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**NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE CENTRE
FOR AFRICAN FAMILY STUDIES (CAFS)**

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FAMILY PLANNING MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An FPMD needs assessment of the Centre for African Family Studies took place from May 11 to May 29, 1991 in Nairobi, Lome and Cotonou. The assessment was conducted by a two person team from Management Sciences for Health, under the Family Planning Management Development Project. The team interviewed some 30 members of CAFS' staff, observed part of a training course, and reviewed documents. The resulting snapshot is described in this report.

The team followed a forward-looking approach, asking staff to identify what they considered to be in the way of CAFS' progress towards achieving its goals. Based on these insights, our own observations and discussions with USAID/REDSO staff, a plan for assistance *to* CAFS, as well as assistance *by* CAFS (in implementing both FPMD and MSH activities in the region) has been drawn up.

The recommendations are summarized in a draft memorandum of understanding which has been submitted to CAFS for review. They follow the conclusions in this report.

1. BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Centre for African Family Studies (CAFS) was originally established in 1975 as an institution of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). The organization is based in Nairobi, Kenya, and it has a West Africa bureau located in Togo. CAFS provides short but intensive training courses and seminars in population, family planning, women in health, and family life education aimed at integrating these activities into socio-economic development programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Centre for African Family Studies was established in response to a need for training of senior and mid-level personnel in dealing with the practical issues of family planning, these include: education, motivation, programme development and service delivery. CAFS supports its training programmes with research and gathering of relevant information in the field of population and family planning. CAFS efforts are also aimed at public leaders and decision-makers to raise their general awareness of the importance of family planning as a component of development.

During the period from 1986 to 1990, the Family Planning Management Training Project (FPMT) provided support and technical assistance to CAFS in the areas of management training and course development. The Family Planning Management Development Project is committed to continue assistance to CAFS and hopes, at the same time, to become the beneficiary of CAFS' experience and expertise in the region, by implementing some of its activities in the region in close collaboration.

We are presenting our findings to the CAFS' leadership in the hope that they will illuminate how the areas identified below are currently helping or hindering CAFS in fulfilling its mission and in implementing its strategic plan.

2. METHODOLOGY

In line with our scope of work (annex I) and the needs as they were expressed by the various parties concerned, we undertook an organizational needs assessment of the Centre for African Family Studies. We relied on interviews with 30 members of CAFS personnel in Nairobi and Lome at all levels of the organization, the resident consultant in Nairobi, the observation of one organizational event (a staff meeting) and part of the two-week French-language senior management course (which took place in Cotonou), and a review of several documents. We also talked with the IPPF/Africa leadership in Nairobi and with the Director of the IPPF/West Africa Office in Lome. A number of people were interviewed a second time to provide additional clarifications.

Data collection took place primarily through interviews, which lasted about one hour on average, and observation. The interviews were unstructured and free-flowing, especially the first few.

We emphasized the forward looking nature of our inquiries by asking the CAFS employees to share with us what they believed to be "in the way" of achieving CAFS' organizational goals.

As outsiders we had certain advantages as well as disadvantages. The disadvantages are clear: it is impossible to fully understand an organization in such a short time. Although we have seen a glimpse of the richness, breadth of experience and expertise that CAFS stands for, we are aware that we are also missing a lot. However, our advantage is that we are not part of the system, and have no interest in aligning ourselves with one part of the system or the other. We were therefore able to collect a wide variety of stories and interpretations of events and issues, and solicit insights and recommendations from all parts of the system. We believe that this has enriched the exercise and inserted a voice of reality in our recommendations.

3. FINDINGS

We adapted Marvin Weisbord's "six-box diagnostic model" for organizational analysis to include seven boxes (see annex III). This model served to organize our findings and recommendations. The seven boxes contain the elements an organization has to pay attention to in order for it to do what it wants to do: goals, structure, rewards, relationships, technology and helpful mechanisms. It is the task of the organization's leadership - the seventh box - to keep an eye on all these boxes and keep them in balance.

3.1. GOALS

CAFS' goals have changed over time, from educating the public and policy makers on family planning, to developing skills among different categories of family planning professionals, and to provide technical assistance to family planning associations throughout the region.

Several years ago a process began during which CAFS started to look more systematically at where it was coming from and where it was going. Among the programme staff associated with CAFS for many years, there is a keen sense of this process, and the transition that is taking place within CAFS as a result. The current strategic planning process has begun to clarify where CAFS is heading. Changes in the outside environment, both in the area of donor-funding and in the needs of CAFS clients are being acknowledged and are reflected in the strategic plan. For example, the move from regional to bilateral USAID funding is shifting emphasis towards individual countries, away from the traditional regional courses. Concretely, this is translated into increased interest in technical assistance and consultancies to the countries in the region. There is particular interest, at least in Nairobi, to develop CAFS' technical assistance (TA) capabilities in the areas of MIS and financial management. Since these are two areas where demand for assistance is increasing, CAFS is clearly responsive to trends in the larger family planning environment. The implications of such new initiatives are discussed below.

However, this sense of where CAFS is heading is much more noticeable in Nairobi than in Lome. The Lome staff is more pre-occupied, and understandingly so, with getting their courses ready and implemented, which is no easy task given the nearly complete lack of an office infrastructure and the remoteness from CAFS decision makers. In addition, the strategic plan is much less real in Lome than it is in Nairobi.

The mechanism of setting goals and objectives is undergoing a transition as well. CAFS seems to be at a crossroads: the old PPBR system, the rolling three-year plan, is being replaced by the strategic planning process. However, this new planning process still needs to be clarified. Strategic planning and operational planning and programming are two different kinds of exercises which have different purposes. Among the staff there appears to be little consensus on what it is that CAFS is doing right now. The strategic planning exercise needs to be fed by creativity, a keen sense of where funding is going to come from (and where donors are heading), and fueled by a sense of vision. The programming exercise is needed to translate the ideals in do-able, feasible and fundable activities and workplans. CAFS leadership must make room for both these processes to take place, as one without the other is likely to continue the present confusion.

3.2. RELATIONSHIPS

The following is a discussion of our findings regarding the type and nature of a number of relationships. This offers advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand CAFS has much to offer to its clients. On the other hand, CAFS risks to be a collection of individual experts. We realize there are several other relationships about which we know nothing, or too little to say anything meaningful, the list is therefore not exhaustive.

Relationships among professionals

CAFS can boast of: having extremely qualified and capable staff, representing an impressive array of expertise and experience. Although some units appear to work as strong teams, in general team spirit is felt to be missing, especially between units. Competition and protecting one's turf are common modes of operation, to the regret of most people interviewed.

Although people are, in their titles and assignments, fairly specialized, in fact many have important contributions to make to each others' programmes and courses. It turns out that this expertise is not taken advantage of to its fullest. Several staff members indicated that they feel they have something to contribute which is either not solicited or not wanted. To some degree this may be a relic from the past, especially in the area of course development, when courses were effectively units in themselves. Individual course coordinators could consult with others on course development and content but did not have to. As a result, the quality of individual relationships determined who was being consulted and on what. The new structure, by grouping all the specialized training units into one training division, may have been designed to circumvent this problem. However, in practice it is not doing so.

The relationships between Lome and Nairobi colleagues (peers) is weak. For one, they don't know each other, and secondly, direct contact between colleagues in the two places is felt to be discouraged. Some staff mentioned that they would like to sit in on their colleagues' course (on the same subject) but have been discouraged from doing so. Why this happens we were not able to find out, but there seems to be a problem related to the free exchange of training materials. There is fear of plagiarism, and it may be justified (this may also be related to a perceived lack of recognition for individual efforts). As a result, trainers are reluctant to share the fruits of their labor with each other, only materials that come from outside. This has serious consequences for CAFS as an organization, since much of its richness resides in its staff. When staff leave the organization, CAFS loses more than just a person.

The problem is not one particular to CAFS. In fact, it is a common ailment of universities, consulting and professional organizations. No structure is likely to force people together who do not want to work together. However, temporary or permanent taskforces on substantive issues of relevance to CAFS' work, and performance criteria that encourage cooperation and collaboration may rein in a bit the tendency of the free-spirited experts to go it alone. If courses can be seen as collective CAFS products (while recognizing the contributions of individuals involved of course), the tendency to defend against critical evaluations can be lessened so that opportunities to improve a course are genuinely welcomed, and used.

A final, but not less important issue clouding professional relationships is the issue of authority. Although job descriptions appear to be generally available, they do not demarcate the limits of authority. This is leading to considerable confusion and frustration among the professional staff. The structural change does not appear to improve matters. The biggest problem appears to result from the dual appointment of some people in administrative and technical positions at the same time. Although the rationale behind this move has been explained as allowing professional staff to gain managerial and administrative experience, the implementation has raised many issues. For example, some people expressed a considerable degree of role conflict ("Am I first and foremost a technical expert or an administrator?"). Others felt that not being given an administrative appointment was a vote of no-confidence. And finally, some felt that travelling experts could not be also administrators because there was no continuity (eg. they appointed acting heads who are then also travelling, needing acting heads, etc.). There is also some concern that division heads favor their own units at the expense of other units.

We would recommend that the leadership initiate a dialogue with those most affected by the changes (all professional staff) in order to explore how the system can be made to work better for them and for CAFS as an organization.

Professional - administrative relationships

Much has been accomplished recently in attempting to install effective and fair financial control systems and personnel policies. But the task is not yet complete, and although in our discussions with the Financial and Administration Division staff it appeared that they were in the process of building a solid administrative foundation for CAFS, it is not being perceived this way by

other staff, in particular the technical staff and the Lome office. It is perhaps premature to make firm judgements when the process is incomplete, but because the perceptions of what is happening are very different, we believe that these concerns should be highlighted so that appropriate measures can be taken.

Some people are gaining (especially administrative staff, as it makes their work life more predictable and manageable), but some feel they have lost a lot of their autonomy, particularly the mid-level technical staff who had considerable leeway in conducting their business in the past. Lome staff is affected in a particular way. The decrease in salary for Lome staff is creating serious morale problems. Lome staff claims not to have taken salaries, only advances, since they were told that their salaries were too high. This is a potentially explosive situation that need to be redressed quickly. There are clearly very different perceptions, and people feel they are not heard. The Finance and Administration Division may need to better explain and justify the proposed changes, and also "market" itself better to its constituents in Lome. For example, Lome staff appear unaware of the initiatives that the Finance and Administration Division is pursuing to improve CAFS' benefits package; however, they are aware of the changes that affect them in a negative way (salary decrease and the elimination of installation grants for example), seriously affecting morale.

Although many are conceding that the rules and systems are necessary and probably appropriate, it is the application of the rules that worries staff. Keeping a balance between applying rules and leaving room for initiative and creativity is the difficult task of CAFS' leadership. Finance and Administration is very aware of this fragile balance and its efforts to keep the balance are generally appreciated throughout the system (at least on the Nairobi side). There is a concern however, that if the Finance and Administration Division relinquishes this task to others, organizational politics will influence how forceful rules are applied.

CAFS' leadership should closely watch how the new rules are being applied and what the consequences are. Impact on staff morale and productivity are two indicators to watch. It is well known that some people are better at administration while others are better at generating ideas. Far from suggesting that idea-generators are absolved from complying with regulations, CAFS' leadership has to recognize, however, that the institution's creativity and flexibility are two very important components of its success, and that free-spirited technical experts, when reined-in too much are likely to go elsewhere. This too, is a typical problem for organizations in the consulting business.

The two recommendations made above (to rein in the technical experts but not to rein them in too much) may seem contradictory at first. They could be, especially if "solutions" are imposed from above. It is therefore of great importance that these issues are addressed with, rather than for, the parties involved. Open acknowledgement of the problem, a continuous dialogue, and genuine efforts to reach consensus are the most likely to keep people on board and cooperative.

Relationships between subordinates and bosses

As is to be expected, hierarchical relationships vary considerably. Some staff members feel very supported by their bosses, while others feel their bosses are getting in the way. In some cases bosses are supportive in one area and non-supportive in another.

Those bosses who are seen as supportive by subordinates help them enrich their job, acknowledge expertise, encourage and support staff development initiatives, give them opportunities to learn and take on challenging assignments, teach them new things, listen to suggestions for improvement of a particular product or procedure, represent their interests higher up in the hierarchy, and "market" their skills to other staff outside a unit or division. On the other hand, the non-supportive bosses are those who do not acknowledge contributions made by their subordinate, who are seen as hoarding information, who are perceived to apply rules and procedures too strictly or literally; who do not provide timely clearances; who take credit for their subordinates' work; who are seen as less knowledgeable in a technical area than subordinate; and those who don't give clear directions.

These are common motivators or demotivators, and present nothing out of the ordinary. In some cases the solution is simple and cheap: pats on the back, or public acknowledgement of contributions to improved organizational performance (which could be a minor change in administrative procedures saving CAFS money, or a course that was widely acclaimed, an excellent analysis of research data, or bringing in a new contract). In other cases supervisors need to be informed or reminded of the impact of their management style on subordinates. Some managers actually expressed the need for management training to us. A more structured supervision system, which includes annual or bi-annual performance reviews and some staff training in supervision skills may address some of the issues raised.

Delegation and decision-making autonomy are two issues that came up frequently within the context of subordinate-to-boss relationships. There are currently many bosses at CAFS who do work that their subordinates could do as well (and would probably like to do). One of the primary reasons for the reluctance of higher-ups to delegate tasks downward is believed to be a lack of trust in peoples' competence or wisdom. This lack of confidence and trust is acutely felt throughout the system. CAFS' leadership can only change this around if it is willing to openly display trust and confidence in employees further down the ladder. One way of doing this is to examine the types of decisions each level can make, and to explore together where autonomy can be expanded. For example, course directors could be held responsible for conducting their course within budget and given standards. If there are changes in the proposed workplan/activity that do not affect standards negatively, nor exceed the budget, they could be at the discretion of the course director. Such a change requires trust that the advantages (less back and forth communication, less irritation) by far outweigh the risks (of making inappropriate changes). To reduce the risk, CAFS' leadership could meet with course directors and agree on the kinds of decisions they could make on their own. This may be of particular benefit to the Lome-based course directors.

Relationships with IPPF

Many people cited the relationship with IPPF, in the sense that CAFS is part of the worldwide IPPF network, as a great asset. However, it became clear that, at the same time, the demands made on CAFS by IPPF are seen as "getting in the way" (in particular procedural and administrative demands, requiring the production of enormous amounts of paperwork). We met briefly with the top leadership of the Africa Regional Office Secretariat in Nairobi as well as with the IPPF West Africa Office in Lome. It is no secret that the relationship between the two institutions (at least in Nairobi) has been strained in the past. However, discussions are taking place between the two Directors to harmonize this relationship.

The shifting emphasis on obtaining bilateral funding (mostly from USAID but from other donors as well) is troubling IPPF leadership both in Nairobi and Lome, as it means that training slots will not be necessarily filled by staff from IPPF-affiliates. CAFS is slowly moving away from being IPPF's training "wing" (although CAFS/Lome is still being presented as such to the government of Togo, where it does not have an independent status). IPPF/Lome would like CAFS to do more training of FPA staff, whereas CAFS/Lome staff feels passed over by IPPF when it comes to training. There appears to be a large grey area in the IPPF-CAFS relationship, with both parties not clearly expressing to each other what they want and need from each other. Unchecked assumptions and ascribed motivations influence feelings and actions on both sides in an unproductive way. If this relationship is considered important, it is going to require a considerable amount of energy and openness to redress the situation.

It also appears that IPPF is not fully taking advantage of CAFS's presence and accumulated experience in the region, an example being the postponed IPPF/GTZ conference in Zimbabwe on CBD. CAFS' staff who have been involved in CBD management or evaluations were not informed about this conference, with the result that this important resource in the region is left untapped.

Relationships with donors

In the past, technical staff seemed to have had considerable leeway in dealing with donors and generating projects, and therefore income. Some staff members felt that the new structure has put barriers in their way, and there appears to be considerable confusion as to who is allowed to do what in relation to donor agencies or potential funders. Many staff members felt they have an important role to play in generating income for CAFS and expanding CAFS' organizational resume (especially through TA and consultancies), but aren't allowed to do so anymore. The new rationalization of contacts with external agencies is not well understood or misinterpreted, both in Lome and Nairobi. There is both resentment and relief: some are feeling robbed of the opportunity to freely communicate with professionals in other (potential funding) organizations, others are pleased that they don't have to market CAFS anymore. It may save problems later down the road if the rationale behind the rules and the mechanics of generating outside income are discussed, once more, with all staff formerly involved in fundraising efforts, and that their concerns be addressed. This could be done within the context of the development of a marketing strategy. One of the outcomes of the proposed marketing seminar will have to be that all

professional staff has a clear sense of their role in marketing CAFS and its services. (See the section on Marketing).

Relationships with other training institutions

Several attempts have been made to establish organizational links with other training or management organizations on an equal footing. So far, incompatibilities regarding mission, clients, philosophy and methodologies have made these linkages difficult or non-functional. We believe that the best way to see if there is an organizational fit is by trying to work together and then evaluate the experience.

We explored opportunities for collaboration between MSH and CAFS to support MSH's strategy to move its courses into the regions, as well as potential assistance by CAFS' staff in the implementation of FPMD activities in the region. The MSH Management Training Programme is currently exploring if the course "Management of Training Programmes in Health and Family Planning" can be given jointly with CAFS at a future date. In addition, CAFS' collaboration will also be sought in the implementation of FPMD's "Fundamentals of Management Course", which is still to be developed.

3.3. REWARDS

Rewards, or motivators, is what keeps good staff at CAFS and what attracts good people to join. Since CAFS is only as good as the people working for it, rewards become critical ingredients of CAFS' success in accomplishing its mission.

We have asked all people we interviewed why they were (still) at CAFS. There was much consistency in the answers, and it appears that one of the main motivators is the staff itself and the fact that CAFS is an international African organization. Colleagues are seen as friendly, highly competent, credible, hardworking, and understanding.

Other motivators are the relative good salaries, the international atmosphere, the visibility region-wide, the multi-disciplinary nature, the substance of work CAFS is involved in, the challenges it offers for professional growth, the creativity that is called for, the opportunity (for some) to follow professional development courses overseas, and for others the fieldwork. Most of these were mentioned only by professional staff, as is to be expected. For secretaries and administrative staff, the pay and the people is what seems to keep them at CAFS.

When or where morale is low, there are some concrete actions that can be taken, such as improving the supervisory relationships and in general giving more recognition and visibility to peoples' efforts to improve operations. The nature of CAFS' work, i.e. the promotion of family planning, and the exposure to CAFS in action (i.e. during a training course) could also serve as rewards for those not routinely involved in substantive issues. In addition the Finance and Administration Division's efforts to improve and increase benefits (such as access to car loans

and extending staff development to support staff) are being appreciated (although more so in Nairobi than in Lome).

We also identified some factors that may be harder to correct. The most important and troublesome one is the lack of trust which was reported by a considerable number of staff members. Our feeling is that some of this has to do with the limited amount of praise and recognition available within CAFS. A commodity that is in such high demand and low supply is bound to stimulate unhealthy competition. A process of team-building may be designed to increase people's appreciation of each other and for each others' skills and talents. Such exercises may lead to a better use, by the organization, of the talent that is available and the infusion of a team spirit in the work place.

Appreciation of initiative is also an important motivator which appears not to be used very much. As CAFS is growing bigger, and administrative procedures increase in number, there is, as was mentioned above, a risk of becoming too bureaucratic. One characteristic of a bureaucracy is that adherence to rules and procedures gets rewarded over initiative and creativity. Many staff expressed frustration that their efforts to take initiative were either ignored or got them into trouble. The result is that people "keep quiet", remove themselves from the scene or become complainers. None of these are helpful to CAFS. People need to know where they can take initiative, and be acknowledged for that. If there are no consequences to action (or negative ones), the actions tend to disappear.

A related issue, mentioned by many, was that performance has no consequences. Whether one works hard or not, whether one is delivering mediocre or excellent work, it is felt as inconsequential for one's career. Part of the problem is that there is no system for performance evaluation, no career path within CAFS, nor is there a policy or strategy on promotion. As a result, promotions are seen as arbitrary, which they may well be.

3.4. STRUCTURE

We looked at the process of how the new structure is being implemented, and what else needs to be done to complete the process, and we also looked at how the current structure appears to be helping or hindering CAFS in achieving its goals.

The process itself of introducing the new structure appears to be incomplete, for two reasons: (1) many questions were raised by the new structure that were not adequately answered in the circulars and meetings, and (2) the losses that were brought on by the new structure have not been acknowledged. The first issue relates to the rationale behind the changes, which, even if it was explained, people did not buy into. The second issue surfaced fairly consistently in our interviews, especially among the technical staff who referred to the past with a sense of nostalgia.

It is clear that the process needs to be completed. Ideally this would include some mechanisms for staff to give feedback on how the structure is working for them and suggestions for improvement, which could be woven into a larger team-building intervention. Before this is done, however, the leadership needs to examine to what degree the current structure is a given, and take into account the following feedback we collected on how the structure is currently perceived.

The biggest change brought about by the new structure was the creation of a new hierarchy. The effects of this are generally perceived as negative by staff at all levels. Where in the past staff felt secure in their immediate and direct access to the Director, now this is not seen as appropriate anymore, or only a theoretical proposition. The new hierarchical levels are for real, and several staff felt they are too often reminded of that. For example, clearances are held up, activities disapproved, and procedural justifications are used to fight what people consider petty turf battles. Aside from this, the flow of information has changed as well, following the reporting path. If reports are written only for reasons of accountability, this may not be a problem. However, if reports are to inform and share lessons learned, peers and colleagues need to have access to them as soon as possible (indeed, several professional staff told us they would like to do more sharing and learning together). However, the new structure does not encourage this. Mechanisms need to be developed to foster this lateral information flow. They will be discussed later in this report.

The extra layer added between the divisions and the Director is controversial. On the one hand, many of the staff see a role, and even a need, for such a position, if its main purpose is to provide direction and leadership in programme development and in keeping track of trends. This position could serve as a driving force for CAFS in making sure it is addressing client and donor needs and incorporating learnings and new developments in the field. However, as the function is currently being filled in, the predominant emphasis on procedural and administrative compliance is raising concern. It is possible that this is happening by default, since the function is new and not well developed.

It seems that the proposed structure is being implemented in a way that is departing somewhat from its original design. For example, the Finance and Administration Division appears to function at a higher level than the divisions (which actually seems appropriate, given the important role the Finance and Administration Division is playing in bringing CAFS' systems up to speed). Given the transition CAFS is in now, and the changing nature of its work, a flexible structure seems most needed now. For example, if CAFS' MIS and computer capability is to be expanded in the near future, trying to slot this new function into the existing structure is likely to cause problems. The creation of an external focus for the financial management staff in addition to their traditional internal activities calls for additional staff development (i.e. training skills) and probably extra staff. Whether these two functions should stay in one office or not remains to be seen, as a financial management course could also logically reside within the training division. The Women and Health Unit was another area where it was felt that the work might be better served by placing the activity in a division of its own; its broad mandate makes it a microcosm of CAFS. Its current position within the training division is a restraining

rather than enabling influence. This may be a good opportunity to review the current structure with the senior staff, look at the functions that need to be fulfilled now and in the foreseeable future, and solicit their suggestions on how to make it work for all.

The status of the Lome office appears problematic. On the organizational chart it functions as a division, with its own units. However, in practice, Lome functions as a mini-CAFS office for West Africa. Its limited autonomy both in financial and operational terms, is perceived as crippling the office, and many of the administrative and logistics problems that have been plaguing the Francophone courses can be traced to the communications problems between Nairobi and Lome. The reasoning is that if Lome would be more autonomous, there would be less opportunity for mis-communication. The moves that are currently underway to change the way in which monies are disbursed may alleviate some of the problems (such as not having any funds to pay hotel or participants on day one of a course).

We recommend that CAFS' leadership take a close look at some of the problems that have surrounded the Francophone courses in order to analyze what happened. The findings may contain some important pointers for avoiding similar problems in the future: decision-making patterns may need to be altered, processes changed, etc.

3.5. TECHNOLOGY

CAFS' core technology is the provision of training courses and technical assistance in the family planning domain. Three parts are involved in this: the raw materials (its staff, its documentation and information centres, funding, training and consulting knowledge); technical activities that transform these raw materials into desired ends (course development activities, the actual training courses, TA interventions, meetings, conferences); and underlying beliefs about the cause-and-effect relationships that link inputs, activities and outcomes.

CAFS' technology is complex: the outcomes of CAFS' activities is hard to standardize, unpredictable and non-routine. Although attempts are made to standardize activities and outcomes, with the shift towards more TA, this will become increasingly difficult. CAFS' reputation will depend to a great degree on the people it employs. Hiring, motivating, staff development, leadership, and performance evaluation will become critical tasks for the organization to keep its technology up-to-date. CAFS' documentation centre in Nairobi is well developed and maintained. However, there is no such centre in Lome, which is a severe handicap for the Lome staff.

The design and development of courses, and the actual conducting of courses is the responsibility of the various units. The limited cross-fertilization among units has been mentioned earlier. Staff consultations, taskforces, brown bag lunches and cross-functional teams could be set up to foster collaboration and sharing.

Finally, the beliefs about cause-effect relations that link inputs, to activities, to outcomes appear to be unexplored. Again, there is no mechanism to examine assumptions and beliefs; in addition, the lack of trust makes it difficult to engage in such discussions, as many people will feel the need to defend what they do. Nevertheless, CAFS would probably benefit if, at some future point in time (maybe during the staff consultation), such an organization-wide exploration would be initiated. For example, what do people think about organizational effectiveness? What is it? Do people know about real life examples of effective managers or effective organizations or are people acting on ideals? What are their assumptions about organizational effectiveness, how can you teach it? Or what is institution building, how do you do it? What are the different perspectives on project development? Is organizational growth good or bad, what are the implications for the organization, the individual? etc.

We believe that such dialogues are important to keep courses from turning stale, and they would also generate the subject matter for publications, which the Director hopes CAFS staff will produce in the future. The participation of all staff will also allow Lome staff to benefit from their colleagues' experience and vice-versa.

3.6. HELPFUL MECHANISMS

This section reviews some of the mechanisms which can help CAFS to achieve its goals, optimize its structure (or adapt it), reward its people, use technology, and strengthen important relationships.

3.6.1. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic planning process as it was implemented for the first time received mixed reactions from the staff. It was felt that the enthusiasm generated at the beginning was not carried through to the end, and people seemed to have lost their sense of ownership as it moved from staff to board. Some also felt that the time lapse since the process began, and the many changes that have taken place since then, have made it somewhat outdated. Lome staff felt quite removed from the whole process, and did not display much sense of ownership of the end-result. The people carrying the plan forward are proud of the result however, and feel it was worth their effort, emphasizing that it was indeed a major effort. We have studied the plan and feel it is a solid piece of work; however, we did not get a good sense of how much people plan to refer to it. This was difficult to gauge for the simple reason that the plan is not finalized yet. CAFS leadership needs to pay attention to pulling the Lome staff on board; the forthcoming staff consultation may be a good vehicle to do so.

3.6.2. COMPUTERS

Currently only the Nairobi office is equipped with computers. It was not possible to obtain a clear picture of how effectively the current computer equipment is being used. The Finance

Office did indicate that there are bottlenecks because there is only one computer: another computer could probably considerably improve productivity. In Lome there are currently no computers, and at least one would alleviate some of the pressures on support staff (which has computer experience).

The development of CAFS's computer capability is still donor-driven. However, CAFS needs to decide where it wants to go. Currently much of CAFS' computer literacy resides in the Research Division and the Finance Office. This is beginning to create problems (and confusion) as to who shapes CAFS' computerization strategy. Decisions on hardware and software purchases need to be reviewed carefully as they may have implications for years to come. However, it is not clear who should do that (administratively) and who has the expertise to do it. It seems of critical importance that the leadership decide where CAFS' computer capability, with its hardware and software support should reside. If no such decision is taken, this function will default to either the Research Division or the Finance Office; either one of which is bound to be problematic.

Once this decision is made, CAFS can begin to develop its own in-house computer training capability. This is a major effort, which has defaulted currently to the computer expert. However, computer expertise is not sufficient to undertake such a big task: training skills are critical to the success of this venture. The current approach to computer training has inadvertently created a pool of very dependent users who need the computer expert at every twist and turn in the road, thus making enormous demands on her time. The goal of the in-house training programme should be to create self-sufficient users who can rely on their own problem-solving skills when hitting common or routine computer snags.

Parallel to the computer-related TA and training is the development of a strong in-house MIS capability. All of these have big potential as services for external clients. After the internal capacity has been established, and a locus has been found for CAFS' computer and MIS expertise, CAFS will need to prioritize its staff development needs in this area.

3.6.3. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff development was cited as an important, but neglected issue by most staff interviewed. Two facets were looked at: 1) planning for staff development in individual and division/unit workplans, and 2) access to staff development monies.

If people are to attend courses, either over a long period of time, or intensive ones that require complete absence from the work place, this needs to be planned for ahead, and the normal workload re-assigned or taken into account. The way in which donor-funded TA and consultancies are approved (long delays, and then suddenly staff have to travel) on short notice appears to be a fact of life in the business CAFS is in. Although senior staff can look into ways of streamlining such procedures, life is like that and is probably going to stay that way. This has two implications: if staff is assigned to go to a course, he or she should go, if staff development is a high priority (unless the assignment in itself is a rare opportunity for staff

development). The other implication is that CAFS makes a conscious effort to expand its staff capabilities if it has currently only one person who can conduct "high-demand" TA, creating more room for CAFS and staff to pursue the relevant professional development goals.

Areas identified for staff training are among others: computer training, language training (English in Lome and French in Nairobi), new areas for CAFS (i.e. financial management and MIS), and general management training (several staff members admitted to lacking sound management skills, of themselves and others).

3.6.4. MARKETING

The shifting funding base and the increasing emphasis on finding bilateral funding to support course participants has led to an interest in marketing. It seems for now that the responsibility to develop a strategy rests on the shoulders of the Finance and Administration Division with help from the resident consultant. The initiative to hold a marketing seminar for CAFS staff appears to be very timely. The issue of fundraising and the responsibilities of staff at all levels needs to be addressed in very concrete terms. Very specifically, CAFS leadership should look into how the Lome staff is going to handle its proximity (in physical terms) to several organizations and projects such as SEATS, the Futures Group, and shortly also Pathfinder International and AVSC. To explore this sooner rather than later will assure that this is used as an opportunity and an advantage, rather than a source of internal CAFS/CEFA conflicts and problems.

The efforts of several staff-members is helping to put CAFS on the map as an organization with a broad range of services and expertise. The marketing seminar should help systematize these efforts and build up CAFS' institutional resume, which will become increasingly important as family planning efforts are taking off in the region.

3.6.5. COMMUNICATION

Organizational communication was cited by most as an area needing improvement. This is becoming an increasingly bigger concern as CAFS grows and expands. Old ways of doing things are not acceptable or functional anymore while new ways are not well established, accepted or understood. CAFS is currently in a transitional phase and a period of confusion and unease is inevitable. There are, however, things that could, and should be addressed to facilitate the transition and address specific real concerns. These concerns cover both horizontal and vertical communication. A process of team building, complemented with a variety of procedures or mechanisms need to be designed to improve the level and quality of communication among all staff and within or between various subgroups.

Communication among professional staff. Although professional staff are aware of the changes taking place in the external environment, there appears to be little place in the current way of operating to allow staff to explore the effects of such changes on their own and their colleagues' programmes. The one possible mechanism identified by several staff members is the annual staff consultation. It appears to be a convenient forum to pull together the experiences of the

organization since the last consultation, and extract the learnings with respect to external trends and client needs. These discussions could serve as an important introduction to the review of the strategic plan, which the Director plans to do at that time as well.

It is important that Lome staff be appraised of these plans. At the moment they are not aware that a staff consultation is being planned. All professional Lome staff expressed a great need and desire to meet their Nairobi counterparts (some for the first time) on a regular basis. If CAFS Lome and Nairobi are to function as one organization, all staff needs to be included in, and kept informed about organizational events such as the annual staff consultation.

Horizontal communication. The CAFS' leadership needs to pay special attention to nurture and encourage lateral communication. Several mechanisms might help improve this type of communication. For example, project groups could be formed to work on specific courses, TA assignments, client assignments, and organizational tasks such as marketing. Also, it will become increasingly important, as CAFS grows in size, to adhere to regular schedules of staff meetings, at an organizational level and at a divisional and unit level. These meetings will need to be used not only for information giving (which is what most meetings currently are all about) but for problem solving and idea generation as well.

Vertical communication. A major concern has been the restricted vertical communication since the new structure was introduced. Many have felt that they now have no or very limited access to the Director and have inadequate knowledge of the thinking of top management. This is generating suspicion, and where left unchecked, is affecting the level of trust. The transitional nature of the current period is creating a fertile ground for such suspicions, rumors and a variety of (unchecked) assumptions to flourish.

While the whole organization is getting used to a new management style, some special strategies may be considered to facilitate this process. The most important is that people are not left in the dark and that information does percolate down in a continuous fashion (not only when important decisions are made, but throughout the process of reaching such decisions). This will allow affected staff to raise concerns before it is too late to consider them seriously. This implies that there should also be mechanisms to allow feedback from staff, and opportunities to discuss concerns. We believe that the Director needs to address this with some urgency.

The issue of appropriate delegation and information exchange when technical staff are away from the office also relates to vertical communication. There have been examples cited of decisions not being made for weeks because the person with authority was away and had not delegated authority; the same situation will keep information from being disseminated in a timely fashion. The solution is more than ensuring that people appoint acting heads when they leave the office. It also relates to the clarification of what it means to have been appointed acting head. It appears that frequently the tasks are delegated but not the authority to take appropriate action. Given the lack of trust that we encountered in many places, this is a delicate issue, which may best be addressed within the context of a broader team-building process.

3.6.6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation procedures and mechanisms are needed to find out if CAFS is doing things right and if it is doing the right things. In 1988 USAID undertook a comprehensive evaluation of CAFS, and one of the recommendations was to strengthen this function. As a result, a serious effort was undertaken to conduct follow-up of participants, both in a formal and informal way. CAFS is currently struggling with this, partially because of the real and practical difficulties to do participant follow-up in Africa, and partially because of the lack of mechanisms to take advantage of lessons learned, and feed these back into programme design/improvement efforts. Again, the lack of trust, the inadequate lateral communication, and the perceived need to defend one's programme, are getting in the way of taking advantage of findings. An example was given of evaluation results that were shelved because there were some less than complimentary findings in it affecting CAFS staff.

If CAFS wants to use monitoring and evaluation results not only because of its donors, or to watch trends in client needs, but also to help it become a learning organization, it needs to address these issues.

4. CONCLUSION

The six areas explored above, are in our model (see Annex III), depicted as circling a seventh box, named "Leadership". It is the responsibility of the leadership to keep all the boxes in balance. As may have become clear from the above, changes in one box affect others and vice-versa. For example, if the relationships are to become more trusting, the nature of rewards changes as well, and so might the structure. We have inserted in our discussion of the findings a number of recommendations. These are things to be tried out, they may work, and they may not. Organizations are dynamic and always evolving: what worked once may not work anymore. As CAFS is growing in size, this becomes more and more apparent.

FPMD can offer more concrete assistance as well. Because MSH is in many ways a similar organization, we can make available to CAFS some of our own learnings through our staff and consultants. The following is a summary of findings in selected areas and proposed FPMD inputs.

4.1. PERSONNEL SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Findings: CAFS has gone through a number of significant changes over the last two years: increased number of staff, change in leadership, structural changes, new donors and shifted priorities within major funding sources. As a result, CAFS' staff have found that the old systems and ways of operating are not working as well. Some procedures and rules are no longer appropriate, others are missing or need to be expanded. One inescapable side effect is that CAFS has grown more bureaucratic. Where informal mechanisms were adequate in the past, they now become problematic. The Finance and Administration Division has already

begun to review current practices and procedures to develop a more comprehensive and complete personnel management system.

Proposed FPMD inputs: FPMD will make available the services of a personnel specialist to work closely with senior management in the following areas identified by CAFS' leadership as their major priorities for management improvement: development of career and promotion strategies and policies, staff development strategies and policies, an expanded personnel handbook and a supervision/ performance evaluation system.

4.2. DOCUMENTATION FOR MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Findings: CAFS training staff has begun to develop comprehensive documentation support for its courses. The ultimate goal is to complete for each course a set of three supporting manuals: a trainee manual, a trainer manual and a reader for participants. The management training unit in Nairobi has already advanced significantly in this endeavor. A work meeting is scheduled for September 16 - October 4, 1991 to finalize these manuals for the Anglophone management training courses.

Proposed FPMD inputs: FPMD will make available a MSH staff expert in training materials development and management training to participate in this meeting in Nairobi and contribute both FPMD/D materials and experience to the finalization of the Anglophone management training documentation.

4.3. TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Findings: The rapid growth of CAFS and the concomitant changes in structure have made the old ways of communicating and working together inadequate. Many of the professional staff expressed a strong wish to contribute more to their colleagues' programmes or projects. Better communication will reduce friction between units and improve morale. There need to be better mechanisms for getting staff to discuss issues of a technical nature and to learn from and with each other. These are critical preconditions for attracting and maintaining good staff.

Proposed FPMD inputs: FPMD will make available two senior facilitators to set in motion a process designed to improve morale and strengthen work-teams in close collaboration with internal CAFS facilitators. This combination of internal and external facilitators will make it possible to deal with issues best addressed by insiders as well as issues that are easier addressed by outsiders. Interventions will consist of a series of activities, not all of which will require an outside presence. When not physically present in Nairobi or Lome, the FPMD consultants will serve as a resource to the internal team.

4.4. INTERNAL COMPUTER TRAINING CAPABILITY

Findings: The responsibility for training staff lies with the computer expert who is not a trainer. The current informal and ad-hoc approach to training staff in computer skills has proved to be inadequate. The forthcoming change of word-processing software will require a major retraining effort, which may be a good opportunity to develop a longer term training strategy and solid in-house training capability.

Proposed FPMD inputs: FPMD will make available the services of MSH's in-house computer training expert who has successfully completed a process at MSH that is similar to the one CAFS may need to embark on.

4.5. TRAINING SUPPORTS (LOME)

Findings: The staff at the Lome office, and thus by extension their work, suffers from the rudimentary office infrastructure. The telephonist has to go to another room to answer the phone, there is no computer to streamline course preparation, and the IPPF typewriters are not always available. The necessity to be in close and constant contact with Nairobi makes adequate communication equipment a critical need.

Proposed FPMD inputs: Hardware, software and furniture to set up one computer work-station, fax and telephone equipment in Lome. FPMD will also send a shipment to Lome and Nairobi of FPMD publications for staff use and for distribution to participants.

4.6. ADVANCED FRANCOPHONE SENIOR MANAGEMENT COURSE

Findings: The current Francophone senior management course covers basic rather than advanced management concepts. To move towards a more cohesive training approach, CAFS' senior management courses should be designed to cover concepts of increasing sophistication for senior managers over time. Such courses could be given over a period of years in two-week or one-week segments. CAFS' management training staff expressed interest in this approach.

Proposed FPMD inputs: FPMD will make available the services of a senior FP management training expert to work with Lome management training staff on the development of such a sequence and the strengthening of the capabilities of the Lome-based staff to conduct such courses.

4.7. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Findings: CAFS' interest in developing its capabilities in the areas of MIS and financial management requires a focused staff development strategy. Participation of the Finance Officer in MSH's 1991 Financial Management Programme, and participation of CAFS' computer expert in the 1992 MIS course will help these staff to prepare themselves for their increasing responsibilities.

Proposed FPMD inputs: Facilitate the participation of the identified staff to professional development courses on financial management and MIS through FPMD sponsorship with funding from other sources. In addition, CAFS will be invited to send a (Francophone) management trainer to the annual "Francophone Regional Advisory Committee" meeting which will take place in Boston in August on the theme of Quality of Care in Family Planning services.

4.8. CAFS AS A RESOURCE TO MSH/FPMD

We explored possibilities for future collaboration between MSH and CAFS as peer institutions. MSH is looking into the possibility of conducting some of its courses in the Africa region rather than in Boston. To prepare CAFS staff for conducting collaborative MSH/CAFS management courses, it is important that they are familiar with the particular course. MSH is considering such an arrangement for the course "Managing Successful Training Programmes for Health and Family Planning" which will be given in English in July 1991, and in French in September 1991. We also looked at possibilities for CAFS' support to FPMD activities in Africa. Although the following suggestions are not very specific, once the activities are planned, the specific roles and responsibilities of FPMD and CAFS can be spelled out in greater detail. For example the following activities could be envisioned:

- o in Kenya: TA in MIS design and implementation with the Saradidi Project, and the 7th Day Adventist Project.
- o assistance in the MIS training course for local NGOs in Kenya.
- o in Tanzania: assistance in developing a FP training curriculum for UMATI.
- o assistance in design and implementation of an MIS (service statistics and financial reporting systems) for UMATI.
- o assistance in operations research and evaluation of UMATI's new FP programme activities.

In addition, it is hoped that in the near future CAFS can also support FPMD in the development of its planned "Fundamentals of Management Course". This course, of a proposed duration of 6 to 12 weeks (to be determined), is part of FPMD's strategy to respond to the need for a stronger mid-level management capability in the Africa region as family planning services expand.

ANNEX I.

SCOPE OF WORK - CAFS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The team from FPMD will work in close collaboration with counterparts from CAFS to conduct a needs analysis of CAFS and develop a plan for collaboration. The team will spend approximately ten working days in Nairobi, then proceed to Lome to meet with the staff of the regional office. Specifically:

1. Prior to the trip, the FPMD team will review relevant documents and attend a pre-trip planning meeting.
2. FPMD will ask CAFS to set up a tentative agenda for the team in order to maximize available time in Nairobi and Lome.
3. Upon arrival, brief with REDSO/ESA to review the scope of work and agree on expectation for the assignment.
4. Meet with CAFS leaders and counterparts to review the proposed working agenda, agree on priority areas, and define responsibilities among team members.
5. Carry out the assessment of CAFS. It is anticipated that the team will examine multiple areas of potential collaboration and assistance, including:
 - strengthening of management and administrative systems
 - design of a plan for staff development
 - joint curriculum development and/or training programmes
 - efforts to increase library resources and improve documentation

Team members will visit both Nairobi and Lome in order to develop a proposal that is inclusive of all aspects of the organization.

6. Debrief with CAFS and REDSO and present major findings and recommendations. Discuss buy-in potential with REDSO.
7. Prepare a full report and management development plan upon return to Boston and submit for review by June 20.
8. Debrief FPMD staff on proposed collaboration with CAFS.

ANNEX II.

PERSONS CONTACTED

For reasons of confidentiality, CAFS staff-members contacted are not listed by name.

USAID/REDSO/ESA	Mrs. Angela Franklin Lord
USAID/REDSO/WCA	Mr. John Paul James (by phone only)
USAID/Lome	Mr. Paul Ehmer Dr. Koffi Agbekou
IPPFAR/Nairobi	Dr. Richard Turkson Mr. Alpha Diallo Mr. Justice Pobi
IPPFCA/Lome	Mr. Kodjo Adzewoda Efu

ANNEX III.

THE 7-BOX ORGANIZATIONAL DIAGNOSIS MODEL
(Adapted from Weisbord)

