inland claims has not been reduced, and the AR/FFPO has noted that claims referred to his office have not been disposed of. This matter will be given priority attention by the R/FFPO office. The AAO has also requested the Regional FFP office to advise a procedure for timely disposal of inland claims.

Condemnation of unfit commodities remained at acceptable levels during the FY 79 programming year. There were instances of condemnation involving a total of 30 mt. of Title II commodities. These were brought to the attention of the AAO, and the majority was judged fit and sold for animal feed by CRS/Rwanda.

CRS/Rwanda has reported several instances of diversion of Title II commodities into the local market. AAO reported that CRS has taken quick action to investigate the allegations, and in one instance, CRS personnel found that Rwandan customs had auctioned on the local market 13 cartons (98 containers) of Title II edible oil which customs authorities claimed was smuggled in from Burundi. CRS/Rwanda has reported the incident to their colleagues in Bujumbura and enjoined Rwandan customs to notify them of any further seizures of Title II commodities.

The CRS/Rwanda Director also apprised the Program Officer and AR/FFPO of a recent incident involving diversion of 1,487 packages of Title II commodities consigned to the GOR Ministry of Youth. According to the Director, after the matter made its way to the President's office, CRS received assistance of Rwandan law enforcement authorities and was able to document what happened. These documents have been shared with the AAO and CRS has been advised by them and the AR/FFPO to pursue a claim with the Ministry of Youth as well as suspend further shipments of food through them.

The AAO and R/FFPO are satisfied that CRS/Rwanda is making all reasonable efforts to detect and trace diversions of commodities into the market economy.

The recent AAO audit and CRS' own inspections have noted that effective management of the Title II program has been handicapped by two factors: the first being less than accurate commodity accounting and record-keeping and the second, dependence on a tenuous supply line extending from the nearest seaport, Mombasa, Kenya, 1,200 kms. distant and across two international borders. This makes maintenance of an uninterrupted supply of commodities a major logistical challenge.

In responding to the AAG audit recommendations, CRS/Rwanda developed a new physical inventory and reconciliation form which was put into use on July 31, half of which records the amount of commodities approved by the administrative office for release to the distributor following payment of the previous allotment's transportation costs, and the other half completed by the warehouse storekeeper at the time commodities are turned over to the distributor, are kept separately. During the stock inventory process, differences between the office and warehouse are traced and reconciled.

In addition, CRS/Rwanda has instituted a magazine stock list, or master ledger recording commodity receipts by PL (CRS shipment number) condition of containers, and damages. Reconstitution of commodities received in damaged containers can also be traced through the magazine stock list. The ledger also serves as a cross check against the stock tallies, which records the moment of each PL through final dispatch.

The team was briefed on the functioning of the stock accounting system by the warehouse storekeeper. The system was found to be an adequate means of recording commodity receipt storage and dispatches. However, CRS/Rwanda might consider further refinement of the present method of recording damage and reconstitution.

The interruption in supply and untimely delivery of one commodity in particular, non-fat dry milk, was reflected in a review of the most recently available CSR/RSE (July-September, 1979). As stocks of milk dwindled, CRS rightly emphasized distribution to the pre-school nutrition recipients and was able to maintain distribution close to the AER-approved ration level. On the whole, review of the July-September CSR showed that CRS/Rwanda, despite continuing problems in its supply line, has managed to maintain ration levels at 85-95% of AER-approved levels in most cases. Close monitor of commodity supply and distribution, particularly NFDM and edible oil, needs to be maintained by both CRS and the AAO, the CSR/RSE reports are a useful tool for this purpose. CRS/Rwanda has indicated that the October-December, 1979 reports are being prepared and will be made available to the AAO shortly.

On October 12, 1979 CRS received the first \$80 thousand dollar tranche of a 131.4 thousand grant under PL 480 Title II "Project Outreach" which will enable CRS/Rwanda to double its warehousing space as well as purchase an additional vehicle and hire another end-use checker. With the grant, it is envisioned that during the FY 80-81 period,

CRS will be able to expand its coverage of pre-school nutrition recipients by 20% as well as ensure maintenance of an adequate stock of commodities to forestall an interruption in distribution due to vagaries in the supply line.

In addition to a U.S.-citizen Program Director, the CRS/Rwanda Title II program staff is comprised of seven positions: Admin. Assistant, two Pre-school Nutrition Supervisors, Secretary/translator, Shipping Clerk and two end-use Checkers. The staff was found to be knowledgeable concerning its duties and operation of the program. The review team members were particularly impressed by the competence and enthusiasm of the Nutrition Supervisors (one of whom was interviewed by the AR/FFPO on a separate occasion) and the other accompanied the team on one of the field visits.

### III. Project Implementation, Present and Future Directions

Through interviews with the GOR Nutrition Bureau and CRS Nutrition Supervisors, and field visits to 4 pre-school nutrition centers, the team was able to develop empirical, but arguably representative observations on the implementation and future directions the CRS Title II food distribution program might take. As stated earlier, the team concentrated its enquiry on the operation of the pre-school nutrition project, although Title II assistance to secondary schools and post-primary training facilities was also discussed with some of the local administrators.

Field visits conducted on January 15 and 17 enabled the team to view activities of 2 pre-school nutrition centers distributing CRS-provided Title II foods and 1 where Title II commodities were not being distributed. The team also visited the location of 1 center in Kivumu. Although the center was closed while the monitrice was in a Nutrition Bureau training course in Ruhengeri, the sister in charge of the centre de sante proved quite knowledgeable concerning the nutrition center's work.

Regardless of whether the centers were distributing or not distributing Title II foods, it appeared that the training curriculum is similar throughout. The content of lectures delivered by the monitrices on proper nutrition and health practices, practical demonstrations of gardening, animal raising and food preparation appeared to be the same. Also in each case, posters exemplifying the benefits of good health and nutrition looked the same. This gave the impression that CRS and the GOR Nutrition Bureau are cooperating on disseminating

same or similar content in the lectures and practical demonstrations, although centers distributing Title II commodities also conduct demonstrations on how Title II commodities can be prepared following recipes which also emphasize the use of local foods.

The team found some pronounced differences in the (Title II commodity distributing) "food" and "non-food" centers. As indicated in the policy discussion, CRS/Rwanda, as a quid pro quo to distributing the Title II foods, insists that nutrition centers track attendance and weight status of the child according to the Growth Surveillance System developed by the CRS Regional Medical Office in Nairobi. Data from the individual growth charts, also prepared by the CRS Regional Office, is transferred by the personnel of each center to a master chart which is transmitted to the CRS office in Kigali and onward to the Regional Office where data is analyzed and conclusions sent back to Kigali.

CRS/Rwanda requires that the centers admit no more than one pre-5 year old child per household into the program, and maintaining that with more children in attendance it becomes impossible to accurately track the children and establish a one to one relationship with the recipient parents. The CRS assisted nutrition centers also require that the recipient parents undergo a 3-month orientation period before becoming eligible to receive Title II food. In addition to the growth charts, CRS provides weighing scales, vegetable seeds and visual aids to the food

distributing nutrition centers. Each recipient parent is charged a fee of RwF 40 (or dollars 0.43) per monthly visit which is intended to defray overhead and operational costs of running the nutrition centers such as paying monitrices and watchmen as well as the transport costs of the commodities from the Kigali warehouse to the center; however this cost is actually a fraction of the value of the food provided. The Nutrition Bureau and center personnel do not restrict the number of children per family who may be enrolled, and children can remain in the project until they attain a weight of 20 kgs. An initial joining fee of RwF 10 (naturally as the "non-food" center's overhead is lower. The team also found that the "non-food" centers did not follow the Growth Surveillance System's tracking procedures.

Upon their return to Kigali, the USG members of the team, with the good offices of CRS/Rwanda, made an appointment with the Director of the Nutrition Bureau to discuss their observations, enquire as to the mechanics of the tracking system devised by the Bureau of Nutrition for the "non-food" centers, and to seek the Bureau's views on what contributory role CRS/Rwanda should play in the pre-school nutrition project. On January 21, about an hour before the scheduled meeting was to take place, the Nutrition Bureau's Director advised CRS that it had to be cancelled. The Director pleaded a schedule conflict, but also advised that he and his personnel could not meet with representatives of foreign donors without the permission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. The team is not sure what prompted the Bureau's abrupt change, on what were technical grounds, and are disappointed that further views of the Nutrition Bureau could not be reflected in this review. However, on

past occasions, the Program Officer, AR/FFPO and the CRS Program Director have had a number of candid exchanges with the Nutrition Bureau's Director and his staff, and their views are reflected in this paper.

While the 2 systems probably yield basically the same information (weight gain over time) and could provide comparative data for a nutritionally oriented evaluation, the team found that the CRS Growth Surveillance System has 2 advantages, i.e., the recipient parent can better understand whether the child was within the 80th percentile of adequate nutrition (considered to be the standard accepted by most experts) and when the child either fell behind or continued to progress. The Growth Surveillance System also emphasizes the importance of growth maintenance rather than an indefinite track of growth.

In the one operating "non-food" center visited, the team found that the monitrice had devised her own tracking charts after her supply of Bureau-provided charts had been exhausted. The chart, although showing commendable initiative, simply recorded the weight of the child at the time of visit and did not show weight progression, a serious drawback in attempting to determine when a child is progressing, falling back or simply remaining the same. For example, the team found at this center, a child reportedly 7 years old, whose growth was stunted and appeared to have been suffering from the effects of malnourishment for some time. In examining her growth chart which recorded only her weight and attendance, it became clear that as the chart was not recording the weight against a scale of progression, neither the mother nor the monitrice could tell the child was not growing.

In the context of the planned post field visit interview with the Nutrition Bureau, the team hoped to apprise the Director of their observations, and suggest that Bureau personnel ought to provide the center new charts. On the basis of only 2 visits to "non-food" centers, it would be unfair to conclude that these centers lack a standardized growth tracking system. But the team felt unsure whether consistent supervision of "non-food" centers is maintained by the Nutrition Bureau.

Interviews with participant parents and personnel connected with "food" and "non-food" centers concerning the role of commodity distribution were also conducted. In the CRS-assisted centers, the team found strong support for the continuance of Title II commodity aid from both parents and center personnel. While both types of centers

argue that the ritual of weighing the child in tracking its growth was a major incentive to the parents' attitude, the "food" centers' parents and monitrices claimed that provision of Title II commodities was a definite factor in maintaining attendance. The commodities are seen for their value as wholesome supplements to the child's diet, and are certainly recognized for their role in support of the economic well-being of the family. CRS/Rwanda and the food distributing centers recognize that because of its value, participating parents might be tempted to sell the food. However, the incentive of seeing the child grow in comparison to others' children as well as peer pressure to inform on those selling food reportedly acts as an effective preventive to sales.

Personnel at the "non-food" centers argue equally as strongly against the distribution of imported foods. The sister interviewed at Kivumu remarked that in not distributing imported food, the center was following the President's directive that Rwandans should rely on their own resources for development. In the other center, the monitrice said that the people in the commune were not poor and there was sufficient food available, but what they needed was proper guidance in nutrition and food preparation.

The sister at the "non-food" center also observed that she and the parish priest, the guiding force behind the parish's many social service activities, believed their center's participant parents, if given imported food, would attribute the child's growth to eating "the white man's super food" and judge it superior to what was locally available. Also, personnel at both "non-food" centers argued that the children themselves might develop a preference for the imported over local food, which would be a concern when the child leaves the program.

Statements from the "food" and "non-food" centers tended to contradict each other. While the monitrices and participant parents at the "food" centers certainly recognized the nutritional and economic value of the Title II commodities, these centers maintained they carefully stressed the role of imported food as supplementary to local foods, hence the 3-month orientation of the participant parent before Title II commodities are provided. Again, opinions vis-a-vis the Title II foods by recipients varied. In one interview a widowed father said that although he learned much about proper food preparation, his child would probably not have survived without receiving the ration. On the other hand, one mother interviewed at a "food" center said that while she appreciated receiving the ration, she would probably continue to attend the lectures, demonstrations

and baby weighing sessions whether the food was provided or not. She attributed her faithful attendance to her interest in the monthly weighing of her baby.

The team also found that the anti-food distribution attitudes of the "non-food" centers did not mean that imported foods were not provided in absolute terms. The sister and monitrice at the "non-food" centers indicated that in cases of severe malnutrition, powdered milk was administered to the child as therapy. However, it was clear that provision of imported foods was not regarded as necessary to nutrition maintenance or in prevention of malnutrition.

On the basis of these observations, the team concluded that there are equally strong arguments for and against the distribution of imported food commodities in the pre-school nutrition project. However, the team also believes that provision of Title II commodities within a structured and consistently monitored program of nutrition education and growth surveillance, acts as an important incentive towards continued participation by the parent and contributes to the growth of the child.

While it cannot be argued conclusively that provision or non-provision of imported food makes the crucial difference, based on our preliminary observation of available data, the team also concludes that a professional evaluation of the nutritional and economic impact of Title II food aid can be conducted in Rwanda. The enquiry will necessarily entail development of a means of reconciling data being developed from the desperate growth tracking systems in use, and a scope of work that is carefully pretested before actual application. The team feels that work towards such an evaluation is worthwhile and should begin with all due speed.

The team notes with satisfaction that the Ministry of Plan, during a meeting with AID representatives on January 21, 1980, expressed its desire to have a comprehensive evaluation of the pre-school nutrition project performed and has shown interest in AID's possible financial and professional participation. The team sees this as an excellent opportunity to conduct a nutrition impact study and recommends that the active participation of CRS, the distributing agency of Title II foods to the majority of operating pre-school centers, in the evaluation.

As for the future, the continued application of nutrition centers for Title II foods and other inputs distributed through CRS demonstrate that at the field level, the contribution of this assistance is well regarded. Based on this review, the team provisionally endorses continued

expansion of CRS/Rwanda's involvement in the pre-school nutrition project, along the lines projected in the FY 81 CDSS. However, as expressed earlier in the paper, the team is concerned with the divergent directions the issue of food aid versus restriction of food aid seems to be pulling the project. It would be unfortunate if resolution or at least an accommodation of views concerning the role of external food assistance were not attempted. Again, the team views the proposed evaluation of the pre-school nutrition project as an excellent opportunity to resolve a number of questions and some philosophical differences.

CRS/Rwanda's involvement in the secondary and post-primary vocational training programs is well regarded by the Ministry of Education, although CRS and the AAO should be careful to encourage an understanding that both CRS and Title II resources are limited and although it appears likely the projects can continue to be supported at current and projected levels, it would be inadvisable for the GOR to count on indefinite expansion in secondary and post-primary school feeding.

The team also noted that the CRS/Rwanda Program Director was particularly concerned with the number of cases of malnutrition found at the centres de sante; in fact, malnutritive children were found in each of the centers visited. The CRS Director said he had been thinking of establishing, in cooperation with the Nutrition Bureau, a pilot project that would involve the application of Title II foods as nutrition therapy under the direction of the centres de sante. The team feels consideration of such a project bears merit and should be pursued by both CRS and the AAO. Certainly, one of the corollary benefits of a malnutrition treatment project would be furtherance of collaborative relations between CRS/Rwanda and the Nutrition Bureau.

#### IV. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

1. The CRS/Rwanda Title II program plays a significant contributory role in meeting humanitarian concerns as well as GOR and USG development objectives. Through the provision of Title II commodities under a policy of emphasizing their supplementary role to local foods, and in support of nutrition education emphasizing practical demonstrations, the CRS/Rwanda program does meet the objectives of the AAO CDSS and AID Handbook 9 as they relate to pre-school feeding and nutrition education.

2. The provision of Title II assistance through CRS to the GOR's secondary and post-primary education programs is well regarded by Rwandans and supports the USG objective of encouraging recipient countries to provide a balanced diet to school-age children. However, the GOR should be encouraged by CRS/Rwanda and the AAO to recognize the limitations of continued Title II assistance to these programs.

3. The AAO and R/FFPO are satisfied that CRS/Rwanda and the USG agree that while institutional and welfare feeding projects do perform a valuable humanitarian contribution to the Rwandan people, emphasis will continue to be given to meeting the nutritional priorities of pregnant and lactating mothers and pre-school age children.

4. The review team is concerned that the policies of CRS/Rwanda and the GOR Nutrition Bureau are on a divergent course prompted by differences regarding the application of imported food aid in the pre-school nutrition project. The team feels that a professionally conducted study, involving the active participation of AID, CRS and the GOR, to determine the efficacy of Title II food aid on the economic and nutritional status of pre-school nutrition project participants may enable these differences to be resolved. The team notes that the GOR Ministry of Plan has expressed its interest in an evaluation of the pre-school nutrition project. This evaluation could be undertaken with USG financial and professional assistance. The team recommends that CRS collaboration in the evaluation be solicited as well.

5. The team observed that despite some initial problems in implementation, the Growth Surveillance System appears to be working well in Rwanda. The team recommends that CRS/Rwanda share the observations being made from analyses of the Surveillance System Master Charts with the GOR Nutrition Bureau.

6. Based on this review, the perceived incidence of moderate to severe malnutrition among Rwandan children leaves great concern. The team recommends that encouragement be given to CRS/Rwanda's development of a nutrition therapy project on a pilot basis in collaboration with the GOR Nutrition Bureau.

7. The team observed that CRS/Rwanda has made progress in dealing with short-comings in commodity management and reporting. Particularly noteworthy was the installation of a more comprehensive inventory control system and reinstatement of the CSR's. CRS should be encouraged

to continue CSR/RSR submission to the AAO on a quarterly basis. The AAO should also review these documents and transmit copies to the R/FFPO for its views.

8. It is recommended that the R/FFPO assist CRS and the AAO in determining the basis for preparation of ex tackle marine surveys by the CRS/Rwanda independent surveyors as well as recommend a procedure for the timely disposal of inland transportation claims.