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THE RELEVANCE, QUALITY AND UTILIZATION OF A.I.D. RESEARCH

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A report prepared for the Agency for International Development
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December 1979

U. S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE RELEVANCE, QUALITY AND UTILIZATION OF RESEARCH

Edmond Hutchinson and Samuel M. Wishik
December, 1979

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AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
THE RELEVANCE, QUALITY AND UTILIZATION OF RESEARCH

I. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF REPORT

The consultants were asked to look at Agency Research with respect to Relevance, Quality and Utilization.

Relevance and Utility are interpreted to mean relating to and promoting the Agency's aims. Such relationship and promotion may occur in several ways:

New proposals to the Agency for support of operational projects may contain questionable assumptions that need validation or clarification; and corresponding research that is supported could result in preventing unsound expenditures or in modifying projects for greater effectiveness. (Conversely, the assumptions may not be questioned.)

Agency-supported operational projects, continuing or terminating, may expose questions that are important to try to answer; and corresponding research is supported. (More commonly, research does not follow.)

Agency-supported research may produce knowledge that is subsequently applied in agency-supported operational projects. (Or, the research findings may not be used.)

The work of the consultants was limited to two fields, Health and Education. For these fields, there was no attempt to be comprehensive in the sense of reviewing all research activities, but rather to find from examples indications of Agency attitudes and interests and of procedures and mechanisms among central and field units. The present report looks forward rather than backward in deriving from review of the two selected fields generic inferences for considering administrative procedure that might facilitate the objective of achieving relevance, quality and use of Agency research without undue burden on pertinent parties.

Definition of Research

The inclusion of an AID activity in the "research" category is somewhat arbitrary. The simple definition used in this report is that the activity emphasized the acquiring of information rather than the giving of service. A subclassification follows, with examples:

1. Research Studies

- A. Contributing to knowledge on a subject --
identification of the characteristics of malaria antigen;
- B. Collecting facts or data about a country --
survey on people's knowledge, attitudes and practices about family planning;
Latin American Educational Sector studies;
collecting country-by-country data on educational history, coverage, structure, etc.
- C. Performing controlled experiments --
testing different dosages of immunizing vaccines;
studying the effectiveness of teaching mathematics by radio in comparison with traditional classroom methods.
- D. Comparing different methods of delivering a product such as service, but not with experimental design --
pilot projects in use of auxiliary level health workers;
comparative studies of different teaching methods for non-formal education.

- 2. Research development, such as institution building or training in research methods, has sometimes been subsumed under research projects, but more often has not. The present report does not try to cover such activities.

Sources of information

Files in different offices were made available for office perusal. Interviews were held with chiefs and some health and education personnel of central and regional offices. Without travel out of the country, a certain amount of mission viewpoint was obtained from evidence in project records of mission roles in addition to discussion with central personnel who formerly had worked in countries and recalled their experiences. Additional leads and information were obtained from Agency reports, messages to Congress, research contractor publications, the computerized summaries in the DIU library and other sources.

Almost certainly, there is more Agency-sponsored research that is not labeled as research than is so identified and retrievable as such. The non-labeled research falls into the following types:

1. Central or regional bureau research projects that are not called research. It must be admitted that some of that is done purposefully to avoid Research Advisory Committee (RAC) review or other inconvenient procedures.
2. Mission-generated and mission-sponsored in-country research.
3. Research components, small to large, of operational projects under central, regional bureau or mission sponsorship.

Central projects were reviewed, whether or not labeled as research. Uncovering research hidden in mission projects was more an incidental and accidental by-product of the record searches done. ~~Any that were found were taken as examples of practices and used in arriving at recommendations.~~

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The consultants are submitting this report in response to a request by a former DAA to look at issues related to the relevance, quality and utilization of research projects within A.I.D. Only the areas of health and education were studied and these primarily with respect to centrally funded research. In the process, research emanating from Regional Bureaus and Missions also came to hand. Interviews were held with persons in Washington, many of whom had had country mission experience. No general survey of the past was presumed, but generic inferences for future Agency procedures were drawn.

Past Agency research was in large part relevant to the Agency objectives of promoting development in the LDCs, in that those emerging from Regional Bureaus and Missions pertained to fairly specific needs recognized by governments and missions and that central projects attempted to face global or broadly held deficiencies. The later often aimed to compile and organize the components and facets of major problems so that a kind of matrix of sub-issues could be crystallized for inviting research. By nature, such activities had to be less immediate and less visible to workers in countries. The report recommends more formal attention to such matrix construction.

In addition, the consultants tried to look at the assumptions implicit in operational projects. Programs must accept assumptions based on the state-of-the-art and move forward in action. This report recommends that operational project proposals be reviewed more systematically than heretofore for their major assumptions, partially in order to question implausible ones, but more to feed into a pool of topics that warrant research support. The Agency should do a job of aggressive salesmanship for its list of priority research topics because much uncertainty remains about best approaches to different LDC situations and program cost benefits could be increased by improved techniques derived from research.

The quality of Agency research has been variable, much of it excellent but some poorly conceived and executed. This is to be expected in view of the lack of clear Agency definition of research and therefore, of consistency of processing. There is more research done in A.I.D. that is not labeled research than is. The report suggests that reasonably non-burdensome procedures be established for eleven steps that carry Agency research from policy through authorization and monitoring into archives and that these aim to apply to all appreciable research activities throughout the Agency. Toward that end, there is need for a strengthened central research mechanism with competence and with authority for funds earmarked for research.

The greatest weakness in the research picture is that of utilization of research findings. Such lack results from absence of responsibility for identifying useful research products, for extracting them from didactic and administrative types reports, paraphrasing them for selective dissemination and giving priority funding to their appropriate implementation. Such actions are recommended.

The consultants focused on function rather than structure. The ISTC concept would help meet the need for strong central attention to research and to identification of useful research findings. There would remain certain research activities in A.I.D. and need for clarification of respective roles and for establishment and maintenance of smooth channels for inter-agency cooperation and collaboration.

III. - OVERVIEW OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Early in its history, AID recognized that international assistance was more than simple transplanting of American style or any other modern practices. Research and training were added to operational assistance projects. Beyond the usual Agency aim for quality in all its activities, limited funds available for research should be spent on matters relevant to Agency objectives, programs and policies. And research is worthwhile supporting only if potentially useful findings are used.

In a continuous effort over the years to achieve the three basic features of relevance, quality and utilization, the Agency repeatedly made organizational changes. Like most reorganizations, the pattern each time moved away from its existing form and back again. All classifications or tables of organization are compromises. Something is gained or strengthened and something else is given up or weakened. In AID, polarities inherent in any large structure were exacerbated as one or another simplistic philosophy gained the ascendancy of the day. "Why are all those people sitting behind desks in Washington? Get them out into the countries" vs. "Why maintain all that staff and their families around the world? Get them back to Washington and give the indigenous workers a chance to develop." In another polarity -- "Those specialists in the central bureaus are too remote from the program. Scatter them through the bureaus" vs. "We can't possibly have a comprehensive and critical mass of experts replicated in each geographic bureau. Let's concentrate them in a unit that will serve them all." And so the pendulum swings ineluctably back and forth about every six or seven years.

Deja vu! We are recommending strengthening research competence at the center of the Agency and increasing responsibility for research there. At least, we seem to be in agreement with recent policy expressions.

Structural changes alone usually do not improve matters enough to pay the costs of dislocation. The new structure must be built on an Agency commitment and should be made functional by practicable, timely and dynamic supportive procedures. With much humility, as we offer procedural suggestions, considerable detail is sometimes included in this report in order to highlight, perhaps dramatize, the implications of the suggestions. For example, there is probably no moment in the life cycle when more can be done to promote health than four to six weeks after childbirth. Yet, most women in the world do not receive this service. In supported research, the Office of

Health (DS) has demonstrated several alternative service approaches for giving postpartum care. What can the Agency do to apply and spread those practices? Program research need not be esoteric. Nor is application of research findings so removed from simple service delivery and daily living.

In our unambitious endeavor, we have looked only at the fields of health and education. We do not think it is unwarranted to draw generic inferences from that restricted exercise, while we appreciate that other fields will have some differences and special features within the overall picture.

Promoting relevance of research activities

The body of this report elaborates on past AID research on health and education. Most of the research was relevant, in the sense that it originated from recognized needs somewhere in the Agency. That does not, however, ensure that other more important and more relevant research questions were given corresponding attention. We are suggesting that operational project proposals and final reports be subjected to quick subjective scaling of level of validity of the principal assumptions, with possible exposure of research needs.

The Agency's field assistance activities should be a rich resource for identifying relevant research that deserves support. For example, health service delivery projects in different countries encourage the use of local health agents, some of whom are permitted to dispense medicines as well as contraceptives. What medications they may dispense and whether they are permitted to dispense any at all are determined by country government policies. It is assumed, at least by the respective authorities, that the authorized practices are appropriate and safe and that it is inadvisable for the workers to do more. Even within a given country program, local health agents work under a wide range of levels of autonomy from professional supervision and backstopping. There can be no uniform standard answer to issues of safety and permitted responsibility. Research is indicated, specific to each particular illness and medication, on variability of safeguards appropriate to different degrees of access to advice and referral resources. Resulting guidelines for better programming would also help to counter traditional resistance to the use of new categories of health personnel.

A Central Research Unit would receive research suggestions derived from operational programs and projects, contribute its own opinion and collect these over time in a file for ready retrieval in response to requests or to the surfacing of cue topics anywhere in Agency activities. A research topic alone

is a bare bone without enough flesh to attract the attention of potential investigators. The high caliber personnel of a strong Central Research Unit would see the possibilities beyond the skeletal and would present them in terms appropriate to different settings. There would be aggressive "salesmanship" for the ideas.

For a few years, AID favored a list of key areas for program emphasis. With or without some such policy guidance, the usual criteria for priority ranking can help add another measure of relevance. We believe that prioritization within policy should be a formalized part of project processing. This is not to say that all research must be directed at the immediate, recognized or articulated interests of the operational arms of the Agency. A channel must be left open for flexible response to unanticipated promising initiatives.

Promoting quality of research

Although we have not presumed to assess quality of research or to analyze methodologies used, it is our impression that quality has been variable, sometimes very good. On the whole, it could have been better if it had been subjected more assiduously to qualified review and counsel, somewhat as we are recommending for all Agency research. All AID activities require the exercise of reasonable effort to ensure quality. In the case of research, however, there are special reasons for such caution. Mistakes on an individual operational project may be serious, but the impact of such mistakes is largely limited to that project. On the other hand, incorrect conclusions or unreliable results from research projects whose purpose is to serve as basis for country or Agency programs and policies can have adverse consequence far beyond the given project.

If results of research are to be taken up and applied, the procedures under which the research is approved and conducted must be such as to both ensure high quality in fact and to inspire confidence that Agency-supported research will be of high quality. Confidence is engendered by the objectivity and quality control implicit in external review. There are two levels of externality, one from the specific Agency unit and the other from the Agency as a whole. Some of both should feature the research approval and monitoring procedures.

AID is rich in its own personnel and in having access to capable outsiders. Among the two groups, the contributions of three categories can be highlighted. Mission staffs have the country viewpoint. Does the proposed research fit? Is it needed, feasible, etc.? Sectoral or subject technical officers

(education, health, etc.) know the state of the art of their respective spheres. They can judge the research from knowledge of past efforts and from familiarity with new approaches in the field. A different kind of expertise applies to research methodology. The experienced investigator assesses the hypotheses. Can the questions be answered? Would answers be likely to derive from the data? Are the measurement methods and analytical techniques appropriate and acceptable? Are the facilities, staff capabilities, budget and time span adequate for the proposed research?

It is therefore recommended that, to the fullest extent possible and found feasible, all research proposed or conducted anywhere in the Agency be given the benefit of access to such counsel, whether by formal review or other mechanisms. Part of that advice would be on establishment of quantitative objectives and of indices of the extent of achievement of those objectives over the total duration of the project and preferably also at logical milestone points along the way.

After approval, the conduct of the research would be monitored by officers in the sponsoring Agency units or otherwise as delegated by them for each project. If, at the time of review of a proposal, approval is given conditionally or with significant reservations, decision might be made to have periodic stocktaking by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) or other reviewers, possibly with choice of recommending cut-off.

Promoting utilization of research findings

AID research activities have had a useful impact to an extent greater than commonly supposed. The fact of engagement of many people and institutions in research on problems of concern to AID and the widespread dissemination of results of the research activities have undoubtedly advanced understanding of such problems and of ways in which they may be attacked. Some research projects identified potentially productive ways of solving problems that subsequently became the subject of broader and deeper investigation. Some centrally initiated projects have been taken up by regional bureaus and there is evidence that some have had a direct influence on assistance efforts in the field both by AID itself and by other organizations. Nevertheless, the body of evidence as a whole suggests that utilization has fallen short of what might reasonably be possible and desired.

For a period of years, there was in AID provision for internal review of final reports of some research projects. The purpose of such reviews was not clear. It appears that they frequently

consisted of attending briefing sessions presented by the contractor and submitting a report. There is no evidence of a thorough review of the reliability and usefulness of the results or plans for specific uses of results as distinguished from dissemination of reports.

AID has placed great emphasis on dissemination of the results of research by the contractors, by AID itself and by arrangements with outside organizations. Many methods of dissemination have been used, including distribution of reports, publication of special studies, conduct of seminars and workshops, maintenance of a library of research reports and publications, and publication and distribution of a number of formal series of summaries of research projects with provision for making available fuller reports upon request. Such arrangements are useful procedures and we recommend their continuation.

We are suggesting that, in addition, at the end of a research project, the findings should be graded as to potential usefulness and ready applicability. Each useful method or other finding should be extracted from the mass of detail and data and paraphrased into an interpretive report emphasizing program application and containing the information that is needed by the administrator who will do the applying. The usual terminal reports on research projects are not written with the consumer in mind.

In addition to whatever distribution occurs procedurally or spontaneously, responsibility should be centrally vested for selective circulation. If distribution to missions is routine, the material is disregarded by the receivers. If left to each monitoring officer, it is irregular and soon dropped. The Central Research Unit should participate in choosing certain research findings that have high potential for field application. Selectivity is essential, with respect to the items distributed and perhaps also in the choice of recipients. Each of the latter should be required to respond on their interest in promoting application of the research finding within their jurisdiction.

If research projects have successfully uncovered useful products, not putting them to use is letting good money go bad. The Agency must assume responsibility and take the initiative to spend good money after good and do this aggressively as active salespeople. This means backstopping likely retailers (missions) in their efforts to obtain adoption of the new methods. Special high priority and inducement funding should be given to application of methods that are on a list of "useful research findings." The Agency should have a

central repository on research activities and findings that is computerized for retrieval and special funds in the Central Research Unit for their application.

Agency constraints

In AID, there probably has been more research activity not labeled as research than has been so identified. The term "research" has never been clearly defined in AID, and criteria for establishing whether an undertaking is to be classified as a research project for purpose of being or not being subject to prescribed policies and procedures have not been developed. Much time and effort have been and still are being spent in debating whether a particular project should be designated as a research project. Strong positions are taken because of personal convictions or disagreement as to bureaucratic roles. That research-like activities very often are only one component of a complex project also makes it difficult to decide when a particular project is properly classifiable as research. At present, parties in the Agency conceive of research as they see fit. Agency policy and procedures must cut through these problems. It should also be possible for a research piece of an operational project to receive special assessment and counsel without the entire parent project being subjected to the full research review process.

The reluctance to expose projects to external review is understandable. There are concerns about excessive rigor, cost, delay, time, bureaucratic trespass and intrusion on one's ideas and creations. The fears are realistic. The burden on staff can be harsh and should be kept to a reasonable level. With such caveat, the benefits of research review and processing should be brought to bear on activities anywhere in the Agency, conducted as separate projects or appreciable discrete components of larger projects, that have the purpose of (1) developing significant new knowledge and understanding; (2) testing important assumptions; or (3) developing and testing new or alternative materials, methods or systems.

It is not likely that the problem of labeling research can be met completely, nor does it seem advisable to set up cumbersome mechanisms aimed at 100% identification throughout the Agency. Superior officers in any unit are in a position to question gross non-labeling under their jurisdiction. In general, persons would be impelled to label research because of the quality assistance that would be forthcoming. It is also suggested that a specific amount of money be set aside each year to be allocated for research on a project-by-project basis. Any activity receiving such funds would be subject to the special review and approval procedures. Such funds, while

not additional from the overall Agency perspective, would be additional for the using entity. Distribution of the funds would be done under the Central Research Unit, but responsibility for monitoring of the project thereafter would be distributed in the Agency as described in this report.

Central structure for research

The present report has focused primarily on functions that might promote the effectiveness of Agency-sponsored research and has avoided discussion of structure, except to refer to a "Central Research Unit." We believe that the Agency over the years has been giving more attention to structure than function, with less than complete satisfaction. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that at present there is no separate identifiable fund for research, no significant organizational and staffing arrangements for stimulating, undertaking, monitoring, applying and otherwise managing research qua research.

The question of the moment is the concept of an Institute for Scientific and Technical Cooperation (ISTC). An ISTC would help meet the need for strong central attention to research and to identification of useful research findings. All the comments of this report apply regardless of ISTC. The decision will remain as to how the functions will be made effective within whatever structure is arrived at. A chronology of processing of Research might be presented somewhat as follows:

1. Advising on Agency research policy and priorities
2. Funding for research
3. Maintaining overview on status of research in the Agency as a whole and by sectors.
4. Looking at individual operations proposals and grading the validity of their assumptions; extracting ideas for needed research
5. Encouraging proposals for research
6. Reviewing research proposals: grading for priority; judging quality; advising on research design; establishing quantitative criteria for achievement of objectives; recommending approval and funding
7. Monitoring progress of research projects
8. Reviewing progress and final reports; grading for potential utility
9. Interpreting significant findings and disseminating them strategically
10. Supporting and funding implementation of findings
11. Maintaining historical files in readily retrievable form

It will be necessary to transfer some responsibilities to ISTC, retain others in AID, maintain certain activities in parallel

or tandem, and develop practices of coordination and collaboration. Liaison channels must be clear and ready interagency access should exist. In any event, research activities should be fostered throughout AID, at the center, in regional bureaus and in missions.

ISTC might take over almost completely certain global research activities, including their funding and monitoring. Correspondingly, AID would retain primary responsibility for mission-sponsored research projects and research components of operational projects. Each agency would have complementary roles for the other's, with AID contributing elements of immediacy and relevance to the field, while ISTC renders technical advice and critiques.

Constituting a research entity, wherever located, does not automatically confer upon it the mantle of objectivity. Individuals easily develop loyalty to proposals and projects on which they have worked. Externality of the review process must be protected, at the two levels previously mentioned. The first is external to the project officers and their particular unit. They should not select or be the executive officers for review consultants or committees. The broader externality calls for a mechanism such as RAC, whose composition for review of any projects should be sufficiently multi-disciplinary to transcend single sector interest.

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CMGT-02 CTR-02 DIU-04 DSAG-02 DSHE-01 DSST-01 ENGR-02
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FOR JOEL SCHLESINGER, AFR/SFWAP

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TO THE SUPRA-NATIONAL GAMBIA RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT COM
SION.
IT IS FAR FROM CLEAR AT THIS POINT JUST HOW FAR THE RESPECTIVE
GOVERNMENTS WILL BE WILLING TO DELEGATE AUTHORITY TO THIS EMBRYO-
NIC INSTITUTION
K THE DESIGN TEAM OF NECESSITY MADE CERTAIN
ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE FUTUR
ROLE AND STATU
OF OMVG WHICH THEY
PROPOSE BE BUILT INTO THE PROJECT AGREEMENT AS CONDITIONS PRECE-
DENT TO MOST AID INTERVENTIONS. THIS IS A MAJOR REASON WHY WE FEI
IT IS SO IMPORTANT FOR THESE ENTITIES TO READ THE REPORT OG
DRAFT PROJECT PAPER AT THIS STAGE SO THEY MAY FULLY UNDERSTAND
AND AGREE WITH (OR REJECT) CERTI

V
U
SC
NG ASS
PTIONS AS TO
GOVERNMENTS, AT LEAST OVER THE LIFE OF THE PROJECT. IN THIS
RESPECT, WE BELIEVE THAT THE EVENTUAL GRANT AGR
TH SHOULD
BE SIGNED NOT ONLY BY THE OMVG, 775 76 5#3 :97,:0) 91 .8,8534
91 5#3 4303:TIVE MEMBER STATES.

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Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

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ACTION AID-35

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BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE ASKED TO CONTRIBUTE FUNDS TO THE
MRC TO UNDERTAKEN THIS PHASE OF THE STUDY IN COOPERATION WITH
THE FUTURE AID CONTRACTOR WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING
THE OVERALL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY.

ACTION OFFICE AFFW-04

INFO AAAP-01 AFRA-03 AFCW-03 AFDR-06 PPCE-01 P DPR-01 PPPB-02
GC-01 GCAF-01 PPEA-01 GCFL-01 STA-10 PPIA-02 AADS-01
CMGT-02 CTR-02 DIU-04 OSAG-02 DSHE-01 DSST-01 ENGR-02
PIA-01 CH8-01 ES-01 EPA-03 RELO-01 MAST-01 AFDA-01
/061 A1 4

4. IT IS OUR FURTHER UNDERSTANDING THAT THE DESIGN TEAM PLANS
TO RECOMMEND THAT THE WILDLIFE/VEGETATION SURVEY, ANOTHER
ELEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

INFO OCT-01 /036 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BANJUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9200
AMEMBASSY ABIOJAN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR

BE UNDERTAK
P BY THE GOTG
WILDLIFE CONSERVATION UNIT AND THAT THIS BE EFFECTED BY SOME
FORM OF DIRECT GRANT TO THIS LOCAL ENTITY TO ENABLE THEM TO
AUGMENT THEIR LIMITED CURRENT RESOURCES WITH THE SKILLS AND
CAPABILITIES TO UNDERTAKE THIS MAJOR STUDY. WHILE THIS MIGHT
BE EASIER TO ACCOMPLISH THAN THE MRC PROPOSAL DESCRIB
E,
WE ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS PROPOSAL EITHER. WE
WOULD NOT FAVOR A DIRECT GRANT TO THE GOTG UNLESS A CLEAR
CONNECTION IN THE FORM OF WORKING RELATIONSHIP AND SUPERVISION
WERE ESTABLISHED BETWEEN THE GOTG UNIT AND THE U.S. CONTR
U

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BANJUL 1985

AIDAC

FOR JOEL SCHLESIGNER, AFR/SFWAP

RESPONSIBLE

EO 12065: NA
SUBJ: OMVG PP DESIGN TEAM

FOR THE OVERALL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY. ALTERNATIVELY,
A U.S. ORGANIZATION MIGHT BE CONTRACTED WITH FOR THE WILDLIFE/
VEGETATION STUDY WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WOULD RELY
HEAVILY ON AND
CLOSELY WITH THE LOCAL UNIT WHICH IT MIGHT
REIMBURSE FOR ADDITIONAL COSTS THE LATTER WOULD INCUR IN WORKING
ON THIS STUDY.

1. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, THE OMVG DESIGN TEAM DID AN EXCELLENT
JOB DURING THEIR RECENT DATA-GATHERING, INTERVIEWING AND DRAFTING
PERIOD IN THE SENEGAL AND THE GAMBIA. THE TEAM APPEARED TO LEAVE
HERE WITH A COMPREHENSIVE GRASP OF THE LOCAL POLITICAL AND BUREAU-
CRATIC DYNAMICS SURROUNDING THE EMERGING BUT EVOLVING STATUS OF THE
OMVG AND WITH AS CLEAR AN IDEA AS POSSIBLE AS TO HOW AID CAN MOST
EFFECTIVELY AND REALISTICALLY ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
RESOURCES OF THE GAMBIA RIVER BASIN. WE LOOK FORWARD TO RECEIVING
COPIES OF THE DIMPEX REPORT WHICH WE TRUST WILL JUSTIFY THIS ON
MISH.

2. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THE TEAM PLANNED TO SUBMIT ITS
DRAFT REPORT TO DIMPEX BY JULY 23RD, AND THAT DIMPEX SHOULD
SUBMIT IT IN FINAL TO AID/W ONE WEEK THEREAFTER. WE STRONGLY
WUNGE THAT COPIES OF THE REPORT BE MADE AVAILABLE TO AID RE
IMMEDIATELY FOR REVIEW AND DISSEMINATION TO OMVG, AND THROUGH
IT, TO KEY GOTG AND GOS OFFICIALS. OPEN COMMUNICATION WITH
AND FULL UNDERSTANDING AMONG CONCERN PARTIES FROM THE OUTSET
IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT IN THIS POLITICALLY AND BUREAUCRATICALLY
COMPLEX ACTIVITY. WE RECOMMEND THAT FINAL PREPARATION OF THE
PROJECT PAPER BE DELAYED RECEIPT OF FIELD COMMENTS
ON THE REPORT. THIS STEP, WHILE CAUSING SOME DELAY AT THE
BEGINNING, COULD WELL PREVENT MAJ
ENFUSION AND DELAYS
FROM ARISING IN THE FUTURE. TO THIS END, AID/W MIGHT CONSIDER
RETAINING DIMPEX FOR ANY REDRAFTING THAT MIGHT BE NECESSARY AT
A LATER STAGE. ALTERNATIVELY, AID/W COULD DRAFT A PROJECT
PAPER FROM THE DIMPEX REPORT AND SUBMIT THE DRAFT PAPER IN LIEU
OF THE REPORT HERE FOR FIELD COMMENT PRIOR TO IT GOING FORWARD
IN THE APPROVAL MACHINERY. EITHER WAY, WE BELIEVE FIELD REVIEW
AND CONCURRENCE IS IMPORTANT BEFORE THE PROGRAM GOES FORWARD.

3. THE DESIGN TEAM IS PROPOSING THAT THE HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSM
MENT, WHICH WILL BE AN ELEMENT OF THE OVERALL ENVIRONMENT STUDY,
BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL (MRC), A LONG
ESTABLISHED, REPUTABLE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION WHICH
HAS BEEN UNDERTAKING RESE
A IN THE GAMBIA FOR MANY YEARS.
MRC INVOLVEMENT MAKES SENSE BOTH IN TERMS OF COST EFFECTIVENESS
AND QUALITY OF OUTPUT INASMUCH AS THEY ARE ALREADY ESTABLISHED
HERE AND HAVE A BROAD KNOWLEDGE BASE ON WHICH TO BUILD. OUR
PROBLEM WITH THIS IDEA IS THE PROPRIETY OF AID PROVIDING FUNDS
ESSENTIALLY TO A BRITISH GOVERNMENT ENTITY TO CARRY OUT AN
ELEMENT OF AN AID PROJECT. PERHAPS MORE APPROPRIATELY, THE

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