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PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

1. AID PROJECT 611-0202 - Training for Women in Development
2. Zambia Council for Social Development (ZCSD) and Overseas Education Fund (OEF) "Technical Advisory Services Project" (September 1979-April 1982) (AID Grant AFR-G-1578)

In 1979 AID granted the Overseas Education Fund (OEF) of the League of Women Voters \$324,000 (later augmented by \$41,000 in March of 1981 for purposes of closing out the project) to strengthen the Zambia Council for Social Development (ZCSD) and its member organizations by improving their management capabilities in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects.

ZCSD is a consortium of some 50 Community Service organizations. The AID financed project sought to increase the organizational capacity of the Council and its member organizations with particular emphasis on voluntary organizations and with an important aspect being the maximization of the role of women in development. The project was to provide technical assistance and support to improve the organizational processes of planning, evaluation, budgeting, communication and program development and management.

The project has been completed with OEF submitting its final report (dated May 1982) on July 12, 1982. By and large all services and goods have been provided by ZCSD although some, from the U.S., in an erratic fashion and one of the two OEF advisors left Zambia prematurely

in December of 1980. She was not replaced. ZCSD itself provided significant support although there was some turnover in staff and OEF had to pay some salaries.

There were several significant project achievements:

- a needs assessment of 20 non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Zambia
- major assistance to several NGO's
- some institutional development of ZCSD especially with respect to planning, project design and development and evaluation
- assistance to ZCSD in carrying-out an FAO funded survey of 60 organizations and programs related to family life
- assistance to ZCSD in clarifying the role of women in member organization activities.

This partial list of achievements must be looked at in the light of a number of problems.

- the project was too ambitious and could not accomplish all of the goals in the time span allotted
- on the other hand, the Home Office support was so erratic that it is doubtful that full institutionalization of the project and accomplishment of its goals could be achieved
- there were misunderstandings between OEF, and ZCSD and between OEF and AID.

With respect to AID, there are important lessons learned from the project at least as seen by AID/Zambia.

- there must be a clear understanding of project goals and operations on the part of the implementing agent, host country organization and AID. This did not occur and was a major impediment in the initial stages of the project.
- Home Office backstopping is crucial. In this case, there were changes of personnel and a lack of experience at the headquarters level which were harmful to the project and which were, from AID/Zambia's point of view, the major deterrent to considering a continuation of the project.
- because AID/Zambia is not staffed to support any activity outside of its CDSS goals and strategy, significant chunks of unplanned staff time had to be spent on project problems. To allow the small AID/Zambia staff to concentrate on the agreed AID/GRZ goals in the agriculture sector, this was done by the AID Representative himself.

In sum, while the project was reasonably well conceived it was erratically carried out. More attention should have been spent on implementation planning and headquarters backstopping arrangements. The highlights of the project were OEF field staff (although one of the two advisors departed early) and the support provided by ZCSD. Had there been attention to the shortcomings and if the project had been more attuned to AID/Zambia goals

and strategy, it might well have been continued. With respect to the latter point on local AID objectives and strategy, OEF and many other PVO's might well disagree. However, given the need for AID field staffs to do "more with less" there seems little choice given present statutory and regulatory "rules of the game" and accountability requirements.

cc: AFR/
AFR/SA
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AID/Zambia

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