

CLASSIFICATION
PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART I

Report Control
Symbol U-447

1. PROJECT TITLE Educational Media for Women	2. PROJECT NUMBER 598-0572	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE LAC/DR/EST
4. EVALUATION NUMBER (Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No. beginning with No. 1 each FY) _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR EVALUATION <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVALUATION		
5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent FY <u>79</u> B. Final Obligation Expected FY <u>83</u> C. Final Input Delivery FY <u>84</u>	6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING A. Total \$ <u>1,131,000</u> B. U.S. \$ <u>845,000</u>	7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION From (month/yr.) <u>8/83</u> To (month/yr.) <u>8/84</u> Date of Evaluation Review _____

8. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR

A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mission decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., airgram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
<p>None, terminating project.</p>		

9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS <table style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P	_____	10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT A. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Project Without Change B. <input type="checkbox"/> Change Project Design and/or <input type="checkbox"/> Change Implementation Plan C. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discontinue Project <u>9/30/84</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____											
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<input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P	_____											

11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Names and Titles) LAC/DR/EST, Richard Martin	12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval Signature _____ Typed Name <u>Dwight Johnson</u> Date <u>AUG 3 1984</u>
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PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY
PART II
Educational Media for Women

(13) Summary

This project was designed in 1978 as an effort to develop and field test a low-cost training strategy for farm women. It was felt that farm women in many LAC settings could increase their active role in economic development and generate supplemental income for the family without jeopardizing their traditional role as homemakers if appropriate productive activities (growing new vegetable crops, raising animals such as rabbits, etc.) could be identified and effective training offered. Furthermore, the project was to demonstrate how mass media such as radio and fotonovelas could be used to reach very large numbers of home-bound farm women at low cost.

The project is practically complete. The end-of-project region-wide dissemination conference was held and the final report has been published and circulated to the field through IICA and AID channels. Additional time, through September, 1984, has been provided at IICA's request to attempt to apply its women's training methodology in several specific IICA projects, but project funds are nearly exhausted and little additional substantive activity is expected.

(14) Evaluation Methodology

This is a routine end-of-project evaluation. It reflects the current LAC/DP/EST project manager's views based on yearly TDY visits to project sites in the Dominican Republic and Colombia, and the views of an independent contract evaluator who reviewed project outputs and attended the regional dissemination workshop (report attached).

(15) External Factors

IICA believes that a drought in the Dominican Republic mitigated the initially-positive results of its animal-raising activities there.

(16) Inputs

IICA performed pilot women's training projects in two countries rather than the three originally planned. AID and IICA agreed in mid-project that two sites would provide a sufficient test. Otherwise, quantitative inputs were generally consistent with the original plan, except that implementation took two years longer than expected.

(17) Outputs

Most quantitative outputs were delivered, but the quality and utility of the outputs was disappointing. The expected outputs from the project paper are as follows:

(a) Guidelines for using the projects' women's training strategy elsewhere

The guidelines were published in great detail in a weighty manual. However the manual is so massive and complex that it is hard to imagine how it might really be of any practical use to extension agents or planners.

(b) Case studies

Case studies evolved and were written up progressively in the course of project documentation, which was voluminous. Although there is no succinct, readable, written compilation of the case study experiences, the case studies were apparently presented and analyzed effectively at the regional dissemination workshop.

(c) Visual aides describing the approach

Samples of graphic media illustrating the project approach were supplied with the manual. The project's graphic media are discussed below.

(d) Evaluation data summarizing impact of training on low-income women

Enormous amounts of empirical survey data were gathered through long, often-repeated surveys and questionnaires. Unfortunately, the results of all this data-gathering were not synthesized and presented very clearly. As a result, interpretation of the results is difficult and the conclusions concerning impact and coverage are ambiguous. In general, in the pilot areas, levels of participation in project-sponsored activities appeared to be high, but actual economic and/or nutritional impact on participants' lives is uncertain. IICA failed to do an economic analysis based on its field experience from which the costs of replication could be projected, a most unfortunate shortcoming of its evaluation studies.

(e) AID and LIC officials from LAC countries aware of women's training strategy

The final dissemination workshop and numerous briefings at other regional meetings, coupled with publication and circulation of the manual, gave adequate regional exposure to the project's results and methodology.

(f) Capability in three countries to develop media-based training packages for farm women

The capability to develop media-based training packages did not exist on the IICA project team, so obviously no new capability was created in the countries where IICA worked.

(18) Purpose

The purpose of the project is "to develop and test a systematic approach to disseminating farming, marketing, and food processing information to women and increasing their awareness of agriculture sector services for which they are eligible." This general strategy is elaborated in the Project Paper in three objectives:

(a) Developing an approach for disseminating useful technical information to farm women using educational media

(b) Testing the strategy

(c) Disseminating the strategy

While each of these steps was conscientiously undertaken by IICA, the training methodology or "strategy", that was developed, tested, and disseminated was not really media-based nor innovative, as A.I.D. had intended. While the Project Paper provides relatively little detail concerning project design, it is clear that A.I.D. intended to build on promising experience with mass media in an effort to reach a large audience of farm women at low cost.

It was never an issue whether farm women could be trained or not. At issue was how cost-effectively they could be trained. There was never any doubt that traditional face-to-face instruction could effectively teach new production techniques, but neither was there any doubt that these traditional, labor-intensive instructional methods (such as extension agent visits) are too expensive for implementation on a massive scale. If Latin American ministries of agriculture wish to reach the immense populations of isolated and widely-dispersed farm women, modern communication media such as radio offer the only possible affordable solution.

Unfortunately, IICA did not fully comprehend or agree with this emphasis. When field activities began in the Dominican Republic, it gradually became evident that the IICA project team was using a traditional, face-to-face approach which promised to have a significant impact on the women in the pilot

project, but little, if any, utility as an instructional methodology for large-scale replication. This precipitated a confrontation between AID and IICA. After some acrimonious meetings and correspondence, IICA agreed to emphasize media-based training in its second field site in Colombia. As a result, radio spots and photonovels were used to supplement IICA's interpersonal strategy as part of second pilot project undertaken in Pionegro, Colombia.

Unfortunately, IICA never followed through on its agreement to incorporate a media specialist into its project team. As a result, the instructional materials that were produced are unimaginative. The comic books consist of page after page of crude drawings of two women endlessly discussing ways of growing carrots and cabbage. The project also produced instructional booklets called cartillas to provide step-by-step instructions on how to cultivate carrots and cabbage. These booklets are inexplicably illustrated with color photographs of men producing the crops. A series of radio programs was produced in Colombia and broadcast in the project area. The programs consist of pedantic lectures on food preparation and storage, read in a bored voice by a woman, with constant and distracting musical interruptions.

IICA's work on the project was qualitatively off the mark in other ways. A.I.D. was primarily interested in promoting new income-generating activities for farm women. IICA, in spite of A.I.D.'s periodic remonstrations, drifted away from income-generation for women as an objective and back into more traditional nutrition-related training for rural women in their role as housewives, first emphasizing production of food as a dietary supplement rather than as a source of income, later simply providing information on family nutrition. Nutrition education is far from the overall objective of integrating farm women more fully into economic development. Furthermore, according to several AID/LAC/HN professionals who attended the final AID/W project review, the content of the nutrition education messages is badly dated and of little practical utility to farm families.

In terms of the field test and formal evaluation of the strategy, IICA's approach again is adequate in quantitative terms, but poor in qualitative terms. Massive amounts of data were gathered through interviews and questionnaires, but the project team seemed unable to synthesize and present the results of the data analysis. Large volumes of data and tables were mailed to A.I.D., but it was impossible to wade through the information to find clear indications of impact. The IICA project manager refused to submit an economic evaluation of any kind, arguing unconvincingly that pilot project costs do not reflect the costs of an operational project.

(19) Goal

The goal of the project is to "increase and make more effective the participation of low-income rural women in Latin America and the Caribbean in the agriculture sector."

In the view of the evaluator, the IICA project team was able to effectively stimulate participation by farm women in a variety of new economic, health, and nutrition activities, but only in pilot project sites where intensive team intervention was possible. Neither the content of the training interventions nor the general training methodology appear to hold great promise for replication on a significant scale. The goal, therefore, was only partly achieved.

(20) Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries of the pilot projects were appropriate -- low income farm women who engage in both traditional homemaking activities and simultaneously share important productive and economic decision-making functions essential to the survival of the farm family.

(21) Unplanned Effects

None

(22) Lessons Learned

Unfortunately, little was learned which substantively contributes to state-of-the-art knowledge concerning cost-effective training strategies that could enhance the participation of farm women in development activities.

A number of lessons were learned concerning implementation of regional R&D grant projects, including the following:

(a) A.I.D.'s Project Paper should contain thorough detail concerning the project's conceptual rationale as well as the specifics of project design. When the objective of a project is to "develop and test" an untried methodology or technology, the hypotheses of interest to AID should be stated explicitly in the P.P. In this project, the relatively short P.P. (the body of the P.P. is 12 pages) and the somewhat vague discussion of objectives led to initial confusion about our objectives.

(b) Close and consistent AID monitoring, preferably from field missions rather than from AID/W, is essential.

The fact that the misconceptions of the IICA Project Team were detected and the project re-oriented to some extent reflects conscientious and at times difficult work on the part of the AID project managers. The IICA Project Manager, although extremely hard-working and effective in the field, was stubborn and deceitful in her dealings with AID. Monthly progress reports which we often requested and which IICA agreed to supply, were never submitted. Instead, reports from the field consisted of massive and obfusctory reports handed to us on the day of a review meeting, and overseas telephone calls saying that everything was being done exactly the way A.I.D. wished. Our periodic TDY visits to the field sites in the Dominican Republic were always interesting, with opportunities to talk with committed project staff and enthusiastic beneficiaries. Our constantly-repeated insistence on experimentation with cost-effective, media-based training methodologies was always discussed and grudgingly accepted. Follow-up to meetings with AID on the part of IICA was slow, often consisting of excuses rather than action. Because of travel costs and U.S. Embassy resistance to A.I.D. activities in Colombia, it was not possible for the A.I.D. project manager to visit the project site in person once the activity there was under way.

(c) IICA was an effective implementing agency in terms of logistics, but not in terms of creative conceptual development of a new approach, or research activities.

Working with IICA was a pleasure in terms of routine project implementation. Meeting arrangements, financial management, communications, etc. from IICA headquarters in San Jose were excellent. IICA professional staff in San Jose and in its field offices in Santo Domingo and Bogota made constructive contributions to the project and were invariably accessible and helpful. IICA's only mistake was its poor choice of a project field director in the first place and its defense of her when it became evident that replacing her would have been in the best interest of the project.

(d) Complex, long-term R&D projects may not be the best response to "special concern" issues.

This project was conceived in 1978 when "Women in Development" was a top priority of the Administration. As the emphasis of the Agency WID program gradually shifted away from special women-only projects in ensuing years, the project gradually became less relevant and interesting. Even if it had been an unqualified success, it is difficult to imagine who would be interested in the results as the project nears completion now, five years later.

New "special concerns" are probably better addressed in many cases with relatively fast-moving, high-impact projects rather than with conceptually-complex, slow-moving projects like this one.

(23) Special Comments or Remarks

None.

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LAC REGIONAL "EDUCATIONAL MEDIA FOR WOMEN" PROJECT
REPORT OF A CONSULTANCY MISSION FOR AID

December 6-7, 1983

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"EDUCATIONAL MEDIA FOR WOMEN" PROJECT

Consultancy Mission Report, December 1983

I. Introduction

The purpose of this mission was to attend and professionally observe the final review meeting of the LAC Regional "Educational Media for Women" Project, held in Antioquia, Colombia on December 6 and 7, 1983. I was to offer a preliminary assessment of the Project on the basis of site visits, prototype training materials and the final evaluation results presented at the meeting.

In preparation for the mission, I was briefed on the original intent and history of the Project by Richard Martin, Education Specialist, and was given access to technical reports and correspondence from the files of the AID LAC Regional Bureau in Washington, D.C. These inputs proved very useful for understanding the dynamics of the Project at different stages of its development.

Upon arrival in Medellin, Colombia on Dec. 4, I met with the Project Director, Ms. Maria Teresa Aguirre who briefed me on the project from her perspective.

The review meeting itself took place in Rionegro, Antioquia. Thirty-three participants and one observer attended (see Annex A). The participants included representatives of the two co-sponsoring agencies - the Interamerican Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IICA) and the Colombian Institute of Agriculture (ICA) - as well as of four Ministries of Agriculture and other national development agencies. Eight Latin American countries were represented: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela. Due to the short time available for the sessions, a tight schedule had to be maintained. IICA and ICA presentations

during the morning session on December 6 focused on the rationale of the Project in the Latin America context and on the analytic review of its field work, particularly in Colombia. Sample prototype materials were distributed to all participants. They included three comic-style booklets (historietas), five illustrated brochures (cartillas) and a 313-page guidebook or manual for project designers in other Latin American countries. The Manual was based primarily on experience gained by the Project in the Dominican Republic. A guided tour of nearby farms followed in the early afternoon. An after-dinner session was devoted to analysis and evaluation of outcomes.

The entire morning of December 7 was thus free for a "round table" discussion by participants to clarify issues and formulate conclusions. This was the most valuable part of the session.

After the meeting had ended, Maria Teresa Aguirre, Amparo Loaiza of ICA and Lucretia Quiceno of the University of Caldas, took me on a special unannounced tour of the villages to visit homes of rural women who had been associated with the Project. During the two field visits, a total of five families were interviewed. We returned to Medellin on December 7 in the late evening.

On December 8, although a national holiday, Maria Teresa and Eduardo Linarte, Research Consultant to the Project, spent the morning with me going over the points raised at the meeting and other questions needing clarification.

The fact that all sessions had been taped was helpful in reconstructing the discussions after I had returned to the USA on December 9. In addition to the prototype educational materials given out at the meeting, I was able to

review a set of sample radio broadcast tapes. These radio tapes had not been shared with the group at Rionegro.

In reading the comments which follow, it is important to keep in mind that this review was not intended as a detailed assessment of project experience. Such an assessment would require, in the first place, a better system of process recording, field monitoring and feedback than the Project had been able to institute over its four years of existence. The files indicate that there was much insistence, on AID's part, on the submission of monthly and quarterly project progress reports, but there is little evidence that this need had in fact been met. The lack of both hard and soft data on critical issues seen over a perspective of time was a serious limitation in attempting even the present preliminary analysis.

The following observations are therefore offered primarily as points which may be worth exploring in greater depth in any future evaluation of the Project.

II. Significance of the Final Review Meeting

Much significance can be attached to the final review meeting for a number of reasons:

- The participant group as a whole was of high calibre, the majority representing decision-makers at the policy level in their respective agencies in eight Latin American countries.
- There was a good balance of representation from IICA, ICA and other agriculture-oriented agencies. These other agencies included Ministries of Agriculture, the Integrated Rural Development Program (DRI) and research or extension departments of universities.
- In aiming at the participation of high-level decision-makers, it turned out that 25 of the 33 participants were men. This was to be expected, but as a result, the meeting lacked strong advocacy on behalf of rural women. Discussions thus tended to focus on technical aspects of research rather than on the specific communication needs and potentialities of the woman farmer. In presenting the Project's experience to the group as a model for Latin America, there was much emphasis on its transfer value for programs addressed to male farmers. It was claimed that benefits to men result first of all from the Project's spread effect. Men observe their wives using new techniques, find them acceptable and adopt them. In addition, the methodology - though focused on women - was said to be directly applicable to all small farm producers and easily transferable to commercial crops where male labor predominates. This "men as beneficiaries" pitch was repeated several times in different ways, and so was the "family as prime beneficiary" message. Whether these broader considerations motivate national policy makers to do more on behalf of women remains to be seen.
- It seems that organizers of the meeting were prepared for controversy over the Project's approach, research design and assessed outcomes. The Chairman, Mr. Jaime Izaza Restrepo, did an excellent job of negotiating the discussions over some fairly rough ground. He set the tone for the meeting by admonishing the investigators not to be defensive but to "explain objectively and clearly why you did what you did." Others took up this cue, urging that doubts regarding strategies "should not be hidden behind the mask of difficulties." Rather, the influence of difficulties on the research design should be discussed fully so as to encourage further study.

● Discussion centered on three main issues:

- The need to expand coverage in disseminating technical information to the farming population without unduly sacrificing "the depth and quality of the message";
- The limitations of the scientific method applied to human behavioral change; and
- The need to utilize research and communications expertise already available in universities and similar institutions in Latin America and to assure collaborative effort throughout the process, from planning to evaluation.

With regard to coverage vs quality, the IICA representative from Bolivia, Mr. Antonio Saraiva, made a strong case for expanding outreach through mass media because Bolivia's outreach needs are great. He recognized that interpersonal teaching methods, such as demonstrations, are valuable but felt that they should be supported by parallel efforts "of larger magnitude" using mass media. To say that the radio is ineffective was, in his view, an unjust criticism. (In this instance, he was responding to negative results obtained by Project staff when using the radio as a communication vehicle either alone or in combination with other media.*) Mr. Saraiva expressed interest in examining this issue further with the Bolivian Government with the aim of measuring impact not only in terms of knowledge gain and adoption of technology, but also in terms of increased income levels.

The inadequacy of the "pure" scientific method as a means of probing, documenting, and interpreting human behavioral change was echoed by a number of participants. It was felt that when dealing with social change, "there can never be faultless experiments or perfect, absolute, mathematical answers." Social investigation "has no fixed rules as in the physical sciences."

*See discussion of methodology on pages 19 and 20.

Participants observed that if one relies on experimental data alone, they may provide little in the way of reliable conclusions, as variables influencing human change are difficult to isolate. It is also difficult to avoid contamination of control groups. As a result, it was felt that an experimental study of the kind described by project investigators could, at best, suggest tendencies and learning potentialities rather than draw firm conclusions as to the effectiveness of the media and materials tested.

The communication research design used by project investigators came in for more direct criticism from the Open University and Distance Teaching Coordinator, Mr. Alfonso Marroquin, who felt that "many errors had been committed by the Project, possibly due to inexperience in conducting a systematic media-based investigation." He therefore urged closer linkages with other institutions which "have much experience in the production and application of mass media programs including radio, TV and the press, not only in Colombia but in Nicaragua and other countries." His recommendation was that coordination with experienced national institutions should be assured from the start to avoid costly errors.

Several participants spoke in favor of collaborative effort among technical institutions in different countriesⁱⁿ the region. This would be a way of "adapting methodology to the Latin American reality; we simply cannot continue borrowing ideas from elsewhere." The need was considered urgent, since "rural communities cannot wait for the refinement of research or communication methodology by trial and error." The IICA representative from Peru, Mr. Hernan Chaverra Gil, proposed a national interagency project, a major joint effort by all institutions capable of contributing expertise to carry out a large-scale investigation. Cooperation would require sharing of

financial resources as well as technical skills. A project of this type could serve to demonstrate how a national system of concerted effort throughout, from planning to evaluation, could be designed and effectively set in motion.

It should be evident from the above discussion that the final review meeting, though openly critical at certain points, was constructive. Participants as a group felt favorably disposed towards continuation of the effort, possibly with more vigor but on modified terms. The doubts, questions, and issues raised at the meeting are valid. Some of these issues will be examined briefly in the following sections.

III. Conceptual Determinants of the Project

The design of effective implementation strategies and tools and the achievement of desired outcomes surely depend on a clear understanding of the rationale, goals, and objectives of a project by all parties involved. In the absence of such common understanding, and indeed, of commitment to the project's basic purposes, any one move by implementers may precipitate a whole series of actions with a domino effect in directions contrary to the sponsors' original intent. Such seems to have been the case with the Project under review.

Many of the delays and frustrations of the Project's first two years, in fact, can be traced to persistent ideological differences between its funders and its implementers at the country level, although agreements on the matter had been reached between AID and IICA before the start of the Project.

Through time, gained by several extensions of contract, this conceptual gap seems to have been narrowed, especially in the work undertaken in the second country, Colombia. However, some important differences in viewpoints have persisted. Because of the critical role which these conceptual determinants have played in the Project's evaluation, it may be helpful here to examine the two contrasting positions in some detail.

Antecedents

The Project began in September 1978, with the signing of an agreement between AID and the Interamerican Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IICA), a division of OAS with headquarters in San Jose, Costa Rica. The Project's focus was to be the agricultural training of rural women through mass media.

The Director, Ms. Maria Teresa Aguirre, who was appointed in February 1979, visited a number of Latin American countries to locate one or more sites which would provide conditions suitable for the Project.

In July 1979, the decision was taken to initiate work in collaboration with the Government of the Dominican Republic (GODR). The first site chosen by GODR was El Cercado, in one of the poorest and most neglected regions of the country. The choice of this site, though politically strategic, created technical problems for Project staff, particularly because the site was inaccessible and there was lack of adequate media coverage. A second site, El Pinar, was selected in early 1981.

Efforts were also made to extend the Project to a second country. In 1982, an agreement was reached with the government of Colombia to launch the Project in five municipalities in the Antioquia region, with the cooperation of the Colombian Institute of Agriculture (ICA).

It was realized, somewhat late in the process, that the accessibility of sites could make a critical difference to the implementation and monitoring of a program aimed at being innovative. The difficulties of a site such as El Cercado are well illustrated in the following excerpt from an AID field report.

"The trip to El Cercado, without stops in the communities, is 6-1/2 hours; any kind of minimally meaningful field visit means two days in what is a physically punishing trip in the four-wheel drive vehicle which AID has provided. There are no sleeping facilities even in the town of El Cercado, hence the team is forced to return to spend the night in San Juan. While the team has made the trip seven or eight times, the novelty is wearing thin and will grow thinner as time goes on. In a project which will require constant monitoring during its initial stages when materials are being developed, pretested, and retested, it is unrealistic to believe that the team will be able to maintain a schedule of visits approximately every ten days (according to Maria Teresa's calculation). Without such close monitoring, the Project will be veritably useless."

In light of this experience, the selection of new sites, both in the Dominican Republic and in Colombia, was based on more scrupulous application of logistic and communications criteria. This point is stressed in the guidelines for site selection on pages 2-3 of the Manual prepared for dissemination in the region.

1. Original Project Intent and Scope

AID's intent, as spelled out in the Project Document, the formal agreements with IICA and a series of subsequent memoranda and correspondence, was "to increase and make more effective the participation of low-income rural women in the agricultural sector." The focus was clearly on income generation. Rural women would be enabled to raise the efficiency and profitability of their agricultural and marketing activities by having easier access to appropriate technical information. This emphasis was reflected in the Project's Spanish title and its acronym "CAMPROMER", which stood for "Training of Women in Production and Marketing".

It was not intended, however, that the Project would serve as a full-fledged economic development intervention capable of achieving increased incomes for rural women on its own. Rather, the aim was to design training as a "companion activity" to go with regular rural support services such as credit, improved inputs, and organization of campesinas. Thus, its specific purpose was to develop and test a systematic approach to disseminating farming, marketing, and food processing information to women and increasing their awareness of agriculture sector services for which they were eligible.

In keeping with the above, AID's second basic concern was to find cost-effective ways of disseminating the needed agricultural information to larger numbers of rural women. One AID memorandum expresses this concern in strong terms as follows:

"Based on our experience with other projects, AID is convinced that the mass media become a powerful force for change in LA. However, the potential of media for promoting constructive social and economic exchange has not been adequately explored, since media developed in LA has been largely commercial. Furthermore, audience studies have shown that rural women make greater use of available media channels than do men, so the potential development impact of media is even greater on rural women than it is on rural men."

It was thus proposed to explore innovative uses of mass media, in particular radio, for transmitting both technical information and motivational messages. The low-cost, media-based methodological strategy, once designed, tested and assessed, was to provide guidance to Latin American rural development planners interested in media support for their on-going or planned programs.

Since economic considerations were to be central to the project design, it was anticipated that field experimentation could yield useful data concerning at least three economic questions.

It could help discover:

- the optimum cost-effective mix of media for reaching farm women and incorporating them more fully in agricultural production;
- quantifiable benefits of improved production of farm women who receive appropriate information and access to other necessary inputs during application of the project; and

- economic trade-offs between use of media and use of more traditional agricultural extension activities.

2. The Project Director's Perspective

While acknowledging the economic role of rural women as productive agents in the agricultural sector, the Project Director strongly believed that priority should be given to women's social role(s) within the family, because women as homemakers influence the family's diet and consequently its nutritional and health status.

From the Project Director's perspective, it appeared that this social role (focused, in particular, on how to feed and maintain the family) had received inadequate attention in the past, despite evidence of the high incidence of malnutrition among rural families in Latin America. The Project's own baseline study had indicated 50 to 60% malnutrition among pre-school children in the first pilot project area. In some communities, malnutrition was found to be as high as 78%.

The Director felt that simply raising women's incomes would not solve the problem; in the absence of nutrition education, the rural family's increased purchasing power tended to be used for status foods rather than for a balanced diet. Experience in the Dominican Republic, for example, showed that income from the sale of protein-rich produce such as beans and eggs was frequently used to buy processed convenience foods of lesser nutritional value, such as spaghetti.

Among other reasons advanced for changing the Project's focus from income generation to nutrition education was the fact that many Latin American governments are now giving more importance in their national policies to combatting

malnutrition, particularly in the rural areas. Colombia is a good example of such national endorsement.

Given the interest expressed by a majority of women in the Project area in learning new agricultural and animal husbandry techniques, the Director opted to train farm women to grow vitamin-rich vegetables and to raise small farm animals (mainly rabbits and poultry) as sources of protein. The aim was to improve the family diet and reduce the amount spent on purchased food.

In terms of content alone, therefore, the Project experienced a major change from the way it was originally designed. In addition, the plan to conduct the Project as an experiment in mass media applications had to be modified due to a number of difficulties such as poor radio coverage in the first pilot area, economic and social hindrances to radio listening in other areas, and difficulty in recruiting and retaining a qualified media specialist.

3. Implications for Evaluation

The attached Differing Viewpoints Chart summarizes my understanding of the salient points of each of two positions, AID's and IICA's. The difficulty for eventual evaluation is obvious. Starting from different assumptions as to priority needs, each design leads to significantly different expectations of outcomes and of how they are to be assessed. Further complicating the task of evaluation is the fact that the project design, as described in the right hand column of the chart, did not remain consistent throughout the project's life span. Objectives and strategies were modified through a process of "successive approximations" to accommodate some of the concerns expressed by AID yet retain the nutrition focus. This shift is evident from a comparison of

the objectives of the first and the third pilot project sites, El Cercado in the Dominican Republic and Rionegro in Colombia (see Annex B). The latter objectives are much more focused on the testing of mass media vehicles and strategies. Radio usage testing increased slightly at the second site (El Pinar) in the Dominican Republic, but much more at the Rionegro site in Colombia. (See further discussion on pages 22 and 23 .)

DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS CHART

Original Project Design

The focus is on the rural woman and her potentiality to increase agricultural productivity and generate income.

The goal is to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of low-income farm women's contribution to the agricultural sector so that they realize a fair return on their investment.

The emphasis is on dissemination of relevant agricultural and technical information including available support services which farm women could utilize to advantage.

A primary aim is to conduct experimentation in the use of mass media, and in particular the radio, so as to discover cost-effective strategies, vehicles and tools, for transmittal of needed technical information to rural women.

The strategy is to use mass media as a companion service to regular support services in the agricultural sector.

Impact is to be measured in terms of quantifiable benefits of improved production of farm women who receive appropriate information and access to farm support service.

Assessment is to include examination of economic trade-offs between the use of media and the use of more traditional agricultural extension activities.

Project Implementer's View

The focus is on the nutritional needs of the family in which the rural woman acts as homemaker.

The goal is to reduce malnutrition in rural communities by using strategies which help increase both the demand for and the supply of nutritious foods within the economic means of poorer families.

The emphasis is on disseminating motivational messages and selected technical information on food values and on procedures to grow crops or raise farm animals.

A primary aim is to discover through field experimentation which activities and/or media lead to the most learning gains among rural women, in regard to nutrition and farming, and result in real benefits in the health status of rural families.

The strategy is to establish demonstration plots, provide start-up incentives and supplies, assist in the solution of logistic problems such as lack of water supply, and combine practical action with the provision of technical information.

Impact is to be measured by:

- (a) changes in knowledge and attitudes of rural women towards production, nutrition, and food consumption;
- (b) decrease in malnutrition at the pre-school level;
- (c) decrease in the average cost of the family market basket;
- (d) improved eating habits of adults, specifically increased consumption of foods of high nutrition value; and
- (e) increased food products at family as well as commercial levels.

IV. Project Design Implementation and Evaluation

There are several commendable features to the Project as implemented in each of the three sites (two sites in the Dominican Republic and one in Colombia). There were also serious shortcomings. Both will be briefly considered in this section.

1. Baseline Study

All three pilot interventions began with a diagnostic study of the local community and in particular of the situation of women in the area. Each study included data on different aspects of family life, nutrition habits, agricultural practices and media coverage. Thus, provision had been made for securing baseline data against which to measure future changes attributable to the intervention. This was a decided asset.

The baseline diagnostic tool developed for the Dominican Republic sites is, however, cumbersome and lacks focus. Some aspects, e.g. nutrition, are examined in too much detail, without sufficient differentiation among items being investigated and little indication of how the data is to be used. Other aspects, e.g. communications, include questions which have not been justified either by what precedes or follows. (An example is item 9.14 of the schedule which asks, "How often do you speak to your neighbors and at what time of day?" This is to be answered by the father, mother and the children. How this information will be used or to what objective it relates is not clear.)

The most serious shortcoming of the original survey tool is that it covers too much ground.* Thus, it creates problems by generating data which may never serve any direct and useful purpose, either for planning or for evaluation. An attempt to streamline the survey was made when starting work in the second site, El Pinar. In so doing, however, according to Eduardo Linarte some items considered useful for later evaluation were unfortunately left out of the baseline study. Thus, the main problem seems to be one of focus. Recent thinking by the Project's Research staff suggests that this focus and integration can be achieved by stricter application of criteria for data gathering, e.g. by selecting for study only those baseline conditions which:

- directly relate to the objectives of the study and which help to determine its impact;
- directly pertain to the hypothesis being tested; and
- are critically important for the effectiveness of messages to be delivered by the Project or for the understanding of content to be learned or skills to be developed by beneficiaries.

2. Participatory Emphasis

The Project Director attached much importance to the participation of national and local officials as well as community representatives in the planning and implementation of the Project. For this reason a series of

*Data generated includes literacy, education levels, health, housing, occupation of parents, family structure, land tenure, number of farmers by type of produce and area cultivated, ownership of animals, market centers frequented for home consumption purposes, annual productivity and its disposal, number of farmers by market outlets, weekly intake of food items, number of meals per day per family, attitudes towards food items, women's economic occupations and preferences, communication networks, use of media, leadership structures and farmer organization.

meetings were held at different levels prior to making final decisions on such matters as site, priority content, and procedures for reaching beneficiaries.

The value of community participation is now generally recognized as a means of creating a sense of ownership of the program and of releasing the people's will to sustain it. However, this type of motivation can best be achieved when the people are genuinely involved in decision-making regarding their priority needs and problems and how to address them. In this Project, the planners had already decided that nutrition was to receive priority attention. The baseline survey tool itself was heavily biased towards diagnosing nutritional needs. Although a totally open pre-planning dialogue between local communities and field staff is an ideal not easily achieved, there are, of course, degrees of "openness" all along a wide-ranging scale. It is important for project planners to recognize at which end of the scale they stand in actual practice and not just in theory. In this instance, although the rhetoric suggests a highly non-directive posture, the manner in which the program was developed indicates otherwise. In a sense, a high degree of directiveness may be inevitable in a program of mass dimensions, in which case its directiveness should be acknowledged as such.

3. Developmental Orientation

Another principle to which Project's leadership was committed was that of achieving practical results in people's lives and not remaining content with dissemination of information. AID had been well aware of this need from the start, and had, in fact, emphasized the complementary character of the intervention to closely accompany and reinforce normal rural development programs and agricultural sector services of the government.

By taking on a developmental orientation, the project planners complicated their task to the point of its becoming unwieldy. For example, the achievement of nutritional or productivity targets now required the marshaling of a whole set of new resources such as water supply, seed money, and credit; very little of this kind of help was readily available from national sources.

By acting as a negotiator between local communities and external service agencies, project staff was able to arrange for some of the needed support services, e.g. drilling of 30 wells and parasite testing of 230 children. Since these activities were in addition to the already complicated task of monitoring poultry and other small farm animal projects, organizing demonstrations of vegetable gardening, and field testing different communication media, it is not surprising that some other essential tasks such as process recording were left undone or received lower priority.

This difficulty seems to have decreased in the Rionegro project in Colombia, where ICA already has a network of services and a cadre of experienced staff available to support the Project.

4. Experimental Design

One of the stated aims of the Project was to field test a variety of social communication techniques and to determine their relative impact, using scrupulous scientific principles of investigation, to the extent possible. With this aim in mind, Project planners tried to create the precise condition of an experimental design. They selected and closely matched sample populations to serve as experimental and control groups. These groups comprised an average of 20 families each.

This type of experimental design has been tried elsewhere, sometimes with disappointing results as in the well-known UNICEF-aided study in Mehbubnagar, India. The main problem is how to prevent the "contamination" of the control group. Where extreme poverty exists, it may be both difficult and unjust to keep services and influences away from a "control" community simply for the sake of the experimental design. Prevention of the so-called contamination is even more difficult where mass media is used as a main vehicle for dissemination of technology. In addition, maintaining careful process recording of interventions in the experimental villages is of the utmost importance for observing the change process.

If the necessary monitoring structures are in place and functioning, and if the population under observation is not too large, an experimental project can provide useful insights, although they may not always be 100% conclusive.

Having decided on the control/experimental design, project planners proceeded to conduct pre-tests on the sample population with the idea that the same schedule, used eventually as a post-test, could establish knowledge gains or attitudinal changes (in the experimental group) attributable directly to the learning intervention.

The rural families involved in the experiment were also interviewed to determine their media preferences and usage. This data, combined with baseline information on literacy, influenced the choice of media to be utilized with each group. The soundness of this procedure is clear. There were vast differences in literacy levels among women in the three pilot areas*; there

*In El Cercado, for example, 65.7% of the rural women from 178 families who participated in the project were illiterate; in one of the six communities in this pilot area, with 36 families, 80% of the women were illiterate. On the other hand in the Rionegro pilot study in Colombia over 80% of the women participants could read and write.

were also significant differences in their prior technical knowledge, skills and experience in agriculture or animal husbandry. These differences affected the type of content offered as well as the media in which it was packaged, if it was to be relevant and usable by specific beneficiary groups.

Accordingly, five different formats were selected for field testing: radio, cartillas (pamphlets), historietas (comic-style booklets), sonovisos (tape-slide programs) and demonstrations.

These formats were tested with two different content areas (nutrition and food production) on comparable groups. To investigate the effectiveness of mass media, some groups in El Pinas, Dominican Republic, were exposed to radio messages alone, others to radio in combination with one other communication medium. In Colombia, in addition to the above, other combinations of media for the two content areas were field tested simultaneously in five municipalities.

Thus the formats tested in Colombia were:

Radio

Radio alone (control villages)
Radio + cartilla
Radio + cartilla + sonoviso
Radio + sonoviso + historieta
Radio + historieta + demonstration

No Radio

Cartilla + sonoviso
Cartilla + demonstration
Sonoviso + historieta
Historieta + demonstration
Demonstration + cartilla + sonoviso

Initially, puppets had been included in the set of formats but were dropped because ICA in Colombia has already done much field testing with puppets.

Once again the Project attempted too much. It generated too much data in too short a time. In terms of opportunity costs, the time spent in working with these permutations and combinations was time lost for perfecting the materials tested. If the media inputs are not of comparable quality, the experiment cannot be a true test of media effectiveness. As such, one cannot draw conclusions of generalizable validity.

Relative Effectiveness of Media Options

The formats which were developed are unfortunately not of comparable quality. Of all five formats, the quality of the radio program is by far the poorest. It is not only diadactic and dull, but is also frustrating because of frequent interruptions by music. With this kind of input, the test of the effectiveness of radio as a medium is invalid. By contrast, the cartilla (technical pamphlet) has been painstakingly planned and attractively presented in color. Although the quality of the photographs could have been sharper and the type of pictures (showing only hands instead of the full human figure) may be questioned, on the whole the cartilla is clear in its message and easy to follow.

Apparently the Project's media people did not believe that their own radio broadcasts could be made lively enough to attract and hold an audience. They realized, for example, that the Viva Voz radio program is popular

"because the parish priest is from the community, has the same cultural idiosyncracies as the community and is therefore able to establish rapport. (But) in the Project we use a more serious style, it is more technical. Therefore, the radio format did not have impact."

For this reason, it was decided to combine the radio with other formats "to see if this would increase its effectiveness in competing with commercial broadcasts." An alternative which does not seem to have been explored was to

use the soap-opera style for radio broadcasts and establish a direct linkage between the soap-opera characters and those of the historieta. The dramatic quality of both media could have been enhanced.

Project staff, however, attributed several other reasons, as well, to the relative ineffectiveness of the Project's radio program. Hector Lopera, ICA Media Technician in Rionegro, felt that radio broadcasts as educational media are useful only with a captive audience guided by a monitor as is done by Radio Sutatenza and Radio Foro. He stressed that

"Ours was a captive audience in some ways - for example, for the cartilla, the sonoviso and the demonstration formats, but not for radio. We were thus competing with commercial radio which is purely recreational and informational on a general level."

According to the Project Director, there were logistic, cultural and economic reasons as well, which prevented rural women from benefiting from the radio program. In the Dominican Republic, even those who owned radios were unable to use them regularly because batteries would run down and they were costly to replace. Also, it was against local cultural norms to listen to the radio during periods of mourning which in a high mortality area could occur frequently. However, apparently the most common reason given by rural women for not being able to listen to the Project's radio broadcasts was the conflict with family interests: Younger members of the family may wish to listen to other radio programs at the time of the Project's broadcasts, or the arrival of a visitor or the demands of the family to be served a meal may deprive the homemaker of the opportunity to listen to the radio. The latter reason (i.e., family obligations) was confirmed by two of the rural women we visited in Rionegro but they also admitted to tuning in to Radio Sutatenza and commercial radio programs.

By contrast, the cartilla seemed to be favored because "it is always there; it can be consulted at any time." Another reason given was that "if we don't understand the instruction we can always read it again. With the radio, it is gone." The cartilla also seems to be shared within the family, especially where there are school age children.

The sonoviso or tape-slide program is based on the cartilla and apparently used the same photographs and text. It therefore shares with the cartilla the advantage of clarity. Its added attractiveness is that it has movement and can be associated with the entertainment value of movies and television. A great advantage in some areas is that it requires no literacy skills, unlike the cartilla.

Two major disadvantages need mention. One is that a special effort is required to attend a sonoviso show, which for some villagers may mean up to an hour's trek each way. The same objection has been raised by several women in connection with demonstrations. Another difficulty is the lack of electricity in remote areas. When a generator is used, the noise of the generator tends to drown the message.

Our field visits to families in Rionegro showed that both the cartilla and the sonoviso were well received. In one family, the husband, when asked which medium he preferred, named the "television" meaning the tapeslide program. In another home visit, the wife explained that she and her children liked the cartilla best, but that her husband who is illiterate had no use for it. "He prefers the movie (sonoviso)". In both instances, the knowledge gained has been put to use in planting carrots and cabbage.

The quality of the historieta is good from the viewpoint of graphics and poor in terms of content presentation. The art work shows understanding of

the local culture and the characters are apparently a good reflection of the real world in Rionegro. However, Project staff had no experience in writing a comic book and were guided only by samples from other countries. As a result, the historieta produced by the Project is little more than a disguised lecture. It makes no use of drama, conflict of wills, doubts, anxiety, or reflection, to help the readers project their own questions and reservations before making adoption decisions. Another shortcoming of the historieta produced in Colombia is that it combines too many messages and treats them relatively superficially compared to the cartilla. Therefore, even as a didactic rather than projective tool, it has proved less effective. This is contrary to the experience of other countries where historietas have been well received.

Of the five formats, the demonstration was well favored, particularly by groups concerned with agricultural productivity. Two constraints mentioned by rural women were reported by the Project Director. One, a problem of logistics and time investment due to distances to be covered, has already been mentioned. The other relates to group dynamics; the more timid women in the group find they are unable to raise questions because of domination by a few more articulate participants. Here again, the fault is with the manner of presentation and not with the method per se.

To sum up this discussion, I believe it would be fair to say that while some valuable lessons were learned in terms of materials and media development, much energy went into testing, tabulations, and analysis of data which is of little value beyond the Project because the inputs were faulty. This refers not only to the uneven quality of media used, as discussed above, but also to the way different media were packaged together. Several participants

at the review meeting in Reonegro pointed out that the effect of any mixed media package varies with the way the items relate to each other. In this experiment, their role was additive (basically the same message repeated via different media) rather than complementary, i.e., using to maximum advantage the specific and unique contribution of each medium in ways which reinforce the comprehension of the message and the motivation to adopt it.

Training of Personnel

The complex task undertaken by Project leadership was further complicated by the lack of trained staff. This difficulty was particularly evident in the Dominican Republic. The staff assigned to the Project by GODR apparently had no prior experience in research or in mass media communications, nor had they worked before in rural women's programs. None had completed post-graduate studies and some were not through college. They had, therefore, to be trained on the job through a series of short courses in all aspects of Project activities from baseline research and statistics to radio communication and puppetry. Even in Colombia where university-trained personnel specializing in sociology and economics were available, the Project faced an enormous problem of developing staff competency in innovative methods while in the very process of testing the innovations themselves.

Little information on how this training was conducted is available in the files. At least three very sound training principles seem to have been observed: (1) to balance theoretical training with practice, (2) to provide training in small doses, and (3) to offer training as close as possible to the time when skills will be needed.

In the absence of hard data, one can only go by observed results and comments by those who have accompanied the Project from its start. Project leadership seem to feel that staff members have made significant gains in knowledge and skills to the point that there is now an institutional competency at the country level to continue with such activities. A Project Activities Report for August '79-May '80, for example, claims that the intensive training of national personnel in the Dominican Republic

"has resulted in the formation of a team of nationals capable of duplicating any of the steps which they have thus far experienced. Looked at over the short-run this in-service training has caused the Project to advance rather slowly; however, looked at over the long-run this training will permit the continuation of the Project in other areas."

If this level of competency has been achieved despite 60 percent turnover in the Dominican Republic staff, then indeed it does the training effort much credit. The extensive data collected and manually tabulated by the staff is also another indicator of the effectiveness of training in the Project's chosen procedures, regardless of technical questions one might raise about the tools and procedures used. Finally, the results achieved in village people's lives should, when all facts are in, tell something about the competency of staff to develop, apply and support a variety of media usages.

Costs and Impact Evaluation

The Project Research Consultant, Mr. Eduardo Linarte, stated that there had not been enough time to examine the actual cost of different component activities and to estimate their cost-effectiveness. It is expected that these figures will be available by the end of January 1984.

In terms of media impact, several tables were presented to the review meeting. They refer primarily to comparisons of knowledge gains, media preferences, media motivational impact for technology transfer, and the like. In the light of the above discussion of the Project's Experimental Design, the significance of the statistics reported is questionable. Mr. Linarte himself expressed reservations about the "100 percent validity" of the tables. His conclusions, however, were that the experiment has successfully demonstrated three things:

1. It has provided some evidence and a hypothesis about the effectiveness of different media and combinations of media in terms of knowledge gain and technology transfer. It has shown, for example, that alternative media such as the cartilla, can be as effective as the traditional demonstration, if not more so.
2. It has indicated a "congruence between acceptance of the medium and media preference."
3. It has also shown congruence between knowledge gains and adoption.

These are not earth-shaking conclusions. Perhaps the leadership of the Project has taken too limited a view of the impact of the intervention, relying too much on formal pre- and post-tests and on hard statistical evidence. The value of this type of experiment is often undetectable, in its fullness, using statistical instruments. The Project, unfortunately, was not able to set up a systematic feedback format including process recording and other anthropo-centric approaches to understanding human motivation, learning and social change. Given the right evaluation approach, however, the project may well be found to yield many useful insights, both from its achievements and its errors, which could be put to the service of future endeavors of this type.

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1. Objetivos del Proyecto, El Cercado, Dominican Republic, 1979.

Desarrollar e implementar metodología de capacitación que permitan a la mujer del area rural su desempeño mas eficiente como productora y comercializadora.

Identificar y desarrollar técnicas educativas que puedan capacitár a la mujer campesina en terminos de adquirir destrezas y habilidades que la hagan eficiente en tareas de producción y comercialización de productós apropcuarios que escasean en la zona, y que son factibles de producir para su consumo y comercialización.

Capacitar a la mujer campesina en la siembra y cuidados culturales de productós básicos de la alimentacion que permitán balancear la dieta y reducir el costa de la canasta familiar.

Abastecer con hortalizas, frutales y huevos las tiendas de consumo del CENSERI de la comunidad de El Cercedo.

Dar apoyo y fortalecer las actividades de las mujeres campesinas en lo concerniente a su organización en grupos autogestionarios a través del desarrollo del proyecto.

2. Objetivos del Proyecto, Rionegro, Colombia, 1982.

a. **Objetivo General:** Generar metodología de capacitación de mujeres y familias rurales que incorporen el uso de medios masivos de comunicacion.

b. **Objetivo Especifico:** Probar la efectividad de usar la radio, la cartilla y los titeres para la capacitación de mujeres y familias rurales en cuanto a ganancia de conocimiento, adopcion de tecnologia, cobertura y aceptacion del medio.