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An Evaluation of AID-supported grants to  
Cultural Survival (1979-87)

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## Introduction

What follows is an attempt to describe the program of Cultural Survival, a human rights non-profit organization which concerns itself with indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, and to assess its overall effectiveness. While the wider context of the organization is discussed in this evaluation, heaviest concentration is placed on that part of Cultural Survival's program which has been supported by AID through two grants: AID/LA-G-1350 (LOP 9/28/79 to 9/30/82) and LAC-0591-G-SS-3060-00 (LOP 8/31/83 to 12/31/87).

This evaluation is based on review of relevant documentation, including grant proposals and grant agreements, publications and reports done by Cultural Survival, and other related papers and articles; interviews with development specialists, social scientists, government officials, environmentalists, and others who have had contact with Cultural Survival's staff and publications; interviews with groups and individuals in Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador who have had contact with Cultural Survival's representatives; visits to organizations and communities that have received small grants from Cultural Survival; and lengthy discussion with Cultural Survival staff in Cambridge and while wandering about along dusty roads in South America. Unfortunately, I was only able to make contact with two Board members. Fieldwork for this report was carried out between February and April of 1986.

The bulk of the report deals with Cultural Survival's (1) publications and research and (2) small-scale development work, in part because these comprise the most prominent part of Cultural Survival's program, and in part because they were made possible largely by AID money. At the same time, I wish to convey the sense that Cultural Survival is a unique, sprawling animal that does a surprising number of diverse things, all of which add up to an impressive program that supports the rights of indigenous peoples throughout the world.

## ORGANIZATIONS

- AIDSESP - Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana  
(Peru)  
Antisuyo - (Peru)
- APCOB - Ayuda para el Campesino del Oriente Boliviano (Bolivia)
- CCM - Centros Culturales Mapuche (Chile)
- CIDOB - Comité de Pueblos y Comunidades Indígenas del Oriente  
Boliviano (Bolivia)
- CIPA - Centro de Investigación y Promoción Amazónica (Peru)
- CONACNIE - Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de las Nacionalidades  
Indígenas del Ecuador (Ecuador)
- CONFENIAE - Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas de la Amazonía  
Ecuatoriana (Ecuador)
- Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazónica  
(made up of AIDSESP, CIDOB, CONFENIAE, ONIC, and UNI)
- COPAL - (Peru)
- CRIC - Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca (Colombia)
- Federacion Shuar - (Ecuador)
- FOIN - Federación de Organizaciones Indígenas del Napo (Ecuador)
- FUNCOL - Fundación Comunidades Colombianas (Colombia)
- INCRAE - Instituto Nacional de Colonización de la Región Amazónica  
Ecuatoriana (Ecuador)
- MISURASATA - (Nicaragua)
- ONIC - Organización Nacional de Indígenas de Colombia (Colombia)
- OPIP - Organización de Pueblos Indígenas de Pastaza (Ecuador)
- UNI - União dos Nações Indigenas (Brazil)

## Beginnings

The impetus for forming an organization which would apply the experience residing within the discipline of anthropology grew out of the activist turmoil of the late-1960's. At that time, protest over the war in Vietnam was in full swing; closer to home, Amnesty International had begun to expand its reach into Latin America; and the government of Brazil, in particular, was being severely criticized for a particularly ruthless campaign of repression and brutality against various minority sectors, including labor unions, peasants, and indigenous groups. In Brazil, Indians and peasants were in sharp and often violent conflict over lands, and the government was being accused of genocide in its dealings with the former. In the midst of a series of publicized scandals, Brazil's indianist organization, the Indian Protection Service, was first subjected to an intensive investigation and then, in 1968, reorganized. Alarmed that many of the groups they traditionally studied were either physically disappearing or being stripped of their lands, their rights, and their cultures, a number of anthropologists began thinking about what they could do. At the core of their effort was a re-evaluation of the meaning of terms such as "development," "progress," and "modernization."

It was in this moral climate that Cultural Survival was formally constituted in 1972 through the efforts of a Harvard anthropologist, David Maybury-Lewis, and his wife, Pia, both of whom had worked in Brazil.<sup>1</sup> A Board of Directors made up of Harvard academics and related professionals was duly appointed to help orient the fledgling organization. The operating philosophy of the Cultural Survival is characterized in an editorial in the first issue of the Newsletter, in the Spring of 1976:

CULTURAL SURVIVAL aims to help small societies have a say in their own future, to become, in effect, successful ethnic minorities. This is not a matter which only concerns a few, out of the way tribal peoples. It is vital for us all to insure that we live in a world based on the practice of mutual tolerance and respect, for these are the only true guarantees of freedom. But the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. We hope, therefore, through CULTURAL SURVIVAL and its newsletter, to keep people constantly aware of the plight of threatened societies. Without help, they die. In helping them, we help ourselves.

Choice of the name "Cultural Survival," while appropriate by its own logic, has unfortunately brought about two common

confusions. First, it has made it easy for the outsider to confuse it with Survival International, another organization that operates in similar moral territory. Confusion of the two organizations is remarkably widespread, in the United States and abroad, and causes obvious difficulties for both. Second, the term "cultural survival" leads many to think that the organization promotes the strict preservation of indigenous cultures in their pristine state, on the order of residents of an ethnological zoo, protected from the influences of change.

In truth, however, the name "Cultural Survival" was chosen because the founders wanted to stress the fact that:

the organization's activities develop from a concept of cultural survival which defines culture as a set of social mechanisms which permit a group, as a group, to have a sense of itself, to comprehend its situation, and to adapt to changing circumstances.

This orientation is based on the belief that physical survival is not possible without the cultural institutions to "permit a group...to adapt to changing circumstances." Change has occurred among all groups throughout history and is therefore inevitable; the groups that survive are those with the mechanisms which allow them to modify their cultures so that they are able to control changing events. The important factor thus becomes the capacity of a group to manage its own affairs and maintain its autonomy and self-confidence. Development of this capacity is the primary objective of Cultural Survival.

At this point, two questions are commonly asked. First, why be concerned with the fate of "small societies" of traditional peoples? Throughout the world they are disappearing before the onslaught of larger, more powerful societies, a process which appears to be so unstoppable as to be the natural way of things. If this is the case, is not the attempt to protect these groups a bit quixotic?

In the first place it is important to insist ... on the right of other societies to their own ways of life. Such an insistence is not banal. This right is neither generally accepted nor generally understood. That is why it must be established that small-scale societies are not condemned to disappear by the workings of some abstract historical process. On the contrary, small societies may be shattered and their members annihilated, but this happens as a result of political choices made by the societies that impinge upon them, and for which the powerful must take responsibility. It is not, in any case, inevitable. The smaller societies can be assisted to deal with the impact of

the outside world at comparatively little cost to those who bear down upon them. We have now come to recognize the principle that it is reasonable to set aside some part of the profits from the extraction of resources from the earth to be used to offset the ecological damage that may have been done in the process of extracting them. A similar understanding of the human costs of development and a willingness to deal with them is all that is necessary.<sup>2</sup>

Second, if it is agreed that some sort of action should be taken, it must be asked precisely what might be done on the ground. It seemed that sending off formal protests and publicizing examples of genocide committed against indigenous groups could be effective up to a point, and in certain contexts. But at the same time, it was felt that Cultural Survival should move beyond mere activism and hand-wringing to a search for alternative solutions.

All of this was rather easier said than put into practice, a predicament which became evident as soon as Cultural Survival stepped into the street and took a look around. There was no money for a program to look for alternative development strategies, and furthermore, there were numerous other well-heeled development PVOs which had been at the business for years and knew what they were doing. The staff of Cultural Survival consisted of no more than the President, his wife, and a scatter of volunteers and sympathetic friends. This period, stretching from 1972 through 1979, was marked by extremely limited resources and periodic waves of self-doubt as to the feasibility of the task they had set for themselves. The Newsletter, begun in 1976, consisted of four pages. The thrust of the organization--if it can be termed an organization at that stage--was consciousness raising through lectures, seminars, presentations of films, and publishing of articles and the Newsletter. One small grant was secured from the Human Rights Office of PPC in AID (in 1978) to carry out library research on the effects of large-scale development programs on ethnic minorities in various third-world countries; but essentially, all thoughts of expanding to pursue solutions through small-scale development were curbed by the absence of funds for that purpose.

#### The Arrival of Support: Planning for Action

Then finally, in 1978, contact was made simultaneously with the Ford Foundation and AID. The present Projects Director was brought in to help design a program and draft proposals to the two agencies, and assurance of resources was soon in coming. Within a short time, the Ford Foundation came forth with funds to cover salaries and AID provided complementary financing for program expenses, including a large chunk for small-scale field

projects. When the resources materialized, Cultural Survival set forth with a human rights program which combined activism with small-scale development work with native communities. Small grants with indigenous groups in the field were to be coordinated with research, analysis, and publication of the results. The initial proposal to AID, to cover the period of 1979 through 1982, accordingly lays out three broad program areas:

- (1) Technical and economic support for a small number (3-5) of selected projects. These projects will be chosen from among various ones presented to Cultural Survival on the basis of a) urgency; b) appropriateness to Cultural Survival's skills and capacity; c) capacity to serve as examples for similar problems in other (geographic) areas.
- (2) Collection and dissemination of information concerning human rights problems, alternative development projects, and organizations concerned with such issues. The organization and maintenance of such an information network was the concern which most consistently arose during Cultural Survival's recent visit to nine Latin American nations.
- (3) Development of a documentation and analysis center which will make available the results of previous and current research to Indians, Indianists, and development specialists working to improve the situation of native peoples.

This ambitious program, to be undertaken throughout Latin America, was to be managed by a miniscule staff of a Projects Director, an Executive Secretary, and part-time secretary from a rental agency, together with periodic assistance from the President. The pressure of this work load was slightly alleviated shortly thereafter when a Director for Publications and Research was hired.

\$43,000 was set aside for production of the Newsletter and "evaluative studies," but virtually nothing was said in the proposal about how publications would be handled operationally. It was understood that the Newsletter would expand and become more systematic, and occasional longer pieces analyzing specific groups and topical areas would be published. At the same time, evaluation of small development projects supported by Cultural Survival would be a crucial part of the contents of the Newsletter. In this way, the projects area was to feed directly into the research and evaluation wing and lessons from experience at the field level would be disseminated to a wider audience.

The bulk of the first proposal deals with Cultural Survival's maiden voyage into the field of technical and financial assistance to indigenous groups, a sector which was at the time virtually untouched by development agencies. For years, Cultural Survival had been limited to talking and writing about the problems confronting native peoples. It had seen numerous disasters caused by inappropriate "development" schemes and had pondered alternatives that would reach indigenous groups and bring about positive change. Now it had \$220,000 at its disposal to put directly to use for this purpose over a three-year period.

Cultural Survival is always being asked for assistance, by government agencies, by concerned specialists and above all by the native peoples themselves. It is asked for theoretical assistance in the determination of alternative development strategies, in the complicated issue of calculating land needs for land titling, in the even more complicated matter of securing the best possible solution for native peoples who occupy territory where minerals have been found and so on. It is also asked again and again to provide experts to assist in the practical implementation of such studies. Cultural Survival has the capacity to respond to such requests by calling on its network of affiliated experts. All it lacks is the funds to enable it to act.

The initial program was broad: Cultural Survival was ready to work with any situation in which:

- a. The integrity and existence of an ethnic group, indigenous or otherwise, is clearly threatened. (An ethnic group is defined as one which sees itself or is seen by others as being different from other segments of the national society.)
- b. The ethnic group is amongst those who are considered to be the "poorest of the poor."
- c. The proposed project focuses directly on the immediate threat.
- d. The project shows the capacity to improve the situation and, hopefully, aid the group in becoming a viable and competitive ethnic minority.
- e. The problem and its resolution are able to serve as an example for similar problems in other areas (i.e., analysis and evaluation must have broad utility.)

Projects selected were to fit loosely within a set of ranked priorities: (1) land demarcation and titling; (2) legal assistance; (3) education; and (4) health care. From the beginning, Cultural Survival wanted to distance itself from a directive program in which projects are imposed on groups and implementation becomes a joint venture between funder and grantee. Operating with a philosophy similar to that of the Inter-American Foundation, Cultural Survival asked that project ideas and plans come from the field, from the groups themselves. Ideally, indigenous organizations would design and submit their own proposals for consideration. However, in cases where these organizations either were not capable of formulating and carrying out activities or simply did not exist, non-paternalistic support groups (intermediaries) of non-Indians would be funded. Cultural Survival had approximately \$75,000 per year in its budget for long-term development projects and small "emergency" activities. Compared to what they had before, this was a good deal of money; but divided up among as many as 10 groups, the individual donations would be small. At the same time, Cultural Survival believed that it could never compete with other funding agencies working at the grassroots level, nor should it try. Its real expertise was as advisor and broker, and small amounts of money well-placed were often more effective than larger sums, especially when working with indigenous groups. In fact, too much money funneled into a small organization was seen as dangerous.

The project component was also seen as an essential part of Cultural Survival's effort to provide practical advice to other development agencies. Activities funded were, in part, to be selected for their value as learning tools. They were to be monitored closely, evaluated and analyzed, and articles and monographs were to be published in the journal and periodic reports "...which will serve as tools for future development work."

Detailed formal reports, suitable for use by professional development workers, will be prepared by the staff of Cultural Survival... The final reports will be published and distributed with an aim toward providing exemplary studies for similar work in other areas.

It must be said at this point that Cultural Survival's tiny staff was jumping into the waters of small-scale development without a particularly clear idea of what sorts of animals it might find swimming about or how to cope with them when they appeared. In retrospect, the first proposal is somewhat vague and sketchy on many points, especially those concerning implementation of the program. It carried very little

information on how the field activities described were to be carried out, and the link between "projects" and analysis is not dealt with in any operational way. Two problems characteristic of incipient PVOs should be signalled: first, the program described in the proposal was relatively coherent, but far too ambitious to be handled with such a small staff; and second, it is assumed in the proposal that Cultural Survival already has the mature capacity to manage small development projects, monitor them, and pass lessons on to others. In fact, however, it had virtually no practical experience in that field. Seen in retrospect, it should have been stated that Cultural Survival itself was going to learn from the experience and then pass the lessons on. A large part of this experience would have to come from other, more seasoned agencies working in the area of small-scale development.

The second proposal was drawn up in 1982 for continuing support of Cultural Survival's program over the period from 1983 through 1986. Its design was based on three years of experience gained under the first grant and is therefore much more specific in drawing up priority areas for funding and research, work strategies, and concrete objectives. While the general goals remained the same, Cultural Survival had developed methodologies for editing and printing a variety of publications; it had learned valuable lessons from its work with groups in the field; it had launched a direct mail fund-raising campaign; and the organization itself was becoming known, in the United States and in Latin America, as a sound and responsible advocate for indigenous rights. More than 20 small grants had been given to indigenous groups and organizations supporting Indian peoples, primarily in South America. The journal had mushroomed from a four-page Newsletter to an impressive Quarterly which devoted each issue to specific topics, such as deforestation, tourism, and women in changing tribal societies. The Projects Director had worked on the design of large-scale projects with AID missions in Ecuador and Peru. And Cultural Survival had begun working to establish a research institute for social scientists interested in applied studies.

But while the second proposal was more sharply focused, it also reached out to embrace much more territory than the first. Greater exposure to the political realities of Latin America and experience working directly with indigenous peoples to confront those realities had brought an increased awareness of the wider range of levels at which change needed to be tackled. Cultural Survival's network of contacts had grown and the spectrum of possibilities along which it could have influence had expanded, making the 1983-86 proposal, in some ways, even more ambitious than the first. More was known about both the problems facing indigenous peoples and possible solutions to those problems, and therefore more had to be done.

In the area of grant making, priority areas were: (1) land demarcation and titling; (2) organization building; (3) information sharing; and (4) "local economic initiatives" (i.e., income generating activities). Secure title for land was correctly perceived as perhaps the most critical need of indigenous people throughout Latin America, and therefore continued as a priority. Institution building and information sharing were also continued; during the early-1980's indigenous federations had come into being in Ecuador, Peru, and Colombia -- with some assistance from Cultural Survival -- and continued support was needed.

In the area of research, Cultural Survival wanted to continue its policy of encouraging research into conflict between indigenous groups and large-scale development projects (such as the Polonoroeste project in Brazil, financed by the World Bank; see Occasional Paper no. 6, 1981), as well as collaborate with development agencies such as AID on design of the indigenous components of large projects. The Quarterly was now solidly launched and was providing current and steady coverage of indigenous peoples throughout the world; the topical approach had been well received and was to continue. Two priority areas for research were outlined: (1) colonization of sparsely populated zones; and (2) deforestation and natural resource management. Evaluations of activities funded in the field by Cultural Survival, which were to deal with lessons learned and discussions of development strategies for indigenous people, were also to be done. The AID budget of the research and reports section was accordingly elevated to a healthy \$184,000 (up from \$43,000) over a three-year period. Further funds (of a smaller magnitude) earmarked for research in other parts of the world were also received from other sources.

Thus, Cultural Survival was to continue its former program, with a sharper notion of where it was headed, especially in the area of publications. Some specific outputs expected during the second grant period (1983-86) were:

- (1) Continue to assist, formally and informally, in the design and evaluation of large-scale USAID projects which impact on small societies, refugees, and other groups for whom social change often has been traumatic;
- (2) promote understanding of indigenous needs, and subsequently help establish ties between host country agencies, indigenous organizations, and international development agencies;
- (3) terminate and evaluate 12 field projects presently underway;

(4) initiate 24 new field projects, focusing on problems and socio-economic contexts not approached during the initial grant period;

(5) begin regional research and evaluation of a) colonization and b) deforestation.

This, then, is the program that Cultural Survival is presently implementing under the second AID grant. The staff remains remarkably small, a fact which persistently surprises those who have occasion to view the organization's impressive output of reports and other publications, as well as its on-the-ground human rights work in Latin America. David Maybury-Lewis continues as President, a position which is best seen as quasi-staff; he receives no salary for his work with Cultural Survival and is not "officially" a member of the staff. He oversees the institution in a very loose and general way, giving intellectual and moral guidance rather than supervision on a day to day basis. His continued presence has been crucial because of his periodic trips to Brazil and other countries in Latin America and his close contacts with representatives from a wide variety of academic and development institutions. Although he is burdened with a heavy personal load of research and writing, he is surprisingly active in publicizing the objectives and achievements of Cultural Survival through talks, field visits, and seminars.

The staff proper consists of an Executive Secretary and three administrative assistants who more or less straddle the two functional wings of Cultural Survival: the Research and Publications Office and the Projects Office, each of which is fitted with a Director and an assistant. This core staff is aided by a fluctuating group of volunteers which takes on the heavy load of correspondence and helps with various other miscellaneous tasks. These people are distributed in offices across three floors (the 2nd, 4th, and 5th) of the Harvard Peabody Museum, where the Department of Anthropology is also housed. The Board of Directors, which still retains several of the founding members, meets periodically to discuss the overall direction of the organization, review small grant proposals fielded by the Projects Office, and discuss research and publication priorities.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Cultural Survival is that it has done so much with so little staff. While Cultural Survival's staff has remained at more or less the same level as it was in 1980, its budget has increased from \$136,000 in 1979-80 to over \$500,000 in 1984-85, and its output has grown with it. At the same time, Cultural Survival has been moving steadily to diversify its funding sources and create a measure of self-sufficiency. Complete independence from outside funders will never be possible, given the nature of the institution, but

at least the risk of being left high and dry has been diminished, in large part by means of a direct-mail fund-raising campaign which was launched in 1983. In 1979-80, 63.4% of Cultural Survival's budget came from AID; 31.9% came from the Ford Foundation; and 6.9% came from its General Fund. By 1984-5 the AID portion of the budget had been reduced to 38.3%; several foundations were contributing 25%, and Cultural Survival's General Fund accounted for 36.7%.

### The Publishing and Research Division

Cultural Survival's growing reputation among social scientists, development specialists, and an array of other more specialized professionals (such as natural resource management specialists, lawyers, and human rights advocates) is due largely to the evolution of its publishing division. Since its beginning as a four-page Newsletter in 1976, the journal has grown to become a substantial Quarterly (the first issue of 1986 has 80 pages) that has indeed been appearing on a quarterly basis since 1982. Since 1981, topical issues have appeared on the following subjects:

Pesticides	Nomads
Drugs	Women
Mining/Industry	Hunters and Gatherers
Deforestation	Indigenous Organizations
Tourism	Parks and People
Ethnic Art	Identity and Education
Guatemala	Africa
The Electronic Era	Drugs
Missionaries	Multi-lateral Banks
Labor Migration	

Distribution of the Quarterly has jumped from several hundred per issue in 1980-81 to more than 7,000 (each printing is now 10,000 copies); there are presently close to 5,000 paying members (who have paid a minimum \$20 membership fee); approximately 1,000 copies find their way into libraries; and just over 400 are sent to libraries and groups overseas, primarily in Latin America and Europe. Since 1984, Spanish issues of the Quarterly, with the contents slightly re-ordered and carrying articles by Latin social scientists, have been published under the name Extracta by the Centro de Investigación y Promoción Amazónica (CIPA) in Lima, Peru (CIPA also translated the 1982 Quarterly entitled "The Social Cost of Deforestation"). Circulation in Latin America for Extracta and the Quarterly is limited to 2,000 copies because of difficulties with distribution arrangements and the lack of economic resources among potential buyers.

When a particular topical issue is planned, Cultural

Survival's senior staff discuss possible themes and analytic perspectives, methodological approaches, geographical regions, and scholars who might contribute articles or supply the names of other potential authors. At that point, contact is made with people whose names have surfaced, topics are discussed, guidelines are explained, and the ball is set rolling. As soon as articles arrive they are edited, typeset, returned to the authors for review, and then included in the appropriate upcoming issue of the Quarterly. The Quarterly also regularly announces future topical issues (such as "Tribal Children" and "Grassroots Economic Development" for late-1986), but in fact most of the articles fitting each theme are solicited personally by Cultural Survival's editor. While it is always a challenge to lay hands on quality articles which display sufficient geographical diversity within a specific theme, the network of potential contributors grows as the readership of the journal expands, and each year there are more and more unsolicited articles.

The Quarterly is designed as a forum for exchanging information and expressing opinions about the situations of indigenous people throughout the world. Emphasis is placed on covering current events, providing factual information that is warm (or at least semi-warm), and making people aware of the problems confronting native peoples around the world. The journal also prints periodic up-dates on emergency situations and prominent, on-going controversies. In this way, it provides a regular, solid flow of information aimed at "the general public and policy makers in the United States and abroad to stimulate action on behalf of tribal peoples and ethnic minorities." The tone of the journal is consciously moderate and factual, with an avoidance of polemics and academic analysis. The exponential growth in readership, coupled with the response from contributing authors, is perhaps the best indication of the effectiveness of this informative, topical approach.

Cultural Survival also produces two additional categories of publications: Special Reports and Occasional Papers. Special Reports are extensive analyses of a particular theme or problem approached from a regional or national perspective. Four of these have been produced to date: two on the present conditions of indigenous peoples in Brazil and Paraguay; one on the effects of development projects on Ecuador's Amazonian populations (in Spanish, as a joint effort of the Mundo Shuar and Cultural Survival); and the fourth on the ins and outs of the Summer Institute of Linguistics in Latin America.

Occasional Papers tend to be case studies in which tribal peoples are confronting -- or being confronted by, as is more often the case -- the forces of change, in one form or another.

Twenty-one Occasional Papers have been produced since 1980. Many of them deal with tribal peoples standing in the path of large-scale development projects (e.g., The Akawaio, the Upper Mazaruni Hydroelectric Dam, and National Development in Guyana (1981), Resource Development and Indigenous People: the El Cerrejón Coal Project and the Guajiro of Colombia (1984)).

Cultural Survival's staff have contributed to the production of a small number of these studies (e.g., The Indian Peoples of Paraguay: Their Plight and Their Prospects by David Maybury-Lewis & James Howe, (1980), which was supported by an independent grant from USAID in Paraguay; and Politics and the Ethiopian Famine-1984-85 by Jason W. Clay and Bonnie Holcomb (1986), which was done separately from the AID-financed program discussed in this evaluation). But the majority of the reports are based on research financed independently and written by unaffiliated scholars who are interested in publicizing a particular issue concerning an indigenous group. As with the Quarterly, the Special Reports and the Occasional Papers aim to educate a rather diverse, but generally more technical, audience.

Cultural Survival has no precise statistics on the classes of people who receive -- much less read -- the Quarterly and its reports, and therefore assessment of their influence at this time must be based on interviews with a small (yet representative) sample which includes social scientists, congressional aides, PVO representatives, officials from large-scale development agencies, and other specialists working in development and environmental science. Perhaps the most universal commentary is that Cultural Survival's publications, and in particular the Quarterly, are not only interesting and of generally high quality but also useful. The utility of the publications is varied, as follows:

(1) Within AID, the World Bank, and the IDB, officials interviewed have utilized articles on specific projects and topics to sway policy makers and project managers. On several occasions information in the Quarterly has been crucial in tipping the scales toward a more rational project strategy; and in one case materials from the journal were used effectively to reject a proposed project which was judged by Cultural Survival and by officials within the development agency as detrimental to indigenous people in the project area.

(2) The Quarterly, in particular, has helped make tribal issues "visible" to officials in large development agencies through its short, readable articles. If it hasn't made representatives of smaller development-oriented PVOs aware that Indians exist, it has certainly made them more knowledgeable. It is the only journal of its kind that focuses on social change and development among tribal peoples, and for this reason it is the sole occupant of a special and important niche. As one AID

official said, it helps to influence development agencies "to take (Cultural Survival's) client group into account."

(3) Development officials, policy makers, and activists have all noted that the Quarterly (as well as other Cultural Survival publications) is responsible and "has about the right tone" (i.e., it is not antagonistic). Articles are well-documented, "objective", and free from blatantly political agendas. Because of its reasonable tone, it is an effective resource for those who want to argue issues before policy makers. A representative of one group which regularly lobbies environmental issues with the World Bank and Congress noted that the Cultural Survival approach is "very effective because it is professional and diplomatic," as opposed to the operating style of several other activist organizations that are, in his opinion, too "attack oriented" and strident.

(4) Environmentalists have become an especially close ally of Cultural Survival over the past few years, and three issues of the Quarterly have dealt with environmental topics (pesticides, deforestation, and parks and people); a fourth issue, on "Colonization and Land Rights", is scheduled to come out this year. A key environmental officer at the World Bank regularly photocopies articles from the journal dealing with particular regions or types of projects and sends them to project managers inside the Bank "with a stiff cover memo" suggesting that they take note. The Environmental Defense Fund and the Natural Resource Defense Council, activist groups, have made ample use of Cultural Survival's publications to influence the lending patterns of multi-lateral banks.

(5) University professors teaching applied anthropology and development courses frequently use Quarterly articles as lecture material. This, of course, creates a wider audience for the information in the journal, but not necessarily readership. Several professors noted that the topical issues were too good as resources for their lectures to share them with their students. Be this as it may, Cultural Survival has created a sizeable and carefully documented body of literature which views indigenous peoples in the context of political and socio-economic change. The "case study" approach is particularly useful for teaching purposes.

(6) One important side-effect of the presence of a journal that is receptive to articles on tribal groups and social change is that it provides a place where virtually anyone with reliable, pertinent information can find a place to have his writings published. There are few journals of this sort in circulation, and none in this country but the Quarterly which comes out on such a regular basis and reaches such a wide audience.

(7) The topical organization of the Quarterly attracts a variety of special interest groups outside of anthropology, both as readers and contributors. For example:

-- "Women in a Changing World"(1984): Women's studies programs, feminists, development organizations

-- "Drugs and Tribal People"(1985): Congress, drug enforcement agencies, environmentalists, botanists, academic researchers

-- "Parks and People"(1985): environmentalists, U.S. National Park Service, ecologists

The blending of topical specialties with indigenous peoples serves to underline the importance of an interdisciplinary approach that has long been absent from anthropology, while at the same time demonstrating, in a substantive manner, the contribution that anthropology can make to other disciplines.

(8) It has to be said that very little criticism of the quality of the journal or the reports was heard. Some said that the journal was too academic, others that it was not academic enough. Some felt that while the informational content was good, it was too descriptive: Cultural Survival should take a stronger stand on certain issues, speak out more loudly. But in general the negative comments were sparse and did not fall into any particular pattern. The overwhelming majority said that the reports, and the Quarterly in particular, were of excellent quality and, above all, that they were serving a practical purpose.

Beyond the production and distribution of its own publications, Cultural Survival keeps in stock more than 150 books, reports, and newsletters from other "collaborating organizations." These organizations are:

The Anthropology Resource Center (ARC)  
The Anti-Slavery Society (ASS)  
International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA)  
The Minority Rights Group (MRG)  
The U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCR)  
The Indian Law Resource Center  
The Centro de Investigación y Promoción Amazónica (CIPA)  
The Centro Ecumênico de Documentação e Informação

Available publications, together with Cultural Survival's own materials, are listed in a well-organized catalogue. Total sales of these publications in 1984-85 amounted to almost \$30,000. These sales, the bulk of which is made up of Cultural Survival's own publications, have doubled each year since 1981.

The publishing and research division of Cultural Survival is most heavily occupied with editing and producing the Quarterly and reports. With the addition of an associate editor during the latter part of 1985, the quality of editing has improved noticeably, and the Director was recently freed up for a short period to do research on and write about political tangles in the famine relief effort in Ethiopia. It was originally envisioned that the directors of both offices would on occasion be able to take time out to investigate specific issues and write reports. This has only occurred in sporadic fashion, and when it has happened the mental and physical well-being of the researcher (as well as those around him) has been threatened while important routine tasks have usually been left to gather dust. In the main, research has been neglected. For example, the two priority research areas outlined in the 1983-86 proposal -- colonization of tropical lowland zones and deforestation -- have barely been approached, and it is clear that at this time Cultural Survival has neither the staff nor the structure to manage what might be termed a research program.<sup>3</sup> Staff time is already stretched too thin just keeping the organization functioning.

However, the fact remains that the link between reporting and research is crucial and has been promoted from the very beginning. Cultural Survival has encouraged, stimulated, and even pointed the road for considerable research by means of its Quarterly, reports, seminars, and contacts with scholars and development specialists, and plans are constantly being laid to expand this function. For example, formal cooperative agreements for joint research with several universities are close to becoming reality; and some directed studies are projected for the near future. In the meantime, the simple existence of Cultural Survival's publication department serves to motivate scholars to focus their attention on applied issues and prepare manuscripts on the chance that they will be published.

#### The Projects Division:

The domain of the Projects Director is not by any means a self-contained unit, and is therefore a good deal more difficult to describe. It is also less visible than the Publishing and Research Division, for it does not come forth with a single tangible "product" which circulates widely and goes on public display. This is not a comment on the quality of the work but rather a consequence of the nature of the job. Its constituency is made up largely of isolated groups in the field, groups that do not (and cannot) all receive the same attention and often have a very unique, personal relationship with the Projects Director.

The Projects Director generally spends at least three months out of each year, broken up into trips of two or three weeks, visiting the field to monitor grants made by Cultural Survival, to stay abreast of the human rights situation in the region, and to generally keep his contacts warm. Beyond this, he communicates on a regular basis with representatives of other small-scale development agencies involved with indigenous groups; works with lobbying and activist organizations such as the Indian Law Resource Center and the Environmental Defense Fund in Washington, D.C.; fields emergency calls dealing with human rights abuses and takes appropriate action; handles the paperwork for all grants made by Cultural Survival; is responsible for documenting the progress of groups being supported; and attempts to write articles for the journal.

To confuse matters, the label "Projects Director" is misleading for several reasons. First, Cultural Survival does not have projects of its own, either in small-scale development or in research. Nor do many of the things it supports in the field qualify as "projects." Instead, the Projects Director manages grants that either finance specific activities of groups or allow groups the core support they need to maintain themselves over time and gain experience as organizations. Provision of money to pay the salaries of two staff members and cover travel expenses over a period of three years hardly qualifies as a "project;" and when groups use Cultural Survival's funds to carry out more or less well-defined activities -- such as land demarcation or a carpentry school -- in no sense does Cultural Survival step in and direct the course of events.

However, the most important point is that Cultural Survival's principal goal is to foster the growth and evolution of organizations, which is a process, not a "project." In this light, the focus is on the groups themselves, and not on discrete activities of those groups. The end is the creation of administrative, planning capabilities and an accompanying sense of self-confidence; the means (or vehicle or instrument) for reaching that end is salaries for staff members, training in accounting, travel to conferences, carpentry schools, bilingual education, and so forth. In fact, it is often the case that the activities supported are relatively insignificant in comparison to the administrative and organizational experience picked up by the group.

Since 1980, Cultural Survival has used more than \$380,000 of AID funds to provide financial assistance to approximately 30 different groups (and some individuals) in Latin America. The majority of these groups, slightly more than half, are found in Ecuador, Colombia, and Peru; the remainder are scattered throughout Bolivia, Mexico, Paraguay, Chile, and Panama.

Individual grants range in size from under \$1,000 to more than \$20,000. Approximately 40% of the groups receiving grants are indigenous organizations, while the rest are either non-Indian support groups assisting indigenous groups or individuals carrying out studies on indigenous issues. In two cases -- one in Bolivia, the other in Ecuador -- non-Indian organizations were funded initially, then Cultural Survival's assistance was transferred directly to indigenous groups supported by the original grantees after these groups had developed sufficient capacity to administer funds. In some countries, such as Ecuador, Cultural Survival has funded indigenous groups heavily due to the fact that these groups have taken the initiative and have managed -- with admirable success -- to carry out their own programs without having them managed by intermediaries. Colombia and Peru, by contrast, have only seen incipient development of truly indigenous groups during the past few years, and for this reason the bulk of Cultural Survival's funding there has been channeled through non-Indian support groups. The stated and genuine goal of Cultural Survival is to eventually concentrate most heavily on strengthening indigenous groups directly, and this is gradually being done. However, this transition must be brought about realistically, at the gradual and natural pace with which indigenous groups build up their capacity to administer programs and plan their activities in an effective manner. At present, Cultural Survival has been carefully balancing the mix of intermediary and indigenous groups, mindful not to force premature weaning, and placing support where it is most effective.

It was noted earlier in this report that Cultural Survival is not in the business of designing projects; it responds to requests for funds to support activities planned by groups in the field. Although specific criteria for judging the feasibility of proposals have not been adequately defined, selection is based on three general principles:

- (1) A project must benefit small societies as a group, not simply assist a single community or an individual. Research and field observations indicate that indigenous peoples' healthy and secure adaptation to a national society follows if their sense of community and shared experience is maintained.
- (2) The project must focus on a representative situation or problem, one faced by small societies in many areas.
- (3) The project should provide opportunities for extensive analysis.

Beyond this, Cultural Survival works, without being directive, within a framework of "priority areas", the three most important of which are land demarcation, institution building, and information sharing through publications, travel and conferences.

Conscious effort is made, especially when supporting indigenous groups directly, to fund regional organizations such as federations (of a single ethnic group) and confederations (comprised of several distinct ethnic groups) rather than individual communities. This preference is in part due to the conviction that Cultural Survival's scarce resources will have a wider impact if distributed to organizations that represent a larger number of groups. At the same time, it has become clear that donations to single communities often create situations in which these communities gain an unfair advantage over neighboring communities, thus promoting competition rather than unity. This principle has been followed through support to organizations such as CONACNIE, CONFENIAE, FOIN, and OPIP in Ecuador, AIDSEP in Peru, and CIDOB in Bolivia. Grants to all of these organizations have fallen within the priority boundaries; and the majority have involved institution building and information sharing.

The top priority, land demarcation and titling of indigenous territories, is a highly political issue and therefore difficult to deal with at the field level. In its work on land issues with indigenous groups, Cultural Survival has approached it from two different angles. On the one hand, it has aided indigenous peoples to publicize violations of their homelands through local publications in Spanish and Portuguese, and also through its own series of Special Reports and Occasional Papers. Where possible, Cultural Survival's staff has become directly involved in providing pertinent information to put pressure on development agencies such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank in cases where large-scale projects threatened indigenous lands. It has also worked through diplomatic channels to advise the Miskito Indians on territorial disputes with the Sandinistas in Nicaragua.

And second, Cultural Survival has funded small-scale demarcation and titling projects aimed at protecting tribal territories from incursions of outside colonists. These projects are considered "pilot" efforts from which important lessons can be learned and then applied in other areas, with more substantial backing from other donor agencies. Beyond merely criticizing the usurpation of Indian lands, Cultural Survival is anxious to find possible solutions. At the same time, it realizes that the search might be both difficult and, in the end, fruitless. To date, only three efforts at this have been tried (another two, in Paraguay and Venezuela, have just gotten underway), with somewhat mixed results. In 1980,

Cultural Survival supported a land claim study that was to be the basis for the Miskito Indians' negotiations for a secure communal territory. Unfortunately, before the study could be presented to the Nicaraguan government the political tide had turned and the Miskitos were caught in the middle of guerrilla warfare and the quest for secure land titles had to be shelved. Demarcation studies among the Achual of Peru were tangled up in bureaucratic tape and at this point have apparently been lost. And work among the Awas, in Ecuador, which presently has government support, is heading into its sixth year of Cultural Survival support with a total accumulated price tag of over \$60,000 and definitive titles have apparently not yet been granted. The Awas case appears promising at this point; but it must be noted that it has involved the largest cash outlay that Cultural Survival has made to any single effort or group, and the outcome is not yet clear. Without a systematic evaluation of this effort it is difficult to say what sorts of lessons are being learned.<sup>4</sup>

A few more lines should be devoted to the Awas effort because it is important from another perspective. After it was launched, it came to the attention of the Office of Borders and Amazonian Development (INCRAE) in the Ecuadorean Ministry of Foreign Relations. Cultural Survival channeled funds through the INCRAE for a time, but later arranged to place them with the Indian confederacion CONACNIE, which took over management of the money (the Awas did not have the capability) and continued to work closely with the Ministry -- the only difference being that CONACNIE, with control over funds, now had more leverage with the Ministry. Beyond this, the Awas live on the border with Colombia, and the two governments, through their Ministries of Foreign Relations, have been discussing collaboration in the creation of contiguous national parks containing Awas Indians on both sides. Because of its role with INCRAE and CONACNIE in the first stages of land demarcation, the Ecuadorean government brought Cultural Survival into the negotiations with Colombia; and recently World Wildlife Fund, which is working in a nearby park called La Planada, has approached Cultural Survival to express interest. In this way, an activity begun by Cultural Survival has snowballed and picked up a collection of diverse actors, including a local tribe (the Awas), an indigenous confederation (CONACNIE), two governments, and an international conservation foundation (World Wildlife Fund-US).

Other "representative" areas are institution building and information sharing, which Cultural Survival has sponsored in one form or another through more than half of its grants. Administrative support to indigenous organizations has usually been to cover salaries, office supplies, and a variety of other miscellaneous costs. Some training in accounting and basic administration has been funded, but this has been minimal. Cultural Survival has taken the stance that it should allow

grantees room for pursuing their own independent course. Because of the high level of confidence maintained between the groups and Cultural Survival's Project Director, there appear to be few, if any, abuses of the freedom this policy permits. Grant monitoring in the field provides informal discussion of problems and low-key advice which is both supportive and non-directive. It is significant that this type of assistance is seldom given by other donor agencies, which prefer to fund specific activities and projects, and therefore Cultural Survival often fills an important hole.

Beyond areas such as land demarcation, institution building, and information sharing, there is little apparent pattern to Cultural Survival's funding. Although a number of the diverse activities supported can be rationalized as falling within the "local economic initiatives" category -- such as chili pepper cultivation, carpentry schools, and commercialization of crafts -- they are otherwise unconnected and do not lend themselves well to comparative analysis. The diversity in the funding pattern is due to the policy of being non-directive, which pulls against any attempt to work within a framework of priority areas. While many of the scattered, "non-priority" activities are undoubtedly worthy of support, they do not easily "provide opportunities for extensive analysis." This, of course, makes it difficult to do useful comparative evaluations of the activities funded, a point which will be dealt with later in this report.

From early-1980 through early 1986, Cultural Survival has supported a wide range of activities involving: bilingual education (with the Amuesha in Peru, the Shuar in Ecuador); legal assistance (FUNCOL in Colombia, CIPA in Peru, the CCM in Chile); land demarcation (the Achual in Peru, INCRAE and later CONACNIE in Ecuador, the Miskito in Nicaragua); resource management (CRIC in Colombia, the Fundacion Natura in Ecuador, the Kuna in Panama); training and core administrative support (APCOB and later CIDOB in Bolivia; CONFENIAE, FOIN, OPIP in Ecuador; AIDSESEP in Peru); carpentry schools (CIT in Colombia, the Huichol in Mexico); crafts and sacred art (Antisuyo in Peru, the Huichol and the Highland Maya (Chiapas) in Mexico); and a variety of publications (CONFENIAE and the Shuar in Ecuador; COPAL, CIPA, and AIDSESEP in Peru and the Highland Maya (Chiapas) in Mexico). Several of these groups have received funding for single programs that have continued in the form of long-term activities over the years, as in the case with the land demarcation project in Awas territory in Ecuador, which was first funded through the government institution INCRAE in 1980 and later directly to the indigenous confederation CONACNIE. Other groups have received funds for different activities through time; for example, FUNCOL in Colombia was funded to provide legal assistance to indigenous groups in 1980 and, more recently, to carry out a health project. Some of Cultural

Survival's grants are one-shot infusions of money for specific items, such as the publication of a pamphlet describing a natural resource management project by the Kuna Indians of Panama. Others have been long-range commitments designed to support processes such as the gradual development of communications networks and institutional capacity.

It can readily be seen that Cultural Survival, operating with an annual grant budget of less than \$100,000, cannot figure as a major funder in Latin America.<sup>3</sup> In sheer funding capacity it is dwarfed by international donors such as Oxfam, the Inter-American Foundation, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the numerous European agencies that ply the same territory. Cultural Survival clearly understands this, and in practice it has played the role of a "partial funder" to groups which receive the bulk of their support from other, more affluent development agencies. In virtually every case of Cultural Survival's funding cited above, a minimum of two or three other funders are contributing complementary assistance. In some cases, Cultural Survival has placed a small quantity of seed money with inexperienced groups, often to cover administrative costs or to finance a bulletin or newsletter, to set them in motion and allow them time to get their feet and begin structuring a coherent program. In other cases, it has sponsored national or regional conferences -- such as a congress of indigenous groups from Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, and Brazil, held in Lima in 1984 -- which bring Indian leaders together to interchange experiences and ideas, with the goal of creating lines of communication and stimulating new initiatives.

This complementary role of Cultural Survival in overall support to indigenous groups is perhaps its greatest strength. With limited funds for grants, its function as advisor to both indigenous groups and other funders becomes much more important. Many international donors have little experience with tribal groups, with the result that they often feel so far out of their depth that they ignore indigenous groups altogether. At the other extreme, ignorance often engenders funding that is both too liberal and too abundant. It is common to stumble upon donations for support of "projects" that are either overly ambitious or inappropriate or inadequately planned, or all of these combined. Documents on file with the grantees frequently consist of two or three pages sketching terms of agreement and a cursory budget -- all of which does not, at least on the surface, add up to a very intelligent work plan. In many cases, indigenous groups have fallen into the habit of accepting everything that is thrown their way, and their programs become defined more by what is offered than according to their own needs. Actual examples of "projects" of this type, funded by donors with a limited understanding of indigenous people, are (1) the purchase of two large cargo boats

for an Indian "cooperative" which had been formed by a support group for that purpose (the "cooperative" never functioned, no maintenance schedule could be put into practice, and both of the boats sank after several trips); (2) a revolving loan fund funnelled to an indigenous "development PVO" which was supposed to work with several Indian groups (virtually all of the money was used to purchase cattle for the families of PVO leaders, all of whom belonged to the same ethnic group, and the fund stopped revolving); (3) construction of a furniture factory for an Amazonian Indian group (the physical layout was far too ambitious to be covered by the limited budget and the buildings were abandoned at the half-way point). And the list of examples of poorly aimed cash could easily be expanded.

Beyond simply wasting money, misplaced support often does considerable harm. Large infusions of cash placed amid small embryonic groups with few capable leaders have a tendency to create more confusion than is realized. It serves to stretch their limited skills in several different directions, leaving them overextended and taking them away from other, more important tasks -- such as building up their administrative experience or completing activities already underway. To add to the confusion, there is usually little or no communication among the various assistance agencies and consequently donations for activities that overlap or are in conflict sometimes arrive. Too much money given out uncritically, with infrequent monitoring and lax controls in the field, is not universal but it is unfortunately common.

Cultural Survival can help avoid difficulties of this sort by working on two fronts. First, by virtue of its relationship with indigenous groups it can advise them and provide administrative assistance to bolster their ability to plan their programs more rationally and manage the grants they receive. Provision of core support often fills a crucial need that other donors either overlook or avoid (because it isn't tangible and therefore cannot be "measured"), and it gives Cultural Survival the relationship it needs to give advice to the indigenous group. This sort of relationship has been built with groups in Ecuador (such as CONFENIAE, FOIN, AND OPIP) and can be established in other countries. The difficulty is that it takes time to establish the necessary level of trust with small groups of ethnic minorities that invariably find themselves with their backs against the wall, fighting to stay alive. Cultural Survival effectively utilizes the tactic of spending large amounts of time with Indian leaders and visiting outlying communities, listening and chewing over issues important to them and finding out what they consider to be important. This takes a mixture of patience and experience, and considerable time. But because the Projects Director is essentially alone to cover all of Spanish-speaking Latin America, adequate coverage has only been partial.

Information gathered in this manner is invaluable to donor organizations inexperienced with tribal groups in deciding whether or not a particular funding choice is appropriate. A representative from one well-known grassroots development agency related how she once travelled into a remote village in highland Chiapas to investigate a proposal she had received through the mail. After bouncing for hours over precarious roads she rounded a bend and entered town, where she was immediately swallowed up by a milling crowd of Tzotzil Indians involved in some sort of public conflict she didn't understand. After several uncomfortable hours she left, bewildered and still clutching her undeciphered proposal, with the thought firmly lodged in her head that she was unequipped to figure out what the Tzotzil thought about anything. Neither she nor anyone else in her agency ever funded any Indian group in that area of Mexico, although several subsequent attempts were made. One suspects that similar sentiments are more common than is admitted.

In fact, there are development agencies that would like to work with indigenous peoples but seldom do because they don't know how to deal with them. Representatives from the Inter-American Foundation working in Ecuador, Paraguay, Chile, Colombia, and Bolivia have taken advantage of Cultural Survival's expertise, and on several occasions have arranged to send Cultural Survival's people into the field to evaluate particular situations. On some of these trips, Cultural Survival has recommended against funding (or that existing funding be cut off). One representative noted that in several cases the suggestion that he pare the budget down was made, and this has improved the projects. Cultural Survival has also pointed worthy groups in the direction of the Inter-American Foundation; and there has been, over the years, a healthy record of co-funding -- in which the Inter-American Foundation picks up the largest portion. A similar relationship has been established with Oxfam-UK (which has an office in Lima) and Oxfam-US (located in Boston). And the Ford Foundation, which has given core support to Cultural Survival since 1979, has consulted Cultural Survival about funding possibilities in Brazil and several other South American countries. Even so, Cultural Survival's small staff is only able to make contact with a portion of the major donor agencies that presently work or could potentially work with indigenous groups in Latin America.

#### Evaluation of Field Activities

From the very beginning, one key goal of Cultural Survival's small-scale development program was evaluation of field activities. This fits with the long-term objective of using the

grants to learn lessons about what works and what doesn't, and emerging over time with alternative development strategies appropriate to indigenous peoples. Cultural Survival began in an excellent position to analyze the cultural patterns of diverse groups, economic and political relations of these groups to the populations around them, and the effects of change on self-confidence and identity. Now it found itself stepping beyond what anthropologists often consider detached observation and analysis of groups into the arena of applied development work, which in turn was to be observed and analyzed. Lessons were to be learned and passed on to others:

Cultural Survival is organized to influence larger national and international agencies, not compete with or replicate their activities. As such, research, evaluation and dissemination of these results are integral and complementary aspects of a program in which: 1) research aims guide the selection of field activities and 2) results serve to influence public policy and educate a general audience.

While "project" evaluation was seen as central and essential to their program, little thought was initially given to what an evaluation should consist of or what methodology should be followed. At first it was thought that either the two staff professionals could do them during the course of their work. Or perhaps some could be done by other social scientists, either North Americans or Latins, who made up part of Cultural Survival's network. The budget for the 1983-86 period contains one line item for "preparation and dissemination of research reports and evaluations," to the tune of \$48,000 per year. This money has been used to produce the Quarterly, Special Reports, and in-depth evaluations of specific projects. Unfortunately, the evaluations have been done almost entirely of large-scale projects funded by international donor agencies such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. No systematic schedule of evaluation of Cultural Survival-supported projects has been followed. There are several apparent reasons for this.

First, it was mentioned earlier in this report that Cultural Survival rarely funds anything which can easily be termed a "project," and it has therefore been difficult to figure out exactly what should be the unit of evaluation. Cultural Survival is invariably a co-funder, picking up what amounts to a small piece, in economic terms, of the total support given to any particular group. If, for example, Cultural Survival donates \$5,000 to a group which is also receiving more than \$100,000 from the Inter-American Foundation and Oxfam, then what is to be evaluated? In isolation, the tiny corner supported by

Cultural Survival is hardly worth studying; and there has been a reluctance to focus on the group and its activities if they are supported by other agencies.

Second, several people in Cultural Survival commented that the term "evaluation" is somewhat intimidating to begin with, and it grew over time to become both an elaborate and a critical look at the "projects" funded by Cultural Survival. When this happened, evaluation became a problem. The last thing Cultural Survival wanted to do was launch a full-scale critical assessment on a small, fragile group and then publish the results. It was argued that the majority of the groups are vulnerable and what they need is support rather than criticism, unless criticism is given verbally and with great care not to bruise sensibilities. Thus, written evaluations, while potentially illustrative to a wider audience, might do irreparable harm to the groups receiving donations from Cultural Survival.

But the original goal of extracting lessons about alternative development strategies remained, and it was decided that if evaluations were done, they could not be done by permanent staff. On the one hand, they were too close to the groups to be objective; on the other hand, they didn't have the time to do the job professionally. To solve this problem, Cultural Survival decided in early-1985 to amend the AID grant agreement to add another \$36,000 to pay outside evaluators:

A number of field projects have been completed and await evaluation. During 1984 Cultural Survival's Board of Directors began to consider the most effective ways to evaluate out work. It was decided that staff members should not undertake such evaluations; outside evaluators are essential.

Still, no evaluations appeared and it is not yet clear what an evaluation should consist of, what should be evaluated, or what methodology might be enlisted. This would take time, and so would the actual evaluations (12 were to have been done during the 1983-86 grant period).

Also in the area of providing advice to development planners was the notion that Cultural Survival would be able to work with agencies such as the World Bank and AID on the design and implementation of large-scale projects. This does not involve publishing information but rather applying knowledge directly. In the early 1980's, Cultural Survival had been collaborating with the Peru and Ecuador AID missions on the design of two natural resource management projects, and things had gone well. Both Cultural Survival and AID expected to continue their

relationship on into the implementation stage, with Cultural Survival's staff, or other social scientists shepherded by them, assisting in the long-range task of overseeing and participating in project management and monitoring.

Unfortunately, this role proved to be unrealistic and unworkable. Quite simply, the staff were already stretched to the limit and it should have been realized that taking on more work would be impossible. An arrangement was attempted with the Ecuador AID project, but it had to be declined. And when Cultural Survival and the Peru AID mission tried to forge a similar advisory slot to help implement its natural resource management project with a team of U.S. and Peruvian technicians, negotiations became tangled and finally fell apart, leaving behind some bruised feelings on all sides. It should also be mentioned that officials in the World Bank have sought advisory assistance for projects in Brazil and Paraguay, and the outcome has been similar.

While it has to be said that political considerations figured in some of these decisions, it is also clear that (1) Cultural Survival did not have, nor does it have now, sufficient personnel to become even a part-time advisor without neglecting its usual work; and (2) it does not have any sort of institutional mechanism which would allow it to manage and oversee other social scientists who might carry out work on large-scale projects. Put simply, Cultural Survival is not set up to function as a consulting firm, at least at present. Even when Cultural Survival's Projects Director has done short consulting jobs for the Inter-American Foundation there have been difficulties finding time. Partial resolution has been effected by piggy-backing Inter-American Foundation work on top of Cultural Survival trips. The point is that Cultural Survival has been somewhat unrealistic in trying to reach too far and do too much with too little staff. At the same time, the larger development agencies have also been unrealistic in expecting too much from Cultural Survival.

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In summary, the work done by the Projects Office is diverse, covering management of a small-scale development portfolio, travel throughout Latin America to monitor groups receiving grants from Cultural Survival and maintain contact with other development and human rights organizations working in the region, as well as a number of other, less easily defined tasks. The work with development support to groups is generally well placed and effective; approximately 40% of the grants are given directly to indigenous groups, and the rest is channeled through support groups and individuals working with indigenous

groups. This mix is gradually shifting toward indigenous groups as these develop the capacity to manage funds and administer their own programs. In order to foster this evolutionary process, Cultural Survival invests the largest percentage of its capital on institution building.

In virtually every case, Cultural Survival co-funds groups in company with as many as two or three other small-scale development agencies. Cultural Survival's economic contribution in this relationship is relatively small but invariably fills a crucial niche that complements other funding. At times, Cultural Survival has provided seed money so that groups can gain their feet, and then other funders have come along with more substantial support. It has also financed conferences which have allowed indigenous groups to discuss common problems and plan activities. Above all, the relatively small infusions of money provided by Cultural Survival have allowed it to work closely with groups, gain their confidence, and serve as informal advisor. This relationship, which demands considerable patience, diplomatic skills, and time in the field, has been very effectively forged in Ecuador. Lack of sufficient personnel at the present time has made it difficult to build such an intimate relationship in other countries.

Cultural Survival has not critically assessed its small-scale development program and written evaluative reports which can be disseminated to other development agencies. While this has been a crucial objective of the organization from the beginning, it has not been done largely because of lack of staff. Beyond this, there has been certain confusion as to what what should be evaluated and what methodology should be used. By the same token, attempts to become directly involved in the design and implementation of large-scale development projects with organizations such as the World Bank and AID have been frustrated because of the smallness of Cultural Survival's staff.

Comments and Recommendations

- (1) Cultural Survival combines activism with small-scale development work with indigenous tribes through a combined approach which integrates practical field work, research, publishing, and lobbying for indigenous rights. Since first receiving funds from the Ford Foundation and AID in 1979, Cultural Survival has grown into an impressive and very special organization which is becoming increasingly important to development agencies at all levels, from large institutions such as the World Bank to PVOs in the U.S. and Latin America.
- (2) Cultural Survival is also becoming more and more useful to the indigenous groups which are its clients through its growing ability to marshal support in their favor. It is in a class by itself as an indigenist organization that goes beyond mere activism to search for alternative solutions through development assistance.
- (3) The above-mentioned developments have occurred despite the fact that Cultural Survival's staff has not expanded appreciably since 1980. On the one hand, this is remarkable and is an indication of the strong sense of dedication and commitment by all those associated with the institution, from professionals through support staff and even volunteer workers. On the other hand, it is becoming more and more difficult for the staff to cope with the increasingly heavy work load. Either (1) staff is increased to handle the growing flow of work; (2) staff stays at the present level and the work load is decreased; or (3) the present situation continues until meltdown occurs sometime in the near future. The first alternative is recommended.
- (4) Cultural Survival's three publication series -- the Quarterly, the Occasional Papers, and the Special Reports -- all began in 1980. They are largely responsible for the organization's image in the United States. The publications have been informative and, above all, useful to specialists in a variety of professions. Development specialists, social scientists, environmentalists, government policy makers, and others consistently say that Cultural Survival's publications are responsible, well-documented, and objective. The publications have also served to stimulate applied research on indigenous situations throughout Latin America.
- (5) Support given to indigenous groups and support groups working with Indians in Latin America has been generally

effective in reaching the target and filling real needs. The amount of money Cultural Survival places with these groups is small in comparison with the funds available from other development organizations working the same territory. However, Cultural Survival is the only agency that has development assistance specifically for indigenous groups; and it has the understanding and experience to use its own money wisely and at the same time to advise other donor agencies as to the appropriateness of funding choices. More than money, Cultural Survival has expertise.

(6) Cultural Survival, as noted, is stretched too thin. While the Publications section of the Research and Publications Division has held its own--even with expansion--research has lagged behind. In the Projects Division, there is clearly too much terrain for a single person, and it is here that many of the tasks outlined in the AID proposals have only been partially completed. Given the heavy workload, the Projects Director has accomplished a surprising amount of high-quality work. However, if the organization is to continue along its present trajectory and become more productive and, consequently, more effective, it will need to lay hands on more staff, both at the professional and the support levels.

(7) Quite clearly, Cultural Survival has learned a good deal about small-scale development, and it has knowledge which would be useful to other development practitioners if it were analyzed, thought about systematically, and written up. This was a principal goal at the outset and it remains a principal goal now. Again, this task has slipped because of lack of staff. Evaluations of the activities and groups supported by Cultural Survival can only be carried out through the addition of professional personnel.

(8) Cultural Survival must have more field personnel so that it can monitor its grants more adequately and forge closer communication with other development PVOs that work with, or would like to work with, indigenous peoples. The very nature of the work, which involves ethnic minorities that are customarily suspicious of outsiders and lacking in self-confidence, and are often living in remote geographical regions, demands that Cultural Survival's representatives spend considerable time in the field. Only with more staff will Cultural Survival be able to fulfill its potential.

(9) Cultural Survival should continue to provide small grants for development activities in the field. Although minimal, the financial support it has given to groups has often been

crucial. But beyond this, it allows Cultural Survival to gain the trust of groups and puts it in a position to offer advice and constructive criticism--which would be much more difficult were it not offering any financial support. If Cultural Survival were to function solely as a broker for other development PVOs (without its own money for small grants), its role would be rendered ambiguous and work would be considerably less satisfying.

(10) Cultural Survival is unique among PVOs working solely with indigenous peoples in that it successfully bridges the gap between human rights activism and small-scale development work. It has demonstrated, through its publications and its applied fieldwork, that the two perspectives are mutually reinforcing and therefore should not be separated. In this light, Cultural Survival's work provides a valuable model for work with indigenous communities throughout the world.

Notes

(1) Two other people who had a role in founding Cultural Survival are Dr. Orlando Patterson, a Jamaican-born sociologist, and Dr. Evon Vog, Jr., an anthropologist who has studied Mayan Indian groups in Chiapas, Mexico. They are both presently on Cultural Survival's Board of Directors.

(2) "Societies on the Brink," by David Maybury-Lewis. Harvard Magazine, January-February, 1977.

(3) The Research Division of Cultural Survival is presently working on a report entitled Indigenous Models of Tropical Forest Management in Latin America. The U.S. Man and the Biosphere (MAB) program has provided financial support for this work. Delay in finishing the report, which is comprehensive and contains a lengthy bibliography, underscores the strain placed on Cultural Survival's small staff.

(4) An article on the Awas affair is to be published in the next issue of the Quarterly.

(5) Cultural Survival also has other funds (admittedly limited) from private donations. These are earmarked for specific projects such as a Mayan Indian Writer's Cooperative in Chiapas, Mexico, and projects in areas outside Latin America. This money has grown from just over \$6,000 in FY80 to more than \$36,000 in FY85.

STATEMENT OF WORK

The contractor will perform an evaluation of Cultural Survival programs funded by A.I.D. under Grants nos. AID/LA-G-1350 (LOP 9/28/79 to 9/30/82) and LAC-0591-G-SS-3060-00 (LOP 8/31/83 to 12/31/87). The evaluation will examine and describe the range of activities undertaken by the Grantee and analyze their effectiveness in meeting stated objectives.

The purpose of the Grantee's overall program is to help indigenous peoples and small ethnic groups that are threatened culturally, politically or economically by outside forces to adapt successfully to their changing circumstances. Within this context, the objectives of the original AID grant were:

1. to collect and disseminate information concerning human rights problems and alternative development strategies to organizations concerned with such issues;
2. to develop a documentation and analysis center that would make research results available to Indians, Indianists and development specialists working to improve the situation of native peoples;
3. to provide technical and economic support for a few small field projects that address issues common to indigenous groups, and to monitor and evaluate the projects to determine and share the lessons learned.

The objectives of the current grant, which were formulated from the learning experience of the first grant, are:

1. to identify and analyze the unique development needs of Latin American Indians;
2. to illustrate the particular, often subtle, nature of human rights violations against Indians;
3. to initiate research programs and field activities that focus on broad regional problems confronting Indians, particularly colonization and deforestation of tropical woodlands, and to recommend general policies to improve the situation.
4. to support and document field projects that seek to strengthen local institutions and promote essential technology transfer (ranging from administrative skills to resource management);

The evaluation will be based on (1) review of relevant documentation; (2) interviews with Cultural Survival staff members, board members, members of the advisory council; (3) field visits to projects supported by Cultural Survival in four Latin American countries, involving discussions with beneficiaries and others related to the projects; and (4) interviews with officials from organizations that have observed Cultural Survival's work, both in the United States and in Latin America.

Cultural Survival's two major activities--support for field projects and information sharing--are seen as intimately related and reinforcing. Thus, the evaluation will focus on the degree to which they form a coherent and systematic program.

The following areas will be covered in the evaluation:

1. Overview of Cultural Survival as an Institution
  - a. history, evolution
  - b. present institutional structure (staff, board, advisory council; roles and functions; relationship to Harvard)
  - c. objectives of the organization; thematic and geographical areas of interest
  - d. accomplishments
  - e. the AID financed programs (summary description, budget, etc.)
  - f. financial status (sources of revenue, fund-raising efforts, future prospects)
2. Field Project Support
  - a. types of projects supported (priority areas, restrictions, etc.)
  - b. evaluation of proposals, approval/rejection process
  - c. field monitoring of projects
  - d. project evaluation process
  - e. technical/financial collaboration with other assistance agencies; linkages with national institutions
  - f. effectiveness of field project program
3. Information Collection and diffusion; brokering/networking
  - a. Cultural Survival publications (Quarterly Reports, Occasional Papers, Special Reports); variety, range, distribution, use
  - b. programs to assist indigenous groups in defending their rights: preparing them to negotiate with non-Indian government agencies (national and local); connecting them with agencies and organizations that can assist them with specific tasks

- c. extent and use of networking with a variety of groups, agencies, specialists, indigenous tribes
  - d. different audiences for Cultural Survival's information; nature and impact of information on these audiences
  - e. nature of the interconnections between the field projects and the information sharing program
4. Relationship with AID and other development agencies
- a. impact at the policy level
  - b. linkages with private and government agencies; collaboration, co-funding
  - c. value of Cultural Survival's activities to other organizations
  - d. relationships with AID field missions
5. Value of Cultural Survival's activities to indigenous groups in Latin America
- a. field projects
  - b. information sharing/networking/publications
  - c. facilitating information exchanges among indigenous groups
6. Effectiveness of overall program
7. Conclusions and Recommendations