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**AID'S PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROGRAM  
CAN BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE**

**AUDIT REPORT NO. 85-08  
December 7, 1984**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Agency for International Development spends about \$135 to \$150 million each year in training thousands of foreign participants. Participant training is considered one of AID's most important contributions to international development. Many host country leaders of government, industry, technology, education, and science are drawn from the ranks of AID participants. Recently the AID Administrator established a goal of substantially increasing this program during the next two fiscal years.

Over the years, the Office of Inspector General (IG) has reported on various aspects of AID's participant training program. The purpose of this audit was to identify major recurring participant training problems that need to be resolved at the headquarters level.

This review consisted primarily of an analysis of prior Inspector General audits and was supplemented by our limited work in AID's Office of International Training and four AID Missions (Jamaica, Panama, Peru, and Egypt). The review disclosed four major participant training-related problems, some of which have existed for years. We believe that the limited program effectiveness and waste of resources caused by these problems are unnecessary and that increased attention by top AID management is clearly needed and warranted.

First, during the project design, careful consideration is not being given to whether the organization to be developed has the type and number of employees who should and could receive training on a timely basis. Our audits of ten projects, funded at about \$200 million, disclosed that project outcomes were seriously compromised because training candidates simply were not available as anticipated. We found that on all ten projects, little or no assessment was made as to whether sufficient numbers of training candidates would be available once the project was implemented. We have recommended that AID require such assessments be made for project papers containing significant participant training components.

Secondly, participants are being sent for training who do not meet English language and academic qualifications. Our audits of four projects, funded at about \$140 million, found that unqualified candidates were being selected and sent for training which resulted in (1) substantial Federal funds being wasted on participants who could not complete training and/or (2) training taking longer than planned, preventing participants on some projects from returning in time to work

with U.S. technical assistance teams. Unqualified candidates are being sent for training because of inadequate candidate selection processes. We have recommended that the Office of International Training monitor the performance of participants while in the U.S. to detect possible weaknesses in mission and contractor participant selection processes and report any weaknesses or problems to the responsible mission for corrective actions.

Thirdly, missions are not following-up on returned participants to ensure they are effectively used on development projects and to evaluate the effectiveness of the training in meeting its objectives--a problem the General Accounting Office reported on in 1980. Despite the hundreds of millions of dollars AID has invested in training thousands of participants, there is little information available today to assess the effectiveness and impact of this training. The Office of International Training is developing automated participant management and evaluation systems which we believe can greatly improve mission follow-up and evaluation activities. We have recommended that AID require missions to implement these systems once they are fully developed and tested.

Finally, AID continues to lack the comprehensive, up-to-date information needed to effectively manage participant training activities--a problem both the Inspector General and the General Accounting Office reported. The problem exists because independent contractors now handle almost 65 percent of AID participants and AID has no overall system for (1) collecting comprehensive data on participant training contractors, (2) comparing contractor services and costs, or (3) analyzing contractor effectiveness.

As a result, AID does not know how many and how well participants are being trained and at what cost. This information is essential to making informed decisions concerning the program, adequately responding to Congressional inquiries, and assessing the overall effectiveness of participant training. We have recommended a mechanism be established to insure the Office of International Training is made aware of all mission and AID/W contracts with participant training activities. We have also recommended that AID/W and missions be required to compare the costs of contractor provided participant training services with Office of International Training costs to ensure the most economical method is used to obtain these services.

#### MANAGEMENT COMMENTS AND IG RESPONSES

The Bureau for Management stated that the issues and recommendations contained in our report parallel those being

considered by the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training and should be included in its agenda. The Bureau for Science and Technology (S&T), which coordinated comments from other bureaus and offices, acknowledged the need to improve participant training project design, selection processes, follow-up, and monitoring of contractors. The following sections describe key management comments and those situations where there is lack of agreement between management and the IG.

#### Management Comment

S&T did not believe our report considered the complexities of managing participant training. They stated that AID's policy to largely decentralize implementation makes it very difficult for a central international training office to play a significant management role for the whole Agency.

#### IG Response

We agree that achieving stated goals for participant training is difficult. However, we also believe stronger, central guidance and oversight is essential. Problems identified in our reports are pervasive and would be very difficult to correct with the current decentralized program.

#### Management Comment

S&T raised the questions of how frequently the reported problems occur and whether the age of the prior IG reports would allow us to capture recent program modifications to eliminate recurring problems.

#### IG Response

We do not know the precise magnitude of the problems discussed in this report; however, the problems are extensive and still exist. Our summary report contains information from 35 IG reports; 32 of these were issued between March 1981 and July 1984 and 14 were issued in 1983 and 1984. (See Appendix I). These reports identified systemic problems affecting the entire organization. Further, we believe these problems still exist because (1) our on site work at four AID missions during the summer of 1984 confirmed the existence of problems identified in our prior audits and (2) our current review of two Bureau for Latin America and Caribbean regional training programs identified major problems with project design, selection processes, follow-up, and contractor monitoring--the same problems identified in this report.

### Management Comment

S&T stated that AID has recently undertaken several initiatives to improve participant training. These initiatives include the establishment of the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training, issuance of the Participant Training Policy Determination, current preparation of the Participant Training Strategy Paper, and development of OIT sponsored workshops for regional training officers.

### IG Response

We believe our report recommendations will assist managers of these initiatives to reach their objectives of improving the participant training function.

In addition to the above general comments, S&T commented on our specific recommendations. Based upon these comments, we revised three recommendations (Nos. 3, 6 and 7). Although S&T suggested that our other four recommendations be revised or deleted, we do not agree and have retained these recommendations. In these four instances, we have included, in the body of the report, S&T's comments concerning the recommendations followed by our response (see pages 8, 9, and 18).

S&T also suggested that all recommendations should be directed to S&T. However, we are making several recommendations to the Deputy Administrator because of the importance of the participant training function and the fact that S&T does not have line management responsibility over the other bureaus and missions.

Comments from the Bureau for Management and S&T are included as Appendices II and III.

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## BACKGROUND

The AID participant training program is a vital element of foreign assistance. AID participants are foreign nationals sponsored by AID to receive training outside their home countries. The principal goal of participant training is to develop people who will (1) actively participate in developing their country and (2) continue development after the U.S. ceases to provide assistance.

Participant training is considered by many to be one of AID's most important contributions to international development. AID participants provide the knowledge and skills needed to implement and carry on AID supported development projects long after AID and other donors leave. Many host country leaders of government, industry, technology, education, and science are drawn from the ranks of AID participants.

The cost of AID's participant training program is not readily determinable. Estimates range from \$135 to \$150 million per year. There were over 9,000 participants in the U.S. during fiscal year 1983 for both academic and technical training. The AID Administrator has set a goal of increasing participant training by at least 50 percent by fiscal year 1986.

There are two types of training projects: general and project-related. General training projects provide short- and long-term training in key development areas for country leaders, mid-level managers and specialists. General training projects can be used to ensure the availability of at least a skeleton staff for initial project implementation or to provide needed management skills to a larger number of host country individuals so they will be better able to manage future activities. Project-related training provides training to target groups in a specific sector, such as agriculture or health, and as part of a specific development project. This type training is intended to overcome human resource constraints to project implementation.

Within AID, the Office of International Training (OIT) is functionally responsible for all aspects of participant training including: (1) directing and supervising the centralized participant training activities for AID/W bureaus and offices; (2) directing the development, implementation, and maintenance of policies, regulations, procedures and standards governing participant training; (3) serving as AID's liaison to educational institutions; (4) developing policies, plans, and evaluating activities pertaining to U.S. and third country training; and, (5) evaluating the

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effectiveness of all aspects of participant training, with emphasis on appraising contractor and training institutions performance as well as assessing participant experience in the U.S.

At one time, most participants were handled by OIT. Now OIT, through its contractors, handles only about 35 percent of AID's participants. The remainder are managed by independent contractors selected by missions, bureaus, and other AID/W offices. OIT officials estimate there are more than 100 different contractors involved in participant training.

### Objectives, Scope and Methodology

Over the years, the Office of Inspector General has reported on various aspects of AID's participant training program. The objective of the current audit was to determine whether recurring participant training problems existed that require AID/W actions to correct.

To accomplish our objective we (1) reviewed Inspector General audit reports issued since 1979 to identify participant training findings; (2) categorized the findings by major issues; and (3) assessed whether actions had been taken or were needed to resolve any major participant training-related problems. Appendix I summarizes the participant training-related findings contained in the Inspector General reports we reviewed.

In addition to reviewing past audit reports, we also conducted audit work within OIT and at AID Missions in Jamaica, Panama, Peru, and Egypt. This audit work was part of an overall audit survey of AID's participant training activities intended to identify training issues warranting more detailed audit efforts. We also utilized this audit survey to determine whether major participant training problems identified in past audit reports still existed and what actions, if any, had been taken to resolve these problems.

Our work was done in accordance with the Comptroller General's Standards for Audit of Government Organizations, Programs, Activities and Functions. Since this audit relied extensively on prior audit reports, supplemented by audit work in OIT and four AID missions, we did not review the adequacy of agency internal controls over participant training activities.

## FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Participant training is a vital element of AID's foreign assistance and is critical to the success of many AID projects. We continually find, however, that (1) training is behind schedule, (2) participants are being sent for training who do not meet qualifications, (3) missions are not following-up on returned participants, and (4) AID lacks the centralized information needed for effective management. These problems exist because:

- missions do not adequately assess the availability of candidates when designing projects;
- candidate selection processes are inadequate;
- missions lack the resources to implement a follow-up program and/or do not have complete records on all participants; and
- OIT lacks a mechanism to obtain information on and from the large number of participant training contractors who now handle 65 percent of AID's participants.

The problems identified above have existed for years. They severely limit the effectiveness of AID's participant training program. Further, although this report is based primarily upon summary information, it is obvious that a significant amount of Federal funds have been wasted due to poor management of the program. Of even greater impact are the unnecessary costs incurred and benefits foregone due to extensive project delays or in some cases failure to complete project objectives. We believe that the limited program effectiveness and waste of resources are unnecessary and that increased attention by top AID management is clearly needed and warranted.

**NEED TO ASSESS THE AVAILABILITY  
OF CANDIDATES FOR PARTICIPANT TRAINING  
DURING PROJECT DESIGN**

The availability of participant training candidates is not being adequately assessed during project design. USAID missions when designing projects must carefully assess whether the targeted host government has the type and number of employees who could be trained in a timely manner. Our audits, however, continually disclose that project participant training is behind schedule because the type and number of training candidates were not available as expected.

Training delays have serious ramifications on project outcomes because (1) participants will not return from training in time to work with U.S. technical assistance teams and (2) trained employees will not be available as expected, hindering program operations and adversely affecting project outcome. These situations occurred primarily because missions and project design teams did not adequately assess the availability of training candidates when designing the projects.

**Availability of Training Candidates and  
Timing of Training Are Critical for  
Project Success**

Participant training is an essential component of many development projects and must, therefore, be carefully designed to achieve its intended objectives. During the design phase of a development project it is important to determine availability of the type and number of employees who should receive training. Careful consideration of this issue during project design will help avoid situations where missions find, after a project is implemented, that there is an insufficient number of qualified candidates available for training.

Another important issue to consider during project design is the timing of the training. AID's 1983 Participant Training Policy Determination requires that project implementation schedules generally time phase departure and return dates of participants so that maximum interaction with technical assistance personnel occurs. If participants are not provided, or are furnished later than planned, the value of technical assistance is eroded and institution building becomes seriously curtailed. Additionally, when the phasing of participants gets off schedule, subsequent project activity is disrupted or cannot progress.

Candidates Are Often Not Available for Training Because of Inadequate Project Design

The training components on ten of the projects audited, funded at about \$200 million, were behind schedule because sufficient numbers of qualified candidates were not available for training. This occurred because project designs did not carefully consider whether the organization being developed had the type and number of candidates who could receive training on a timely basis. For example, in seven of the ten projects we audited, the availability of candidates was not even considered during project design. Although some consideration was given to candidate availability on the other three projects, this consideration was inadequate.

These training delays adversely affected overall project results since project participants lost the opportunity to work with and benefit from U.S. technical assistance personnel. We also found that the lack of trained personnel adversely affected the capability of the host government to carry on or expand project activity.

The following examples from our audits illustrate the negative effect on projects resulting from the lack of trained personnel.

Sudan's Blue Nile Integrated Agricultural Development Project --\$15.7 Million

Although the project's long-term success depended on having a number of well-trained Sudanese professionals available to continue the project, it was doubtful the anticipated level of training would be achieved by the project completion date. The project included long-term U.S. training for 14 Sudanese participants. At the time of the audit, however, only two Sudanese had been sent for training and it was unlikely that the remaining participants could be selected and trained before the project completion date. This situation occurred because the expected number of Sudanese government employees was not available for training--a factor not addressed during project design. The lack of trained Sudanese will probably prevent the Sudanese Government from carrying on or expanding project activity as planned.

Indonesia's Sumatra Agricultural Research Project -- \$9.5 Million

The project's participant training was seriously behind schedule due to a lack of candidates. The success of the project was dependent upon training eight candidates at the Doctorate level and 64 candidates at the Master Degree level. We found that just two years before the April 1984

project completion date only about \$60,000 of the \$1.1 million budgeted for this activity had been expended and the overseas doctorate-level training had been virtually discontinued.

The project paper assumed there would be an adequate number of English speaking qualified students for U.S. graduate level training. However, the major reason for the training shortfall was the lack of available candidates with sufficient English language capability. We concluded that it was unlikely that the planned number of participants could be trained by the project completion date and that the project's success was jeopardized.

#### Lesotho's Farming System Research Project -- \$9 Million

Slippages in sending project participants for long-term training would probably result in only two of the planned 16 participants completing their training by the project termination date. The major reason for training delays was that the targeted government organization had few qualified persons to hire and even fewer to send to school. This should have been disclosed in the project design. However, the project design did not adequately address the manpower and organizational needs of the newly established government agency. Also, training plans did not allow sufficient time to recruit and train national staff so that they could continue with the research after termination of the AID project.

It was realized that the lack of trained personnel would adversely affect the project. In fact unless this project was extended, the 14 participants who had not yet received training would not have an opportunity to work with technical advisors during project implementation--a critical requirement.

#### Malawi Agricultural Research Project -- \$ 10.4 Million

Delays in selecting participants and in their completing degree requirements caused the project completion date to be extended. Even so, training would probably provide limited benefit to the project because participants would not have an opportunity to interface with technical assistance teams. This situation occurred because, even though the project paper identified a potential pool of training candidates, no formal review of the candidates' qualifications was undertaken. As a result, many of the candidates were rejected because they could not obtain minimum Graduate Record Examination scores.

Jamaica Integrated Rural Development Program -- \$26.2 Million

Although this project was to train 56 participants, only 30 project employees had been selected for training at the time of our audit--about five years after the project started. More participants had not been trained because the host government restricted training opportunities to a limited pool of candidates--a problem not addressed in the project paper. Shortages of trained personnel were hindering project operations.

Conclusion

Our project audits have disclosed numerous instances where the project training components were seriously behind schedule. This jeopardized project success, because the type and expected numbers of candidates were not available. These situations can be avoided if, during project design, careful consideration is given to whether the organization to be developed has the type and number of employees who should and could receive training on a timely basis.

Recommendation No. 1

We recommend that the Deputy Administrator direct that (i) project papers with significant participant training components contain assessments as to whether the targeted host government organization has the type and number of employees who could be trained in a timely manner and (ii) project committees be required to conduct assessments of project papers' participant training components.

Recommendation No. 2

We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator for S&T direct OIT to develop the appropriate methodology and guidance for conducting and documenting these assessments. Issues to be covered in this methodology and guidance should include techniques to be used in:

- Determining whether the host country or targeted organization has a sufficient number of training candidates to select from once the project is implemented.
- Determining whether the pool of candidates possess the required English language and academic qualifications.
- Determining whether there are qualified employees available to replace the targeted organization's candidates sent for training.

### Management Comments

Concerning Recommendation No. 1, S&T stated that existing guidance includes several unambiguous statements requiring project-related training to be fully justified in the project paper and that additional guidance is not necessary. For example, S&T noted that project papers and project agreements already contain formal assurances, with covenants as needed, that local resources are adequate and the local government is committed to making personnel and other resources available as stated in the project agreement. S&T also stated that before actual implementations, PIO/Ps (Project Implementation Orders/Participants) repeat again a needs assessment for each trainee and a training plan.

Concerning Recommendation No. 2, S&T stated that the diversity of circumstances among participating countries prevent an AID/W office from developing a functional methodology for universal application. S&T believes field missions need latitude to prepare country specific assessments and that the adequacy of the country specific assessment should be judged at the time of the review of the project paper. S&T, therefore, suggested we combine our Recommendations No. 1 and 2 and proposed some alternative language.

### IG Response

We do not agree with S&T's position concerning Recommendation No. 1. While we acknowledge project papers and agreements contain formal assurances that the local government is committed to making personnel and other resources available as stated in project agreements, these assurances are general in nature and do not relate specifically to participant training candidates. Also, these assurances were obviously ineffective in preventing the problems identified in our report. Further, the PIO/Ps mentioned by S&T are prepared immediately prior to implementing the training and would not at this late stage address the problem of candidate

availability. Our audits continually point out that during the design phase more careful consideration needs to be given to the type and number of employees who should receive training. We have, therefore, retained this recommendation.

Concerning Recommendation No. 2, we agree that it would be difficult for an AID/W office to develop a specific methodology for universal application. We believe, however, that general methodology and guidance can be developed to facilitate assessments as to whether host countries or targeted government organizations have the type and number of candidates who could be trained in a timely manner. We have, therefore, also retained this recommendation.

## NEED TO MORE CAREFULLY SELECT TRAINING CANDIDATES

Participants are being sent for training who do not meet English language and academic qualifications. Because of the time and costs involved with training participants, only candidates who meet required English language and academic qualifications should be selected for training. AID mission and host countries are jointly responsible for ensuring training candidates, among other things, (1) possess adequate English language proficiency to meet program requirements and (2) have sufficient academic and/or other experience to meet prerequisites and enable them to complete programs successfully. We found, however, that unqualified candidates were being selected and sent for training. As a result, scarce training resources were being wasted on participants who could not complete training, and training was taking longer than planned which prevented participants on some projects from returning in time to work with technical assistance teams.

Unqualified candidates were being sent for training because some missions and contractor selection processes were inadequate. Since OIT has the primary responsibility for AID's policy, oversight, coordination and administration of participants, we believe OIT should monitor participant performance while in the U.S. to detect possible weaknesses in mission and contractor participant selection processes. The office does not now do this on a systematic basis.

### Unqualified Candidates Being Sent for Training

The training components on several projects we audited were behind schedule because participants sent for training were not qualified. Our audits of four projects, funded at about \$140 million, disclosed candidates were sent for training who did not have the required language or academic qualifications. As a result, training was taking longer than planned and a significant amount of funds targeted for training was being wasted on participants who could not complete training. The following examples from our audits illustrate the problems caused by sending unqualified candidates for training.

#### Kenya Agriculture System Support Project--\$61 Million

The initial group of five participants chosen on this project was poorly qualified. Three of the first five were on academic probation and one student eventually failed. A second group of four participants was also not qualified and required two additional years of undergraduate training to meet academic prerequisite requirements.

Yemen Educational Training Projects--\$68.6 Million  
(Two Projects)

Participants on both projects were sent to the U.S. with an insufficient knowledge of English and questionable academic qualifications. Of a group of 70 students, for example, 42 were subsequently dropped because of poor academic records or low English language capabilities, thus wasting valuable training resources.

An AID evaluation of a project also found unqualified participants were sent for training. A 1981/82 evaluation of a \$4.5 million Morocco Development Training and Management Support Project found that of 98 participants, 16 either never actually began training or were terminated prior to completing their training due to insufficient English language skills or inadequate academic backgrounds.

Participant Selection Processes Are Inadequate

Unqualified candidates are being sent for training because missions and contractors are not following adequate selection processes to ensure candidates have the required English language and academic skills needed to study in the U.S. For example, our 1981 audit of the \$61 million Kenya agriculture research project disclosed the contractor took unqualified candidates.

Our 1982 audit of the two Yemen educational projects disclosed that neither project followed adequate selection processes. On one project, for example, each participating host Government agency had its own criteria for selecting participants. As a result, candidate selection was not well controlled and many participants were selected whose qualifications were questionable (e.g., participants were sent to the U.S. with an insufficient knowledge of English and then needed extensive language training). On the second project, participants were selected unilaterally by the government ministry without regard to English language or academic qualifications. Many of these participants did not meet minimum English language competency requirements and several had weak academic records.

Greater OIT Oversight Could Detect  
Candidate Selection Problems

Greater OIT oversight of participants' performance while in the U.S. could detect weaknesses in mission and contractor selection processes. OIT has primary responsibility for AID's policy, oversight, coordination and administration of

participants. One of OIT's responsibilities is also to maintain centralized information on AID's participant training.

However, OIT does not now monitor participants' performance on a systematic basis. For example, OIT currently lacks information on contractor managed participants which account for 65 percent of AID's participant training program. We believe OIT should conduct monitoring samples of the trainees' performance in the U.S. to identify weaknesses in selection processes. Such weaknesses could then be reported to the appropriate missions or contractors for corrective actions.

### Conclusion

Our audits are disclosing that processes being used to select candidates for training are not adequate. We believe this points up the need for strengthened mission and contractor participant selection processes. Since OIT has primary responsibility for AID's policy, oversight, coordination and administration of participants and maintains centralized information on AID's participant training, we believe OIT should take steps to detect possible weaknesses in mission and contractor participant selection processes and ensure corrective action is taken.

### Recommendation No. 3

We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator for S&T direct OIT to (i) annually conduct monitoring samples of the trainees' performance in the U.S. to detect possible weaknesses in mission or contractor participant selection processes and (ii) report any weaknesses to the appropriate mission or contractor for corrective action.

### Management Comments and IG Response

The above recommendation was revised to reflect S&T's comments.

## AID MISSIONS NEED TO FOLLOW-UP ON RETURNED PARTICIPANTS

Missions are not adequately following-up on participants after they return from training. Missions are responsible for maintaining a follow-up program for returned participants to ensure they are effectively used on development projects and to evaluate the effectiveness of the training in meeting its objectives. This is not being done because missions lack the resources to implement a follow-up program and/or they do not have complete records on all participants. As a result, missions have little information on how or whether participants are being effectively utilized, and there is little data available that can be used to assess the effectiveness and impact of AID's estimated \$150 million annual participant training program. OIT efforts to develop participant management and evaluation systems could improve follow-up and evaluation activities.

### Follow-up Activities Are an Essential Segment of Participant Training

AID's Handbook 10, which provides AID's policies, regulations, procedures and guidance on participant training, states that evaluation of participant training should be conducted on a continuing basis, and follow-up activities are an essential aspect of participant training. Missions are responsible for maintaining a follow-up program for returned participants to ensure their utilization in development activities and to evaluate the effectiveness of training in meeting its objectives.

Follow-up activities are a form of continuing education designed to further the technical and nontechnical objectives of all AID-sponsored participant training. Follow-up activities are intended to:

- Ensure that participants utilize their training as planned.
- Assist returned participants in reinforcing, extending, and transmitting to others the technical and managerial knowledge acquired during their training.
- Strengthen the bonds of friendship and understanding between the U.S. and other countries by continuing to broaden the returned participant's knowledge about the U.S., its people, institutions and culture.

At a minimum, missions are required to maintain personal and/or written contact with returned participants, especially

those who received long-term training, to obtain the information needed to accomplish follow-up objectives.

Missions Are Not Conducting  
Follow-up Activities

Although GAO reported in 1980 that missions were not conducting follow-up activities, our audits and current survey work disclosed this problem still exists. In a January 4, 1980, letter to the AID Administrator, GAO reported that its work at three overseas missions (Liberia, Guatemala, and Peru) determined that mission follow-up activities were not conducted systematically and thoroughly.

Audits we conducted since 1980 disclosed missions are still not following-up on returned participants. Audits of four projects, funded at about \$75 million and involving ten different countries, found that limited or no follow-up activities were being conducted. For example:

- A 1982 audit of two Yemen educational projects, funded at about \$68.6 million, revealed the mission had not, at the time of our audit, implemented follow-up procedures for monitoring the activities of almost 100 participants who had returned to Yemen. Further, we found that four participants, who completed their training in the U.S., never returned to Yemen and apparently are still in the U.S. We also reported on the mission's lack of follow-up on returned participants in 1979.
- A 1981 audit of a \$4.5 million agricultural research and information project conducted in six Latin America countries disclosed that project officials, while recognizing a high turnover of trained personnel, did not have a follow-up policy requiring a review to determine how many of the returned participants were still working in their assigned positions.
- A 1981 audit of the \$2 million Southern Africa Manpower Development Project conducted in three African countries found the missions were conducting few follow-up activities. Contact with participants, if maintained at all, was usually informal and infrequent. We concluded that the lack of follow-up weakened the effectiveness of the participant training program.

Follow-up activities at the four missions we visited during our recent survey were very limited. For example, the

USAID/Jamaica training office had no formal system to maintain contact with returned participants. Any contacts were on an informal and infrequent basis. The USAID/Panama training office utilized a questionnaire to periodically follow-up on participants but had fallen behind in administering the questionnaire and maintaining an up-to-date roster of returned participants.

USAID/Peru recently completed a study of past participants and planned to establish a participant alumni association in the near future. However, even this mission was not current with its follow-up activities--information on participants was not current and contacts with returned participants were on an informal basis. For example, although the training officer told us long term participants were required to submit a final report on the results of their training, only one of six returned participant files we reviewed had such a report.

USAID/Egypt, which accounts for about 20 percent of AID's participants, also conducts limited follow-up activities--a problem we also reported on in 1979. Our 1979 audit report of USAID/Egypt's participant training program found that there was no systematic follow-up and debriefing of returned participants. Our survey work at the mission revealed the mission's follow-up activities were still severely limited. Returned participants were only debriefed on an informal basis and the mission had no formal on-going follow-up program.

Despite the recognized importance of participant follow-up and evaluation activities, missions continue to devote little attention to these areas. As a result, AID lacks information on the effectiveness and impact of costly participant training programs.

#### Lack of Resources and Incomplete Information Hinder Follow-up Activities

GAO reported in 1980 that missions were not conducting follow-up activities due primarily to a lack of personnel and incomplete information on participants. This situation was also reported in a June 1982 AID evaluation of the \$9.7 million Sahel Manpower Development Project, which was training 400-500 Sahelians. This evaluation reported that the AID missions involved with the project were generally understaffed to address such training issues as participant follow-up. Our audits and current survey work indicate this is still the case. Mission foreign service training officer positions have been eliminated leaving only a local national staff who have little time to devote to follow-up activities.

Lack of information on all participants is also a problem. AID's participant training program has evolved into a very decentralized and fragmented program making it difficult for mission training offices to be aware of all participants sent for training. At one time, most participants were programmed, placed, and monitored directly by OIT. Now OIT handles only about 35 percent of the participants. The remainder are handled by independent contractors selected by missions, bureaus, other AID/W offices, or even the host government. With so many different participant training programming sources, mission training offices may not be aware of all participants sent for training.

For example, our 1983 audit of a host country contractor used on a \$14 million Egyptian agricultural project found that the mission was not aware of over 80 participants sent by the contractor for U.S. training. Our check of the USAID/Peru training office's records during our survey visit revealed that the training office only had records on 15 (or 47 percent) of 32 participants studying in the U.S. as of May 1984. The other 17 participants had been handled by two independent contractors without the knowledge of the training office.

#### OIT Efforts to Develop Participant Management and Evaluation Systems Could Improve Mission Follow-up and Evaluation Activities

OIT is currently developing an integrated participant management system and a comprehensive evaluation system which, when fully developed and implemented, should greatly facilitate mission follow-up and evaluation activities.

OIT's integrated participant management system will be a microcomputer-based software package that will allow missions to monitor all their training activity throughout the life of each training program and for as many years after program completion as desired. The tracking system will include implementation benchmarks for management oversight, trigger evaluation and follow-up activities, and provide a historical record of each mission's participant training program.

OIT designed and implemented a scaled-down version of its management system at USAID/Dominican Republic in early 1984 and is currently developing a larger scale version of the system that can be implemented at all missions. Once developed, the system will be made available to all AID missions that request it. However, Missions will not be required to use the system. The Director OIT also noted that this system (or any system) will only work if the mission leadership requires all training information to be centralized within the mission training office.

OIT is also developing a system for missions to evaluate participant training. Standard evaluation questionnaires have been developed and are currently being tested at USAID/Peru. These questionnaires will also be tested at a few other missions. Once the testing is completed and the system finalized, OIT will also make this system available to all missions. Again, however, missions will not be required to use the system.

### Conclusion

Over the years, AID has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in training thousands of participants. Yet today there is little information available to assess the effectiveness and impact of this training. Despite the recognized importance of participant follow-up and evaluation, these activities continue to be seriously neglected by the agency.

We believe that the participant management and evaluation systems currently being developed by OIT can greatly facilitate mission follow-up and evaluation activities and that these systems should be developed and implemented as quickly as possible.

We also believe that, in view of AID's goal of substantially increasing participant training, AID should require missions to implement the OIT systems once they are fully developed and tested. Further, we believe OIT should monitor mission implementation of these systems to assure missions conduct follow-up and evaluation activities as required.

### Recommendation No. 4

We recommend the Deputy Administrator require all missions to implement the OIT participant management and evaluation systems when fully developed and tested.

### Recommendation No. 5

We recommend the Deputy Administrator direct OIT to monitor mission follow-up and evaluation activities to assure these activities are being effectively and efficiently carried out.

## Management Comments

Concerning Recommendation No. 4, S&T agreed that missions should be required to use the participant management system being developed by OIT. However, S&T believed that evaluation teams should assess the participant training components at the time of evaluation of the individual projects. S&T stated that since most AID funded training is project related, evaluation of the participant training aspect should not be a separate act but an integral part of the evaluation of the project.

Concerning Recommendation No. 5, S&T stated that realistically it is impossible for OIT to monitor mission follow-up and evaluation. S&T believes OIT's appropriate role is to provide technical assistance as available and supply, within its capability to respond, support activities as requested by field missions. S&T, therefore, recommended this recommendation be deleted.

## IG Response

While we agree participant training should be evaluated as part of the overall project evaluation, we also believe that missions need to evaluate the effectiveness of training as a separate activity. We do not believe project related participant training evaluations alone can provide sufficient information for missions to adequately assess the effectiveness of their overall training efforts. Broader evaluations, as provided for in Recommendation No. 4, would serve as a management tool to identify strengths and weaknesses in the mission's entire participant training program.

We also do not agree with S&T's position concerning Recommendation No. 5. According to AID Handbook 17, OIT's responsibilities include (1) coordinating with regional bureaus and AID missions to ensure compliance with participant training policies, standards, and procedures and (2) evaluating the effectiveness of all aspects of participant training. Since follow-up and evaluation are essential aspects of participant training, we believe OIT must play an important role in ensuring these activities are carried out.

We believe it is possible for OIT to carry out this function. Handbook 10 requires AID/W and missions to report to OIT on their follow-up and evaluation activities. OIT could send out notification letters in cases of non-compliance with this requirement. We also believe that in view of the long standing nature of this problem, OIT could also visit a limited number of offices and missions each year to ensure mission follow-up and evaluation activities are carried out. Accordingly, we have retained our recommendation.

## AID CONTINUES TO LACK ACCURATE AND COMPLETE CENTRALIZED PARTICIPANT TRAINING INFORMATION

At the Washington level, AID continues to lack comprehensive, up-to-date information on its participant training programs. As a result, AID has not been able to effectively monitor these programs and manage its numerous participant training related services. Our survey disclosed serious shortcomings in the agency's information sources because a mechanism has not been established to provide OIT information on the large number of participant training contractors. These shortcomings have resulted in AID not knowing how much it spends on participant training and having virtually no information on the effectiveness of the vast majority of its participant training expenditures. OIT has taken some actions to enable it to better monitor contractor activities but much remains to be done.

### Accurate and Complete Participant Training Information Essential for Effective Program Management

Each year AID provides training for thousands of participants from developing countries. In order to effectively manage participant training, AID needs to know such things as (1) the number of participants trained, (2) what countries the participants come from, (3) what and where the participants study, (4) how long the participants' studies take, and (5) the cost of training. This information is essential to answering fundamental management questions, such as: How many participants does AID train? How much does the training cost? Where does the training take place?

### AID's Lack of Centralized Participant Training Information Has Been a Continuing Problem

Both the GAO and IG reported in 1980 that AID did not have current and complete information on participant training activities and recommended AID's information systems be improved to provide such data.

GAO's January 1980 letter to the AID Administrator, discussing some participant training administrative problems, noted that although Handbook 10 places responsibility for the planning, development, direction, implementation, follow-up, and evaluation of the participant training program with OIT, the office was unable to provide current or complete information on the (1) number of participants being trained, (2) participants' U.S. arrival and departure dates, (3) occupation of participants who returned home, and (4) contractors supplying the participants with training and related services.

GAO further noted that while it agreed with AID's general position that training is an essential component of nearly every facet of development, it found the agency's present information system does not provide complete data on participants and training costs. GAO concluded that without this information, AID cannot be sure that all training is contributing effectively to the overall development process.

We reported virtually the same problems in our May 1980 report on participant training. In this report we stated that AID's management information system does not provide AID with adequate data to determine the total number of AID-financed participants in the U.S. and third countries and that AID does not know how much money it spends on participant training. In pointing out the importance of participant information, we noted that in 1977 AID's Administrator stated that the agency must move immediately to solve a long-standing problem of incomplete or inadequate statistics on all AID-financed participants. We also noted that AID's Administrator again in 1979, advised all organizational elements of the Agency that,

"...the Agency still lacks comprehensive up-to-date information on the number and location of AID participants undergoing training in the United States and third countries, and the content and time period of the training. We also need to know and be able to prove when participants return home. At the present this information is often neither readily available nor internally consistent."

#### AID Has Not Established a Mechanism to Obtain Information on Participant Training Contractors

Although the majority of AID's participant training is now handled by contractors, AID has little information on the cost and effectiveness of this training. OIT is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of all aspects of participant training, including appraising contractor and training institution performance. About 65 percent of all participants are now handled by contractors outside of OIT. However, OIT has little information on the cost and effectiveness of these contractors. A mechanism needs to be established to provide information on contractors providing participant training services. The current participant training system has become quite complex and difficult to monitor as evidenced by the following:

- Any one of the numerous AID missions, host country organizations, regional bureaus or other AID offices may sign agreements with independent contractors to provide participant training services.
- More than 100 independent contractors handle participant training activities.
- The thousands of participants handled annually by independent contractors attend more than 500 different training institutions.
- Agreements between independent contractors and the respective Agency offices may take several forms, including contracts, loans, grants, memoranda of agreement, and cooperative assistance agreements.

Further complicating the problem, OIT's existing system for collecting and analyzing participant training data is not designed to contend with large numbers of independent contractors.

Data we developed during our survey visit to the Pennsylvania State University illustrates the extensive involvement of contractors in participant training and the difficulty faced by OIT in attempting to monitor their activities. OIT's participant training information system showed that during April 1984 there were 37 AID long-term participants located at the university. Our analysis and comparison of OIT's information with the university's participant records revealed the following:

- In addition to OIT's programming agents, there were nine other contractors involved in placing and monitoring the participants at the university.
- Only seven participants were handled through OIT's programming agents.
- OIT's information did not include three participants located at the university.
- OIT's estimated training completion date was incorrect for 7 of 12 participants handled by two different contractors.

AID's lack of information on the Agency's total participant training program was highlighted recently. In March 1984, the House Appropriation Subcommittee on Foreign Operations requested data on AID expenditures for participant

training--a seemingly simple request. As of August 1984, six months later, however, AID has been unable to respond and, in our opinion, will be unable to provide accurate and complete information on participant training expenditures.

Some Actions Being Taken To Improve  
Participant Training Information  
But More Needs To Be Done

In an effort to collect and analyze data on participant training contractors, OIT undertook a contractor study in 1983. As a result of its study findings, OIT recommended several actions be taken including (1) requiring missions and AID/W offices to justify contractor costs which exceed OIT's costs and (2) establishing a mechanism to provide OIT with copies of all contract procurements of participant training activities.

Although corrective action is underway, much remains to be done. For example, the OIT recommendation, which would require missions and AID/W offices to justify contractor costs which exceed those established in Handbook 10, has not been implemented. According to the OIT officials, Handbook 10 is being revised to include more cost information and a project officer's guide for participant training is currently being developed by OIT which will include a section providing project officers information on how to compare contractor and OIT training costs. However, there is no requirement at this time that such cost comparisons be made.

We had earlier recommended that such cost comparisons be made. Our 1982 audit of a \$4.3 million Morocco education project found that USAID/Morocco did not use the most economical method to obtain participant training services. The audit revealed that contractor-related training costs were more than 50 percent higher than OIT costs. The audit report recommended that AID offices and missions be required to compare the costs of training as a contract component vs. training managed by OIT prior to including training as a component in a contract. This recommendation was not implemented.

Also, we were told that no mechanism has been set up to provide OIT with copies of all participant training contract procurements. According to an OIT official, the Office of Contract Management has occasionally provided OIT with copies of participant training related contracts as they become aware of them. However, no mechanism has been established to assure OIT is made aware of all mission or AID/W contracts with participant training activities.

## Conclusion

AID continues to lack basic participant training information, such as how many participants are being trained and what is the cost of this training -- information that is essential to effectively manage participant training. Until AID obtains accurate and complete participant training information, it will not be able to make informed decisions concerning the program, adequately respond to Congressional inquiries, or assess the overall progress and effectiveness of participant training. Even determining whether the Administrator's goal of increasing participant training has been achieved will be difficult since AID does not now know, with any degree of accuracy, the extent of participant training.

A major reason for AID's continued lack of participant training information is the fragmented and decentralized nature of training. Most participant training is now handled by contractors outside of OIT. OIT does not now have a mechanism to assure it is provided information on the large number of contractors providing participant training services. Further, AID/W offices and missions may not be using the most economical method to obtain participant training services because there is no requirement that a comparison be made of contractors' versus OIT costs.

### Recommendation No. 6

We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator for S&T direct that OIT, in collaboration with the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training, establish a mechanism for collecting data on all AID funded participants, including contractor managed participants.

### Recommendation No. 7

We recommend that the Deputy Administrator (i) require that AID/W offices and missions compare the costs of contractor provided participant training services with OIT costs and justify contractor costs which exceeds OIT costs and (ii) direct OIT to develop guidelines to facilitate such cost comparisons.

## Management Comments and IG Response

The above recommendations were revised to reflect S&T's comments.

AID'S PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROGRAM  
CAN BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS

AFRICA

1. Southern Africa Manpower Development Project - (Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland) Audit Report No. 3-633-81-06, March 31, 1981
  - . \$2 million contractor managed project.
  - . Training needs require evaluation.
  - . Third country training facilities not being used.
  - . Candidates for training do not meet required qualifications.
2. Kenya - Agriculture Project - Audit Report No. 3-615-81-12, June 30, 1981
  - . \$61 million project. Participant training handled by contractor.
  - . Contractor's participant training plan, programming and reporting were inadequate.
  - . Initially contractor took poorly qualified candidates (3 of first 5 students were on probation).
  - . Contractor did not keep USAID informed of academic progress.
  - . Second group of participants was one year late and three participants short.
  - . Also took less qualified candidates which will require additional two years of training.
  - . Unclear how many of participants will overlap with technical advisors.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

3. Losotho - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-632-83-19, June 24, 1983
  - .\$9 million project.
  - .Long-term participant training was not synchronized with technical assistance. Only 2 of 16 participants will have opportunity to complete training and work with the technical team. Project completion date may have to be extended.
  - .Mission was not adequately monitoring long-term training.
  
4. Malawi - Agricultural Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-612-83-3, November 26, 1982
  - .\$10.4 million project.
  - .Participant training taking longer than planned, students averaging 35 months to obtain degrees rather than 27 months as planned due to need to take additional foundation courses.
  - .Participants also had to be sent in phases because government could not allow all participants to be absent from their work stations at one time. (This apparently was not considered in project paper.)
  - .Because of training delays, participants will not have opportunity to interface with technical assistance team.
  
5. Rwanda - Food Storage and Marketing Project - Audit Report No. 3-696-83-23, September 23, 1983
  - .\$7.9 million project.
  - .Most of planned training had not occurred because if those few people who were available had been sent for training, project activity would have come to a halt.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

6. Senegal - Casamance Regional Development Project - Audit Report No. 7-685-84-1, November 17, 1983
  - .\$23.7 million project.
  - .Ineffective participant training component. Project was late in identifying and sending personnel for training. Will result in participants returning to the project after advisors have left or just prior to their departure.
  - .Some participants switched their academic study and, in one case, a graduate did not return to the project as required by the grant agreement.
7. Seychelles - Food Crops Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-662-83-20, July 26, 1983
  - .\$2 million project.
  - .Planned training not accomplished because key personnel were not available for training.
8. Swaziland - Rural Development Project - Audit Report No. 3-645-82-21, July 28, 1982
  - .\$17 million project.
  - .Participant training was behind schedule. Only 3 of 9 participants left for training.
  - .Host government slow in nominating candidates.
9. Tanzania - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-621-84-01, October 27, 1983
  - .\$8.5 million project. Involved 67 participants.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

- .Participant training files maintained by contractor were incomplete.
  - .Insufficient information to monitor participant's progress. Mission was not adequately monitoring training.
  - .Host government not providing required number of participants.
10. Zaire - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-660-82-17, June 9, 1982
- .Project involved about 20 participants.
  - .Training behind schedule.
  - .Participants sent to U.S. were not qualified (had little required work experience and poor English capability).
  - .Latest group of participants sent to U.S. will return after project is completed--thus questionable benefits.
11. Zaire - Agriculture Project- Audit Report No. 3-660-83-17, May 19, 1983
- .\$23 million project.
  - .Little of the planned training was done because there were no replacements for those selected for training.
12. Zaire - Rural Health Project - Audit Report No. 3-660-84-10, March 30, 1984.
- .\$10.7 million project.
  - .Long-term training behind schedule -- almost nine months.
  - .Short-term training was overfunded -- excess funds available.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

Latin America

1. Costa Rica - Agriculture Project - Audit Report No. 1-515-81-4, December 12, 1980
  - . \$11 million project.
  - . Substantial lag in scheduling long-term training because of host government delays.
  - . Benefits from training will not be timely and in long run may prove detrimental to the project.
2. Guatemala - Earthquake Recovery Program - Audit Report No. 1-520-82-3, November 30, 1981
  - . \$11.5 million project.
  - . No plans available for training funds - part of institutional development component.
  - . As a result, may not have institutional capability to complete remainder of the project.
3. Haiti - Agriculture Project - Audit Report No. 1-521-82-16, September 14, 1982
  - . \$22.6 million project. Project budgeted \$961,000 to train about 60 participants.
  - . Training activities have not progressed as planned.
  - . Funding allocation for training appeared excessive.
  - . One of 3 long-term training positions was changed, adversely affecting project benefits.
4. Honduras - Agriculture Project - Audit Report No. 1-522-82-13, July 23, 1982

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

- . \$98.9 million project. About \$6.2 million was budgeted for training 300 participants.
  - . Need to reevaluate supply/demand for participant training (e.g, plans to train 300 forest graduates but country cannot absorb that many).
  - . Short-term training was not being provided because government would not fund transportation costs.
5. Jamaica - Rural Development Program - Audit Report No. 1-532-82-9, March 30, 1982
- . \$26.2 million project. About \$380,000 was budgeted for participant training.
  - . Training program not effective in meeting needs of project personnel and participating farmers. Government restricted number of candidates available for training.
  - . Shortage of trained personnel hindered program operations.
6. Panama - Rural Roads Project - Audit Report No. 1-525-82-1, October 23, 1981
- . \$16.6 million project.
  - . Ministry was lax in providing required training to its personnel (short-term training in Mexico).
  - . Lack of trained personnel adversely affected project activities.
7. Panama - Rural Development Project - Audit Report No. 1-525-82-8, March 19, 1982
- . \$28.5 million project. About \$105,000 budgeted for training.
  - . Training needs not clearly defined despite recognized needs.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

8. Regional Office for Central American Programs - Guatemala - Agriculture Research - Audit Report No. 1-596-81-14, May 15, 1981

. \$4.5 million project. Involved over 500 participants.

. Project officials did not know how many persons trained in six participating countries were still in service in their assigned positions. No follow-up policy.

Near East

1. Egypt - Review of Participant Training Programs - Audit Report No. 6-263-79-3, May 30, 1979

. Training program funded at about \$5 million and involved over 700 participants.

. Full extent of training is not known.

. Little follow-up activity being conducted.

. Problems with AID/W changing training plans.

. Medical exams not being given.

. No reconciliation of master disbursing account with AID/W.

2. Egypt - Agricultural Project - Host Country Contractor - Audit Report No. 6-263-83-8, August 29, 1983

. \$14 million host country contract. Involved at least 80 participants.

. Number of project participants who visited the U.S. for training is not known.

. Contractor by-passed USAID/Egypt. Participants got tourist and business visas.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

- .Host country contract did not contain a clause requiring the contractor to follow the provisions of AID Handbook #10.
- 3. Morocco - Education Project - Audit Report No. 0-608-82-47, February 22, 1982
  - .\$4.3 million project. About \$290,000 allocated for participant training.
  - .Believed participant training could be provided much cheaper by OIT rather than method used (contractor). Recommended missions be required to make cost/benefit comparison before contracting out.
  - .Found AID paying for international travel under training contract.
- 4. Morocco - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-608-82-27, September 29, 1982
  - .\$8 million project. Involved 23 participants.
  - .Surfaced issue based on this and other audits that host governments are failing to provide participants as planned and that stronger mechanism is needed to deal with this problem.
  - .Project funds used for non-project training.
- 5. Morocco - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No. 3-608-83-16, April 25, 1983
  - .\$22.3 million project.
  - .Found need to more closely monitor participant training expenditures, such as research stipends. For example, the contract allowed each participant to spend up to \$10,000 towards research. However, neither the host government nor the mission had established specific guidelines for using the research allowance or adequately monitoring participants' actual expenditures.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

6. Sudan - Agriculture Project -Audit Report No. 3-650-82-11,  
March 31, 1982
  - .\$15.7 million project.
  - .Qualified candidates not available. Only 2 of a  
planned 14 participants sent for U.S. training.
  - .Doubtful anticipated level of training will be  
achieved before the project completion date.
  
7. Sudan - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No.  
3-650-84-08, February 24, 1984
  - .\$74.2 million project. Involved about 30  
participants.
  - .Short-term training was not proceeding accord-  
ing to original plan. Lack of qualified candi-  
dates.
  - .Report recommended new training plan be  
developed.
  
8. Yemen - Human Resources Projects - Audit Report No.  
5-279-82-9, August 26, 1982
  - .\$68.6 million for two projects.
  - .Acceptable criteria for selecting participants  
was not developed.
  - .Unqualified participants were chosen and,  
subsequently, dropped out of school or train-  
ing was extended.
  - .Some participants failed to return from the  
U.S. In addition, the mission was unable to  
determine if 48 participants trained in Egypt  
had returned.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

ASIA

1. Indonesia - Agriculture Research Project - Audit Report No. 2-497-83-04, February 28, 1983
  - . \$9.5 million project. About \$1 million allocated to participant training.
  - . Participant training seriously delayed due to lack of qualified candidates and existence of other donor funded training program which offers larger stipends than AID training.
  - . Project being carried out by less qualified individuals.
  - . Short term training has been chief constraint on project effectiveness in the past.
2. Indonesia - PL480, Title II - Audit Report No. 2-497-84-06, April 21, 1984.
  - . Found trip to U.S. for several Indonesians and contractor officials incorrectly classified as participant training. Audit report recommended Mission recover \$23,140 expended for trip.
3. India - Irrigation Project - Audit Report No. 5-386-84-4, July 17, 1984
  - . Provided 20 government employees short-term training. Little effort made to utilize trainees on the project -- 9 of 18 officials trained were not associated with the project.
  - . Original grant agreement did not contain provision requiring the trainees assignment to the project. Grant implementation letter subsequently made this a requirement.

SUMMARY OF PAST INSPECTOR GENERAL  
PARTICIPANT TRAINING-RELATED FINDINGS (Cont)

4. Nepal - Radio Education Teacher Training - Audit Report No. 5-367-81-2, October 16, 1980
  - .\$3.3 million project.
  - .Long delays in selecting participants - some lost training opportunities.
  - .Some returning participants not used in the project.
5. Nepal - Agriculture Project - Audit Report No. 5-367-81-2, May 21, 1981
  - .Contractor was sending participants to training without notifying USAID in advance. About \$240,000 budgeted for participant training.
  - .One participant, studying in Hawaii, did not return.
6. Nepal - Resource Conservation Project - Audit Report No. 5-367-83-8, July 26, 1983
  - .\$32.6 million project.
  - .Trained participants not working on project (only 4 of 11.)
7. Philippines - Energy Project - Audit Report No. 2-492-82-14, August 31, 1982
  - .\$8.6 million project.
  - .Participant didn't work required length of time in the project.

25 OCT 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: RIG/A/W, Mr. E. John Eckman 

FROM: AA/M, Mr. R.T. Rollis, Jr.

SUBJECT: Draft Inspector General Report, "A.I.D.'s Participant Training Program Can Be Made More Effective."

REF: RIG/A/W Memo of September 20, 1984

An Intra-Agency committee has been established by the Bureau for Science and Technology, chaired by John Eriksson, S&T, for the purpose of dealing with issues of management, data collection, and costs as they relate to the Agency's participant training program. The attached memo describes the committee's efforts, and shows its membership.

The issues and recommendations contained in the subject audit report forwarded by the referenced memorandum parallel those being treated by the committee, and should be included in their agenda.

Attachment:  
Memorandum

September 28, 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: See Distribution

FROM: S&T, John Eriksson *J.E.*

SUBJECT: October 3rd Meeting of the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training

We appreciate your willingness to serve on the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training. The first meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 3 at 2 p.m. in Room N.S. 3886.

The purpose of the committee is to look at issues related to the collection of data on individual participants, costs of training, and the management of participant training. Specific issues the committee will review include:

1. Participant Training Data

- A. The need for comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date information on participant training. S&T/IT's Participant Training Information System (PTIS) provides data on a small number of the overall activities involving participants in A.I.D. projects. A comprehensive data base is necessary to determine the total participant numbers, areas of study, countries of origin, degree objectives, U.S. training institutions, length of training, training costs and other relevant data.
- B. Data on participant training expenditures. Limited data exists on participant training expenditures for the Agency. S&T/IT and M/SER/FM have been examining this problem but have been unable to provide accurate figures on total annual expenditures for participant training. (The best estimate is \$100-140 million in FY84 for U.S. training).
- C. Data on participant training contractors. A recent S&T/IT cost study identified several issues concerning costs of participant training contractors. It is important for the Agency to be able to identify training contractors, the services they provide, and the cost of those services. Issues raised in the cost study should be examined by the committee.

## 2. Participant Training Data Systems

The need for a system to collect participant training data. Once the Intra-Agency Committee has identified the type of data needed on participant training activities, the Committee should address the type of system needed to collect this information. Besides the PTIS, no other Agency-wide system collects data on A.I.D. participants (as individuals) or on training contractors (or others responsible for managing participants) in a useful manner. The Agency needs this data to be able to analyze and report on the effectiveness of the Participant Training Program.

The attached background materials are provided for your review before the meeting:

1. GAO Letter of January 4, 1980 and summary report on participant training issues.
2. Kammerer/Brady correspondence on participant training expenditures.
3. Cost Study of Participant Training Contractors conducted by S&T/IT, May 1984.

I look forward to seeing you at the meeting on October 3rd.

### Distribution

AA/AFR, F. William Small  
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cc: BIFAD/S, Mr. Frank Fender  
S&T/HR, Ms. Ruth Zagorin  
S&T/IT, Ms. Dona Wolf

Clearance: S&T/HR:RZagorin JL/S Date 9-26-84  
S&T/IT:DWolf DW Date 9-26-84

SENIOR ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

NOV 14 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: IG/RIG/A, E. John Eckman  
FROM: S&T, N. C. Brady *NCB*  
SUBJECT: Draft Inspector General Report "A.I.D.s Participant Training Program Can Be Made More Effective"

Introduction

The draft audit report on Participant Training dated September 20, 1984, is useful. We acknowledge the need to improve participant training project design, selection processes, follow-up and monitoring of contractors. In collaboration with the Geographic Bureaus, The S&T Directorate for Human Resources is identifying ways to and means of removing obstacles to improved implementation. In this context we find the report's recommendations timely. We do, however have several significant concerns and reservations about this report. Before addressing specific recommendations, we call your attention to the following general comments:

General Comments

Management of participant training is complex. Countless minor incidents, the kind one never can really foresee, combine to lower the general level of performance so that it is easily possible to fall short of intended goals. There are numbers of variables. The varying degrees of strengths and weaknesses among our client countries contribute to less than perfect implementation. The Agency policy to largely decentralize implementation makes it very difficult for a central international training office to play a significant management role for the whole Agency. These and other extenuating circumstances describe the setting of the participant training program yet the report draws categorical conclusions about management and monitorship of the program with no apparent consideration of inherent complexities; nor does the report offer citations or recognition of improvements which we believe have occurred during the last three years.

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Information on the total number of participants included in this survey is limited; therefore we have no means of judging whether the percentage of untimely starts and completions were in fact a serious hindrance to the expected outcome of training as stated. In the NE/Bureau, during the early stages of implementation of the Peace Fellowship Training Program, the numbers of participants sent to the U.S. did not match the projected number. Through appropriate structural changes in management, the lapse has been overcome and implementation is well beyond targeted outputs.

The report highlights "four (recurrent) major participant training-related problems". Judging from the Bureaus' comments we are uncertain whether the report captured the most recent program modifications to eliminate recurring problems. The Bureaus state that sections of the audit report describe events which occurred more than 5 years ago. Specifically, Africa Bureau states that "Most projects were initiated between 1975-1977 and concluded in 1980-1981. Since that time, a great deal of study and a number of corrective measures have been taken. Had the audit been conducted on current programs or those initiated since 1981, the same conclusions may not have been reached or would have been significantly modified". Near East Bureau states "Much is based upon outdated information . . ." PPC states "This report a) is based almost entirely on old audits of old projects, with most audits completed between 1979 and 1982 and b) is highly selective in its choice of projects, ignoring the large number of projects which have not encountered these problems or which have addressed them successfully." Assuming a five year life, the 31 projects listed in the report's summary (Annex I) had start dates as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>No. of Starts</u>
1974	1
1975	1
1976	5
1977	11
1978	9
1979	4
	<u>31</u>

### New Initiatives

We find it difficult to accept the statements and inferences that A.I.D. has not been responsive to previous audit recommendations and/or to its own evaluation findings. The report does not acknowledge the very substantial efforts A.I.D. has made in the last three years, including the establishment of an Intra-Agency Task Force on Participant Training, instituted in September 1984.

The issuance of the Participant Training Policy Determination, the Participant Training Strategy Paper, now in preparation, and the S&T/IT sponsorship of workshops for regional training officers, are but a few examples of the amount of restructuring occurring in the Participant Training program but not mentioned in the report.

### Response To Recommendations

Recommendation No. 1: that the Administrator direct that project papers with significant participant training components contain assessments as to whether the targeted host government organization has the type and number of employees who could be trained in a timely manner.

Existing guidance includes several unambiguous statements requiring project-related training to be fully justified in the project paper. Additional guidance is not necessary for the following reasons:

Project papers and project agreements already contain formal assurances, with covenants as needed, that local resources are adequate and the local government is committed to making personnel and other resources available as stated in the project agreement.

In addition, before actual implementation, PIO/Ps repeat again a needs assessment for each trainee and a training plan. Further the Agency is developing methodology to develop a long-term (5 years) country training plan which will be required of each Mission. The plan has been tested in several countries and is being refined. This reinforces the assessment required in the project paper.

In light of the above we suggest combining recommendations No. 1 and 2 because the intent of the two are the same.

Recommendation No. 2: that the Administrator direct OIT to develop the methodology for conducting and documenting these formal assessments. Questions to be covered in this methodology should include:

The diversity of circumstances among participating countries prevent an AID/W office from developing a functional methodology for universal application. Field missions need latitude to prepare country specific assessments. The adequacy of the country specific assessment should be judged at the time of review of the project paper. If the assessment is deficient the mission can be asked to provide additional information before project approval. We therefore suggest rewording Recommendation No. 2 as follows:

The Office of International Training should issue an Agency notice requiring project committees to review carefully each assessment for training, and require review committees to request additional information from the missions, if needed, before project approval.

Recommendation No. 3: that the A.I.D. Administrator direct OIT to (1) monitor the performance of participants while in the U.S. to detect possible weaknesses in mission or contractor participant selection processes and (2) report any weaknesses to the appropriate mission or contractor for corrective action.

S&T/IT has become more active in monitoring the performance of participants while in the U.S. S&T/IT, in conjunction with the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training is seeking ways to improve the Participant Trainee Information system so that better monitorship can be achieved. Once completed, the system will be able to identify trainee weaknesses and weaknesses in management by the contractor. The question is how far the monitoring system can be extended given current personnel and financial constraints. We, therefore, suggest rewording Recommendation No. 3 as follows:

We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator of S&T (1) require the Office of International Training to conduct, periodically, monitoring samples of the trainees performance in the U.S. to detect possible weaknesses in Mission or contractor participant selection process and (2) report any weakness to the appropriate Mission or contractor for corrective action.

Recommendation No. 4: that the Administrator require all missions to implement the OIT participant management and evaluation systems when fully developed and tested.

The Office of International Training is preparing a standardized Participant Training Management System (PTMS) for the use of the Missions. The monitorship of participant management prior to arrival in the U.S. and at the time of return from the U.S. is a mission responsibility. As for evaluation, in that most A.I.D. funded training is project related, evaluation of the participant training aspect should not be a separate act but an integral part of the evaluation of the project. Handbook 10 will have a new chapter that will deal with participant evaluation. We suggest therefore that Recommendation No. 4 read as follows:

We recommend that the Agency require missions to use the PTMS being developed by S&T and SER/IRM and that evaluation teams assess the participant training aspect of all projects at the time of evaluation of the full project.

Recommendation No. 5: that the A.I.D. Administrator direct OIT to monitor mission follow-up and evaluation activities to assure these activities are being effectively and efficiently carried out.

Realistically it is impossible for the Office of International Training to monitor mission follow-up and evaluation. The appropriate role for the office is to provide technical assistance as available and supply support activities as requested by field missions and within the capability of the Office of International Training to respond.

We therefore recommend deletion of Recommendation No. 5.

Recommendation No 6: that the A.I.D Administrator direct that a mechanism be established to ensure OIT is made aware of all mission and AID/W contracts with participant training activities.

It is appropriate to recommend that A.I.D. establish a mechanism to ensure that complete training information reaches OIT. This is stated in Handbooks Three and Ten but not being followed because of inadequate numbers of trained staff and inadequate compliance. The newly conceptualized computer-based system should simplify the transmittal of data on all participant trainees to the Office of International Training. The operation of the mechanism is subject to the pending recommendation of the Intra-Agency Task Force of participant training.

We therefore recommend change in Recommendation No. 6 as follows:

The Office of International Training, in collaboration with the Intra-Agency Task Force on Participant Training establish a mechanism for the collection of data about all mission or AID/W funded trainees including contractor managed trainees.

Recommendation No 7: that the A.I.D. Administrator also require that AID/W Offices and missions compare the costs of contractor provided participant training services with OIT costs and justify contractor costs which exceed OIT costs.

We acknowledge the need for clear guidelines for training costs within the Agency. The Office of International Training has done considerable work establishing costs. S&T supports the establishment of a range of standard costs. The issue is being addressed in the Intra-Agency Committee.

We therefore suggest that recommendation No. 7 read as follows:

The Office of International Training confer with the Regional Bureaus to arrive at a definition of contractor managed elements of participant training and a range of reasonable costs.

In conclusion we appreciate the opportunity to respond to this draft report. We believe also that even though the report on participant training is to some degree pre-empted by recent events, it nonetheless serves to underscore the need for continued, coordinated efforts to improve the entire program. We believe the regional bureaus value the leadership role undertaken by S&T/IT. The suggestions for combining or deleting certain recommendations are made in good faith. We aim for realistic and achievable corrections. As for change in assigning the action from the A.I.D. Administrator to others, it is our understanding that first line responsibility rests with S&T. If S&T chooses to transmit its directives over the signature of the A.I.D. Administrator we see nothing preventing the Bureau from so doing. In our judgment most of the actions can be achieved through continued cooperation of the geographic bureaus with S&T Office of International Training.

**AID's PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROGRAM  
CAN BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE**

**LIST OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

	<b>Page</b>
<b><u>Recommendation No. 1</u></b>	<b>7</b>
<p>We recommend that the Deputy Administrator direct that (i) project papers with significant participant training components contain assessments as to whether the targeted host government organization has the type and number of employees who could be trained in a timely manner and (ii) project committees be required to conduct assessments of project papers' participant training components.</p>	
<b><u>Recommendation No. 2</u></b>	<b>7</b>
<p>We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator for S&amp;T direct OIT to develop the appropriate methodology and guidance for conducting and documenting these assessments. Issues to be covered in this methodology and guidance should include techniques to be used in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-- Determining whether the host country or targeted organization has a sufficient number of training candidates to select from once the project is implemented.</li><li>-- Determining whether the pool of candidates possess the required English language and academic qualifications.</li></ul>	

LIST OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont)

	Page
-- Determining whether there are qualified employees available to replace the targeted organization's candidates sent for training.	
<u>Recommendation No. 3</u>	12
We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator for S&T direct OIT to (i) annually conduct monitoring samples of the trainees' performance in the U.S. to detect possible weaknesses in mission or contractor participant selection processes and (ii) report any weaknesses to the appropriate mission or contractor for corrective action.	
<u>Recommendation No. 4</u>	17
We recommend the Deputy Administrator require all missions to implement the OIT participant management and evaluation systems when fully developed and tested.	
<u>Recommendation No. 5</u>	17
We recommend the Deputy Administrator direct OIT to monitor mission follow-up and evaluation activities to assure these activities are being effectively and efficiently carried out.	
<u>Recommendation No. 6</u>	23
We recommend that the Senior Assistant Administrator for S&T direct that OIT, in collaboration with the Intra-Agency Committee on Participant Training, establish a mechanism for collecting data on all AID funded participants, including contractor managed participants.	

LIST OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS (Cont)

	Page
<u>Recommendation No. 7</u>	23
<p>We recommend that the Deputy Administrator (i) require that AID/W offices and missions compare the costs of contractor provided participant training services with OIT costs and justify contractor costs which exceed OIT costs and (ii) direct OIT to develop guidelines to facilitate such cost comparisons.</p>	

**AID'S PARTICIPANT TRAINING PROGRAM  
CAN BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE**

List of Report Recipients

Administrator	1
Deputy Administrator	1
Assistant to the Administrator for Management, AA/M	2
Associated Assistant to the Administrator for Management Services, M/AAA/SER	5
Senior Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Science and Technology, SAA/S&T	5
Agency Director, Directorate for Human Resources, S&T/HR	5
Director, Office of International Training, S&T/IT	5
Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Asia, AA/ASIA	5
Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Near East, AA/NE	5
Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, AA/LAC	5
Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa, AA/AFR	5
Assistant to the Administrator for External Affairs, AA/XA	1
Office of Press Relations, Bureau for External Affairs, XA/PR	2
Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination, PPC/EA	1
Center for Development Information and Evaluation, PPC/CDIE	2
Office of Financial Management, M/FM	5
Office of Financial Management, M/FM/ASD	2
Office of Legislative Affairs, LEG	1
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AID Overseas Offices	69
Office of Inspector General, IG	1
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RIG/A/Manila	1
RIG/A/Cairo	1
RIG/A/Karachi	1
RIG/A/Dakar	1
RIG/A/LA/Tegucigalpa	1
AIG/A	1
IG/PPP	1
IG/II	1
IG/EMS/C&R	16