

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (RES. - PART 1)

|   |   |                                    |  |   |
|---|---|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. PROJECT TITLE<br>CRS/Caritas<br>PL 480 Title II Program  |   |                                    | 2. PROJECT NUMBER<br>N/A   | 3. MISSION AID/W OFFICE<br>USAID/Honduras   |
| 4. EVALUATION NUMBER (Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No. Beginning with No. 1 each FY) |   |                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR EVALUATION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVALUATION |   |
| 5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES   |   | 6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING       |  | 7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION   |
| A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent:<br>FY N/A  | E. Final Obligation Expected:<br>FY N/A | C. Final Input Delivery:<br>FY N/A | A. Total \$ _____<br>B. U.S. \$ _____  | From (month/yr.) 09/84<br>To (month/yr.) 09/85<br>Date of Evaluation Review May 13-31, 1985 |

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

| A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mission decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., airgram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.) | B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION | C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. The Mission should continue providing food through Caritas, and adopt a more collaborative style in seeking Caritas compliance with A.I.D. regulations.   | HRD<br>CRS<br>Caritas                     | Immediate                      |
| 2. Change the Project Design to include only FFW Activities. This implies including milk in the FFW ration so that an MCH activity can be part of the FFW component.   | HRD<br>CRS<br>Caritas                     | October 1986                   |

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|---|--|---|---|---|
| 9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS |  |   | 10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CFI Network | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br>CRS, USAID Files | A. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Project Without Change | B. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Change Project Design and/or |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan                     | <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Change Implementation Plan         | C. <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue Project                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework                  | <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C                                 |   |   |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement                  | <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P                                 |   |   |   |

|   |                                |  |
|---|--------------------------------|--|
| 11. PROJECT OFFICERS AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS (List APPROPRIATE (Names and Titles)) |                                | 12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval |
| Thomas E. Park, USAID/HRD   | Joyce M. King, John Snow, Inc. | <i>[Signature]</i>                         |
| Juan J. Castillo, USAID/FFP/HRD   |                                | Printed Name<br>Anthony J. Cauterucci, MD  |
| José Luis Espinoza, Caritas   |                                | Date<br>10/2/85                            |
| Julio Montoya, CRS  |                                |  |
| James M. Pines, John Snow Inc.  |                                |  |

### 13. Summary

The purposes of PL 480 Title II programs are to provide supplementary food to groups of malnourished people both in rural and marginal urban areas to combat hunger, alleviate malnutrition, improve economic and social development, increase food production and improve its distribution. The two feeding programs carried out by CRS' local counterpart, Caritas, are MCH and FFW. Both programs currently serve a total of 25,000 beneficiaries.

The attitude of Caritas de Honduras concerning the Title II program has improved and changes have been instituted in response to the 1984 audit and to the Mission decision of reducing beneficiary level to a minimum. The reduction of beneficiaries eased administrative burdens and encouraged better management procedures. Caritas added staff and reorganized, for the first time placing a full-time person in charge of the food program. To resolve the problem of making national and diocesan autonomy compatible, Caritas is decentralizing the administration of the program through subsidizing the employment of six "food program promoters" to work in diocesan offices under diocesan authority, but subject to national office influence. CRS has also appointed a new country representative. As a first result of improved administration, Caritas has generated statistic charts on number and kind of W activities. Detailed reporting of participation, heavily dependent upon untrained volunteers, continues to suffer from lack of supervision, though the amount and quality of reporting continues to improve.

Although little possibility exists for increasing the GOH \$50,000 annual program contribution, unchanged since 1967, the Mission has been informed by AID/W that CRS/NY is taking steps to obtain an Outreach Grant. If the OPG is given, Caritas should be able to generate the added financial support essential for alleviating long-standing supervision, transport and facility problems.

Even with limited participation of children and lactating women, the low costs of this program, made possible by reliance on volunteers, resulted in benefit-cost ratios comparable with those of more sophisticated MCH programs.

Although the child and mother feeding (Vaso Nutricional) component still falls short of AID guidelines for MCH activities, modest improvements in nutrition monitoring and education, especially at urban sites, are likely if more resources can be made available and if Caritas would coordinate MCH activities with MOH centers. FFW projects link well to GOH agencies, exhibit few disincentive effects, and strengthen the Caritas housewife clubs in food production and related broader social development programs.

For a detailed narrative of the evaluators Conclusions and Recommendations see Annex A.

#### 14. Evaluation Methodology

In PIO/T No. 522-9103-3-50033, USAID/Honduras requested a "Management and Impact" evaluation to determine whether or not the CRS/Caritas program should continue and the levels and terms of any continued USAID support. The evaluators were to review CRS/Caritas capacity and willingness to make needed changes, assess their costs and benefits, and determine whether objectives were realistic and achieved.

Since a full administrative audit of the CRS/Caritas program had been made by "Molares, Palao Williams and Associates" in May 1984, the team did not review, in depth, storage and supervisory practices (unlikely to be improved without additional resources), but noted some improvements in the status of still open audit recommendations. There is no weight monitoring in the program and a field measurement was not feasible or desirable.

The team visited 20 of the 300 program sites, focussing on areas of greatest program concentration and looking into suspended programs as well as fully operating ones. They interviewed Diocesan directors, Caritas paid Diocesan promoters, a Bishop, priests, volunteers, beneficiary mothers and the national staff of CRS and Caritas.

Field visits emphasized:

- a) the exploration of diocesan differences, necessary because the autonomy of bishops allows wide variation in program operation; and
- b) the exploration of the opinion of field volunteers and participating mothers in order to identify divergences between real field performance and the perceptions of senior decision-makers in Caritas.

The method also emphasized the participation of USAID and CRS in the interviews. It was expected that this approach would not inhibit responses but that, on the contrary, it would allow the sharing of experience and avoid compliance-oriented responses.

The method emphasized observation over documentation and substance over form.

#### 15. External Factors

Current economic stress in Honduras probably increases difficulties that families are encountering in paying for transportation of foods and inhibits establishing a revolving fund that could pay costs in advance. It also damages nutrition status of beneficiaries, making achievement of nutrition improvements more difficult.

Participation and membership in clubs by mothers of beneficiaries vary widely. Volunteer help may consist exclusively of well-motivated women leaders, though rotating participation by participants' mothers also occurs frequently. The clubs cover local transport costs of food and a share of Caritas wholesale transportation costs. Practices and magnitude of fees vary widely, the only obligation being a total stated payment or alternative arrangement for bringing the food from parish storage to site. Caritas reluctance to reduce the size of the net food subsidy, the benefit remaining after subtracting fees from value of food received, has resulted in low fees (e.g., \$.03-.05 a pound) that too often leave clubs unable to pay for transport when required. This results in temporary suspension of Vaso Nutricional distribution until funds become available, an avoidable and nutritionally unfavorable outcome. More transport funds would eliminate the problem and increased rations would ease payment of the higher fees required.

#### 16. Inputs

Because of past administrative difficulties, the CRS/Caritas program was held to a maximum of 24,750 beneficiaries in FY 1985. The 814 metric tons approved were to be distributed as follows:

| <u>Program</u> | <u>Number of Beneficiaries</u> | <u>Milk</u> | <u>(in metric tons)</u> |               |            | <u>Total</u> |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------|--------------|
|                |                                |             | <u>CSM</u>              | <u>Bulgur</u> | <u>Oil</u> |              |
| MCH            | 19,250                         | 210.5       | 104                     | 104           | 104        | 522.5        |
| FFW            | 5,500                          |             | 120.2                   | 150           | 21.5       | 291.7        |
| Total          | 24,750                         | 210.5       | 224.2                   | 254           | 125.5      | 814.2        |

The team estimated that these foods have a market value of a little over one million dollars, or \$.58 a pound. CRS estimates that beneficiary contributions will constitute an estimated \$150,000 for twelve months, or \$.08 a pound. The Government of Honduras continues to contribute \$50,000 annually, unchanged since 1967, which is used for payment of the six diocesan promoters, for customs fees, salaries and expenses of Caritas national office and fringe benefits. CRS has estimated the value of Caritas volunteer staff at \$50,000 annually. Roughly totaling up these inputs, costs may be estimated as follows:

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Local market value of food   | \$1,000,000 |
| Government Health Ministry   | 50,000      |
| Caritas (in kind)            | 50,000      |
| Beneficiaries <u>150,000</u> |             |
| Total                        | \$1,250,000 |

These figures do not include CRS staff.

17. Outputs

For the months between October 1984 and March 1985, the latest month for which distribution reports were available in the FFP Office, average beneficiary levels reached and the rations provided compared with those approved, as follows:

Beneficiaries

| <u>Program</u> | <u>Number Approved</u> | <u>Number Benefiting</u> |
|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| MCH            | 19,250                 | 15,600                   |
| FFW            | <u>5,500</u>           | <u>7,462</u>             |
|                | 24,750                 | 23,062                   |

Rations

| <u>Program</u> | <u>Pounds Approved</u> | <u>Pounds Distributed</u> |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------------|
| MCH            | 5.0                    | 5.6                       |
| FFW            | 50.0                   | 53.0                      |

18. Purpose

The CRS/Caritas program seeks to deliver supplemental food to the most vulnerable segments of the Honduran population, preschool children and pregnant/lactating women, many of whom are outside the GOH health network, but its purpose are not solely health-oriented. Other purposes include increasing family income and food availability (through home gardens, increasing water supply), and improving the home environment.

19. Goal/Subgoal

The goal to which the activity contributes is to improve the health and social status of the vulnerable segments of the Honduran population.

20. Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries are poor families identified by the Caritas network which distributes food in six dioceses, with beneficiaries distributed as follows:

|                |        |
|----------------|--------|
| Tegucigalpa    | 4,500  |
| San Pedro Sula | 4,500  |
| Choluteca      | 6,500  |
| Comayagua      | 4,250  |
| Olancho        | 3,250  |
| Yoro           | 1,750  |
| Total          | 24,750 |

## 21. Unplanned Effects

The Vaso Nutricional component of Caritas Title II program falls far short of A.I.D. guidance for MCH programs. Often, overaged children benefit from this component. On the other hand, T/II activities are part of a larger Caritas social development program for improving family stability and the status of women. Caritas/MCH activities have permitted, in many cases, the consolidation of housewife clubs as development institutions. The image of housewife clubs improves and as a result grass-root organizations are consolidated.

Caritas has an enormous outreach capacity given the fact that churches may be found in the most isolated places in Honduras.

## 22. Lessons Learned

The CRS/Caritas Honduran program is, as the evaluation title suggests, a challenge to adaptability of the regulations governing Title II programs to the situation of local PVO's. The evaluators have suggested that voluntary agencies and programs must often be accepted in many ways on their own terms and may not overlap fully with A.I.D. Those like the Caritas Program, which may well be offering grassroots development benefits for the most deprived, merit a review of its nature to assure their continuity.

The Mission is now fully aware that problems of this type should be given priority to avoid the growing tension that is built among all concerned institutions.

We must change our management style and be more creative to help Caritas take a step forward in their development effort, particularly given Caritas limitations to meet MCH standards.

## 23. Special Comments or Remarks

The evaluation recommendations do not suggest changing regulations, but a clear and realistic indication of Caritas capabilities vis-a-vis current financial resources and what can be done for the future of the program in the outyears.

Well-targeted financial support could enable Caritas to improve their performance in implementing both MCH and FFW activities.

## ANNEX A

### CONCLUSIONS

#### A. PROGRAM

1. The precarious Honduran economic situation complicates food program administration and reduces available material support from Caritas and communities.
2. The Caritas networks of housewife clubs and "patronatos" provide an outstanding vehicle for moving food to poor people and using it to support community projects.
3. Though an excellent example of self-help and communal concern, the Caritas Vaso Nutricional Program falls far short of PL 480 guidelines for an MCH feeding program and can be better justified under other categories.
4. Caritas Food for Work goals are more consistent with A.I.D. development goals than are those of the Vaso Nutricional Program.
5. The Ministry of Health program contribution of 100,000 Lempiras (\$50,000) annually has not increased since 1967 and seems unlikely to change in the near future.

#### B. ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL

6. Current Caritas operations exhibit better than adequate response to findings of the 1984 Audit, though resource limitations continue to restrict other needed improvements in preparation, storage, and transportation.
7. The Caritas network of diocesan food program promoters, established after Audit, offers good potential for continued improvement of program management and compliance.
8. Current Caritas plans for improving the accuracy and flow of information will, with reasonable execution, provide timely fulfillment of CRS and USAID requirements.
9. Caritas staff and procedures now in place are adequate for support of gradual increase in the current Title II Program, though increased supervision would improve performance considerably.
10. The lack of funds for transport costs seriously impedes timely food distribution and Caritas has not explored adequately the alternatives available to alleviate the problem.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### A. Program

1. The Mission should continue providing food through Caritas, and adopt a more collaborative style in seeking Caritas compliance with A.I.D. regulations.
2. USAID should acknowledge that the Vaso Nutricional cannot, in the near future, meet guidelines for an MCH feeding program, and therefore should continue activity under other PL 480 program categories.
3. If continuation of Vaso Nutricional, as presently conducted, is not accepted, USAID should encourage CRS and Caritas to modify the Program by expanding Food for Work projects among housewife clubs and promoting continued Vaso Nutricional activities with FFW rations.
4. If FFW projects among the clubs expand, milk should be included in the ration, to encourage and facilitate continued Vaso Nutricional activity among the clubs.
5. Caritas should explore ways to increase participation of weaning age children (six to thirty months old) and vulnerable women in Vaso Nutricional, especially for urban projects, and USAID should encourage flexible programs likely to improve participation of these groups (multiple sites for any club, varied timing).
6. Caritas should expand the parameters of the Food for Work program description to also include community development activities to improve food storage and preparation facilities.
7. Caritas should explore ways to introduce nutrition monitoring, tailored to time and capacity of current volunteers, in urban Vaso Nutricional projects.
8. USAID should help CRS and Caritas obtain funds for providing technical assistance and material support to non-governmental FFW projects.

### B. Administration and Control

9. USAID should encourage communication in monitoring the Program and should tailor enforcement of compliance to the practical possibilities.
10. CRS should encourage direct communication between, USAID and Caritas, as a step toward increased assumption of responsibilities by the national agency.

11. USAID should acknowledge adequacy of steps taken by Caritas to date in response to the 1984 Audit, that have improved organization and administration of the Program, while recognizing that the open-ended Audit recommendations require continued action by the national agency.
12. CRS should review with Caritas current information procedures and agree on the minimum practical time achievable for assembling information and transmitting it through community, parish, diocese, and national levels.
13. USAID should recognize practical limits affecting Caritas ability to deliver reports and should accommodate to them by, for example, maintaining a flexible report delivery schedule.
14. CRS and Caritas should give high priority to generating the minimum acceptable information agreed upon, and USAID should recognize that Caritas staff limitations make it likely that full achievement of this goal will require considerable time.
15. Caritas, CRS and USAID should share information about the Caritas program with the Ministry of Health and support coordination of private and governmental feeding activities.
16. CRS and Caritas should share information about beneficiaries with CARE to avoid duplication of services and food received by beneficiaries in the Title II programs.
17. CRS and Caritas should take immediate steps to seek support for the CRS/Caritas Program, following consultation with USAID, through Outreach Grant, monetization of commodities, OPG, ESF support or any other sources mutually agreed upon.
18. USAID should provide additional funds to Caritas for improving supervision and control, recognizing that desired standards of, compliance and the level of assistance should be mutually consistent.
19. CRS and Caritas should explore ways to reduce financial constraints on orderly food distribution by increasing participant fees, recognizing that increasing rations can maintain net food subsidy value content if desired, and USAID should support higher rations.
20. Caritas should explore possibilities for reducing transport costs by coordinating food delivery arrangements among neighboring clubs.