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PaL-Tech, Inc.

Mid-Term Evaluation

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION MONITORING PROJECT (IMPACT) (936-5110)

Consultants:

Barry Riley
Jere Haas
Katherine Tucker
Carol Pearson

November, 1995

*Prepared for the United States Agency for International Development,
Bureau for Global Programs, Field Support and Research, Center for
Population, Health and Nutrition, Office of Health and Nutrition
Contract No. HRN-5510-C-00-5008-00*

MID-TERM EVALUATION
FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION
MONITORING PROJECT
(IMPACT)
(936-5110)

Prepared by:

PAL TECH, Inc.
1700 Moore Street
Suite 1250
Arlington, VA 22209

Consultants:

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ABBREVIATIONS

BHR	Bureau for Humanitarian Response
CI	Collaborative Inquiries
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CS	Cooperating Sponsors
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
ECSA	Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Commonwealth Secretariat
EOPS	End of Project Status
FAM	Food Aid Management
FY	Fiscal Year
GAO	General Accounting Office
G/PHN/HN	Global Bureau, Center for Population, Health, and Nutrition, Office of Health & Nutrition
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services, India
ICN	International Conference on Nutrition
IDD	Iodine Deficiency Disorders
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IG&D	Information Gathering and Dissemination
IMPACT	Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring Project
INCAP	Institute for Nutrition for Central America and Panama
ISTI	International Science and Technology Institute, Inc.
LAC/HNS	Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau's Health and Nutrition Sustainability Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSF	Medecins Sans Frontieres
NAPM	National Action Plan for Micronutrients, Honduras
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations (see PVO)
NSSP	Nutrition Surveys and Surveillance Project
OMNI	Opportunities for Micronutrient Initiative
PD	Policy Determination
PDRC	Project Development Review Committee
PL 480	Public Law 480 related to Food Aid
REDSO/WCA	REDSO West and Central Africa
PRS	Progress Reporting System
PVO	Private Voluntary Organizations (see NGO)
RNIS	Refugee Nutrition Information System
SARA	Support for Analysis and Research in Africa
TA	Technical Assistance
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/W	United States Agency for International Development/Washington
VPI	Virginia Polytechnic Institute
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 29, 1990, USAID awarded the International Science and Technology Institute (ISTI) a contract to implement the Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring Project (IMPACT). The main purpose of the project is to assist and collaborate with USAID Bureaus and Missions, Host Country institutions, private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to:

- develop and maintain food security and nutrition monitoring systems that include the integration of nutrition concerns in diverse sector activities such as agriculture, planning and health;
- conduct nutritional assessments of diverse groups, e.g., national, regional, age, or gender specific populations, in order to identify those most at risk;
- conduct collaborative inquiries to improve the availability, relevance, and quality of food and nutrition information;
- train a cadre of individuals to establish and maintain the food and nutrition monitoring programs; and
- carry out regular information exchange opportunities including seminars, workshops and newsletters.

The mid-term evaluation was conducted in the fifth year of the project by a four member team from PAL-TECH. The report includes the evaluation methodology and documents the Project background. The report also includes the major findings, including assessments of the degree to which IMPACT has achieved its goals and purpose, its proposed End of Project Status (EOPS) and its proposed output targets.

In general, the Evaluation Team found that IMPACT has done a commendable job in meeting the objectives contained in the logical framework. The Team concludes that where the project has fallen short is likely more a function of overly optimistic assumptions at the time of the project design than faulty implementation *per se*.

The Team concludes that with respect to the Project's overall effectiveness, IMPACT has been managed effectively within a limited budget. The Project has managed to seek out opportunities for advocating the importance of food security and nutrition information in program design and performance monitoring and evaluation.

The report also contains conclusions and recommendations and the main points are summarized below.

A. Conclusions

Project Design

- The project was focused on an extremely important issue: the high rate of malnutrition and accompanying food insecurity in many developing countries, a situation then, as now, suspected to be worsening. The objectives of producing more and better data and promoting their use were appropriate.
- The Project Logical Framework assumption concerning the interest of host countries, missions and bureaus was overly optimistic and, therefore, affected the ability of the Project to accomplish the end of the project status.

Project Process: In terms of the management and implementation of IMPACT, this evaluation found that:

- In the initial phase of the Project, progress was slowed by the changes in the Project Directorship, and by the lack of a Food and Nutrition Specialist.
- Project management has greatly stabilized and solidified with the hiring of the current Director and Food and Nutrition Specialist in 1992/3. The team has worked effectively together. The position of Food and Nutrition Specialist appears to have evolved beyond the original intended role of coordinating technical consultants, and now encompasses project administration, not only in the absence of the Director, but also contributing to significant programmatic input and direction.
- Project implementation may have been more effective had fewer countries been targeted.
- Project technical and contractual management of subcontractors, while not seamless, was effective and diligent given the breadth and depth of its activities.
- The USAID reporting requirements were too onerous and time-consuming for such a small project staff.

Project Outcome: Regarding the achievement of the project's outputs, this evaluation concludes that:

- A significant amount of research has been accomplished but was not sufficiently generalized and disseminated into useful material for policy makers.
- The narrowing of focus of most principal project activities to strengthening the capacity of PVOs to better manage and monitor their food aid programs and to improve the food security impact of their programs was a defining moment in the Project's lifetime. This technical assistance and training to administer Title II food

aid programs seems likely to attain measurable results of considerable importance in confronting food insecurity over the long term.

B. Recommendations

1. Remaining Life of Project

- **Concentrate on assistance and training of PVOs**

The highest priority activity for the Project's core staff during the remaining life of the Project should be to carry forward with the Project's plans to conduct workshops and training sessions for PVO staff (and USAID staff who relate to PVOs). The single most important element of this training may well be the completion of the Handbook now entitled "Food Security Indicators and Framework: A Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluation of Food Aid Programs", and its use as a training aid. Efforts to adjust the focus of the training to include Africa should be initiated in the remaining months of the Project.

- **Attention needs to be devoted to dissemination of results already achieved**

The IMPACT core staff should focus on the IMPACT Project's need to complete several on-going activities and to enhance the long-term impact of activities already completed. In particular, added attention needs to be devoted to the dissemination of results already achieved.

- **Give priority to advocacy type information dissemination**

Pull together into a single analytical and advocacy presentation, the important findings and conclusions from the Project's experience to date. Set this in the context of the continuing serious food and nutrition security problems. This could consist of two publications: the first intended primarily for an USAID non-nutritionist policy-level audience, the second intended for non-USAID policy-level audience in developing countries, other donor organizations, and NGOs.

2. Future Considerations

During recent years, there has more attention paid by the USAID, and the larger donor community, to food security as a unifying concept that combines objectives of developmental and humanitarian assistance. The USAID definition of food security (PD-19) identifies three elements; food availability, access to food and utilization. Better food utilization combines USAID's efforts for increased food consumption and a healthy consumer to fully utilize available food.

The need for comprehensive nutrition and food security information to inform policies of USAID, and others, is greater now than it was when the Project was designed in the late 1980s. Currently, food aid constitutes over 40 percent of USAID's resources. USAID reengineering

guidelines suggest that between 3 and 10 percent of program resources should be devoted to performance monitoring and evaluation. The opportunity is great for the Global Bureau to take an active role in assisting the Agency in applying technical rigor and guidance, especially for the BHR in its support of the large food aid and child survival programs.

The following suggestions are put forward in the design of a future activity:

- Training/Capacity building among Cooperating Sponsors, USAID and other donor partners to design and implement performance monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the impact of USAID resources on food security.
- Continue work on materials, such as the Handbook including its field testing, to provide guidance in food-aid and non-food aid projects and for use by indigenous NGOs and other intermediaries in project design, proposal writing, implementation and monitoring of projects intended to have a food security impact.
- Design training and technical assistance approaches in such areas as; sampling methodologies, cost effectiveness criteria, interpretation of data and choice of indicators likely to engender sustainable institution building in selected countries. Channel a large portion of this training and technical assistance through PVOs and the private sector.
- Address gaps in the methodologies, in such areas as food consumption surveys and cost effective approaches to data collection and analysis strategies. Develop, refine and disseminate food and nutrition security survey and surveillance methodologies that can be used by relatively small and lightly capitalized organizations in recipient country universities, consulting firms, local governmental bodies and small developing country for-profit companies.
- Expand USAID technical leadership role in nutrition and food security. An excellent opportunity exists to influence the direction of food security programming by international donors including the World Food Program and the European Union.
- Develop approaches for promoting the use of nutrition and food security information for decision making through advocacy and training programs.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report evaluates the food and nutrition monitoring activities carried out under contract numbers DAN-5110-C-00-0013-00 and DAN-110-Q-0014-00 which is part of the larger "Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring Project" (936-5110). The sub-project, known as IMPACT, was signed on September 29, 1990 between USAID and the International Science and Technology Institute, Inc. (ISTI) as prime contractor with three main subcontractors: the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Virginia Polytechnic Institute (VPI), and Tulane University. IFPRI represents the largest sub-contractor with over 25 percent of core funds and the remaining two sub-contractors with less than two per cent. Approximately 10 other sub-contractors were used for specific tasks mostly funded by buy-ins, the largest being Macro, International.

The IMPACT Project is a level of effort contract with funding through a centrally-funded Core Contract totaling \$5,056,519 for five years, with an accompanying Q-contract (Buy In) with funds from the regional bureaus and USAID Missions.

The project was designed to contribute to the overall Program Goal to "...reduce hunger and malnutrition among the poor in developing countries" through the Project Purpose of "...promoting the integration of food consumption and nutrition considerations in development policies, programs and projects in food, agriculture, health and other sectors."

The Program Goal and Project Purpose were to be accomplished through the following:

- Operational research studies to define pertinent indicators of nutrition status and agricultural programs (Collaborative Inquiries)
- Technical Assistance to institute monitoring systems
- Training in food and nutrition monitoring
- Dissemination/network of new information systems (Information Gathering and Dissemination)

The IMPACT Project consists of a project director (since 1993, Dr. Bruce Cogill), a Food and Nutrition Specialist (since 1992, Dr. Anne Swindale) and a financial and administrative assistant. The contract envisaged a Technical Director provided by IFPRI (Dr. Eileen Kennedy until 1993). Since 1992, Dr. Eunyong Chung has been the USAID Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) from the Center for Population, Health, and Nutrition in the Global Bureau. This evaluation covers the period from the beginning of the Project to July 31, 1995. Currently, the project is scheduled to end September 30, 1996.

II. EVALUATION PLAN AND METHODOLOGY

This evaluation assesses the accomplishments of the IMPACT Project from its inception through the fifth year of the project's implementation. It also determines the project's effectiveness and identifies unforeseen factors with significant adverse or beneficial impact on the project's performance. It addresses concerns as they apply to:

- Project management and contract administration
- Technical Assistance
- Collaborative Inquires
- Training
- Information Gathering and Dissemination

Future needs in the area of food security and nutrition monitoring, including USAID's involvement in such activities are also discussed. Future considerations and initial suggestions for follow-on activities are identified.

PAL-TECH, Inc. was contracted to undertake the evaluation. Evaluation team members (team composition is listed in Appendix A) accomplished the project review by:

- Reviewing extensive project documentation on the background, context, purpose, objective, outputs and impacts.
- Meetings with G/PHN/HN Project Officer, other relevant G/PHN staff, and USAID/W staff.
- Meeting project staff on the design, implementation and administrative structure suitability.
- Meeting cooperating agencies of other USAID projects, subcontractors, Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO's) and other previous project participants and or users of project services.
- Conducting field trips to Guatemala and Honduras to assess project activities and accomplishments.
- Conducting interviews by phone, fax, and e-mail with USAID Mission staff to assess quality of Technical Assistance provided by the IMPACT Project.
- Incorporating comments provided by G/PHN/HN staff.

Appendix B lists the people contacted both in the United States and overseas. Appendix C contains the text of a questionnaire sent to selected USAID Mission staff.

III. BACKGROUND

The IMPACT Project was the successor project to the 1980's Nutrition Surveys and Surveillance Project and was designed to further develop, test and operationalize methodologies that would ultimately contribute to nutritional well-being of vulnerable populations. The project experienced a slow start that is typical of operational projects. Since its inception the project has passed through three phases:

Phase 1: From 1990 to 1991, the project was promoted to regional bureaus and USAID Missions with an emphasis on its potential for assisting USAID's development goals. The main sub-contractor, IFPRI, carried out desk-based reviews as part of the series of Collaborative Inquiries (CI) identified in the contract. The CIs were to form the basis for supporting operational activities later in the project. Complementing the project advocacy and operational research agenda, selected technical assistance was provided along with training and information gathering and dissemination activities.

Phase 2: The 1992-1993 period saw increased support to the completion of the Collaborative Inquiries, especially field studies in Ghana, Mali, Kenya, Mali, Guatemala and Honduras. Support was provided to various countries in preparation for the 1992 International Conference on Nutrition in Rome and its follow-on development of National Plans of Action for Nutrition. Technical assistance activities increased with the development of a number of key assessments.

Phase 3: The 1994-1995 period represented the most operational and mature period with a full complement of staff and several new initiatives partly funded through Buy-Ins. The Project consolidated a number of its activities to focus on operationalizing the experiences in support of Missions and USAID's main implementing partners, the Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs). Developments around the use of food aid and Congressional reporting mandates provided opportunities to provide Technical Assistance, Training, and Information Gathering and Dissemination in support of PVOs whose activities include maternal and child health and food security.

IV. FINDINGS

A. IMPACT Project Accomplishments 1990-1995

Project accomplishments are assessed in terms of progress toward: 1) project goals and purposes, 2) end of project status (EOPS), and 3) accomplishing project outputs and objectives.

1. Progress Toward Project Goal and Purpose

The overall project goal of reduced hunger and malnutrition in vulnerable populations was addressed by a mix of operations research and technical applications that was provided through advisory services, technical assistance, training, and dissemination. The early start of various surveys and studies (Collaborative Inquiries) was to result in more and better data and information on nutritional status and food security for use by host country governments, PVOs and USAID missions to inform and influence policy and program implementation. The goal is stated with the understanding that appropriate project inputs would ultimately contribute to improved nutritional well being among vulnerable populations.

Following a slow start, the project's momentum has been building towards meeting the project goal and purpose. The increased number of buy-ins from USAID missions and regional bureaus, the attention other Bureaus and other donors such as the U.N. have given to Collaborative Inquiries, and the interest from other bureaus, such as the Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) in tapping the Project's technical expertise to assist PVOs and Missions with on-going Title II food aid program, is leading to greater availability of nutrition and food security information. An example is a handbook being prepared for PVOs to continue training their own staff that will have additional multiplier effects not only in terms of training indigenous NGOs, but also with modifications could be applicable to development assistance projects.

The information and supporting analysis substantiating the linkages between better food and nutrition security and the beneficial direct or indirect consequence has been furthered by the Collaborative Inquiries. Progress has been made in the development of monitoring systems. However, the extent to which this process contributes to the local capacity and sustainability to maintain these systems is not clear.

More difficult to determine is how much progress has been made by IMPACT in influencing high level decision making professionals on the significance of nutritional considerations in overall economic development. For the most part, where IMPACT could have had a role, decisions are still being made without the benefit of relevant nutrition and food security considerations. Some notable exceptions are in Honduras where IMPACT support has been significant in influencing micronutrient policy as well as agricultural policy. The current direction in training NGOs should eventually reach the intended audience to demonstrate the importance of nutritional status and related indicators.

In summary, the IMPACT Project has contributed to "...more and better data and information" being made available. Indications of an "increased use" of this information at the

policy level are emerging. Recent training and dissemination of information efforts, such as the work in Honduras, hold promise for demonstrating the use of nutrition information at the policy level. Some of the follow-up activities of the ICN are also examples of the emergence of discussions at the targeted level.

2. Progress Toward End of Project Status (EOPS)

The EOPS statement at the Purpose Level in the Logical Framework reads "...nutritional status indicators are part of policies, planning, programs and implementation in food, agriculture and health sectors."

Technical assistance and training sufficient to make policy changes based on the use of nutrition indicators in other sectors has not been clearly demonstrated. When one considers the resources and LOE allocated to this project, the proposed EOPS may have been overly optimistic. It is encouraging, however, that the IMPACT Project is raising consciousness among key policy decision makers for the need to include nutritional criteria as part of the evaluation process of various development.

The remaining time of the project will be significant as the IMPACT Project builds on in-country training experiences, adapts its experience and the findings from the Collaborative Inquiries for wider dissemination and work with PVOs, bureaus and missions towards the achievement of project goals.

3. Progress Towards Achieving Project Output Targets

The following Project Objectives have been used to guide project activities:

- Development and maintenance of food security and nutrition monitoring systems that include the integration of nutrition concerns in diverse sector activities such as agriculture, planning and health. (Output Target - 10)
- Nutrition assessments of diverse groups, e.g. national, regional, age, or gender specific populations, in order to identify those most at risk. (Output Target - 20)
- Collaborative Inquiries to improve the availability, relevance, and quality of food and nutrition information. (Output Target - 10)
- Establishment of a cadre of well-trained individuals to maintain the established food and nutrition monitoring programs. (Output Target - 100 individuals trained)
- Development of regular information exchange opportunities including seminars, workshops, and newsletters. (Output Target - 15 workshops conducted)

The current status of activities as specified in the contract to achieve the Project Objectives are as follows:

	<u>Target</u>	<u>Completed</u>
1. Monitoring Programs	10	12
2. Assessments	20	14
3. Collaborative Inquiries	10	11
4. Persons Trained	100	268
5. IG&D Workshops/Seminars/ Conferences/Newsletters	15	15

As can be seen, with the exception of Assessments, the targets have been met or exceeded.

B. Project Elements

1. Project Administration

This small project has been characterized by a shift in team composition, delays in filling vacancies, and turnover in staff most notable in the directors position. Three people, plus an interim Director, have occupied the position of Project Director. The initial Project Director resigned shortly after the project began. The second Director held the position for approximately one and a half years. The Vice President of ISTI was interim Director until the current director was recruited in 1993.

The position of Deputy Director/Technical Research Coordinator was filled by the main sub-contractor, IFPRI. This position focused on the management of the Collaborative Inquiries. The sub-contractor level of effort and budget for Collaborative Inquiries and project administration were mostly expended by 1993 and this coincided with the departure of the Deputy Director from IFPRI thus reducing the need for a Technical Research Coordinator.

The Food and Nutrition Specialist's position was filled in February 1992 and has evolved from a strictly technical advisory role to include project management and administration.

The Project also consists of a Financial Manager and an Administrative Assistant. Both positions became necessary in the project as the volume of work increased in Phase 3 (1994-1995) especially in the administration of over 10 sub-contracts and many new core project activities.

The contract calls for a Project Development Review Committee (PDRC) which met twice. This committee has had little involvement in the direction of the project.

Project start-up was characterized by weak responses from the Missions. The initial cables announcing the project prompted meetings in Washington and trips by the Project Director to promote the Project. By 1993, however, the Project had become operational with more buy-ins approved in FY 1994 than in the first 30 months of the project.

The numbers of sub-contractors and their roles were increasing in importance. The administration of the project was more complex and challenging for the small staff. The administrative performance in the last two years has managed to meet the needs imposed by changes within the project and by USAID. The improvements in quarterly reports in 1994 and the shift to managing for results has resulted in greater clarity and focus for the project and is in keeping with profound shifts within USAID. The improvements in the project administration can be largely attributed to the excellence of the Project's team and the high level of cooperation between the contractor and USAID.

2. Technical Assistance

IMPACT's Technical Assistance consist of primarily two areas:

- food security and monitoring systems;
- nutrition assessments.

The project activities under the categories of technical assistance, training, and information gathering and dissemination often overlap. For example, the 1994 Technical Assistance work in the Dominican Republic on household income, consumption and expenditure surveys led to training of local personnel in household consumption impacts of structural adjustment on poverty. Dissemination of information via these trained individuals will continue to produce results related to the purpose of the project

While Technical Assistance was part of most project activities, some examples of Technical Assistance provided in the area of food security and nutrition monitoring systems include;

- Design of a monitoring system for the Honduras National Action Plan for Micronutrients.
- Design and implementation of Title II cost-effectiveness study in Honduras.
- Adaptation of the Progress Reporting System (PRS) for the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India.
- Design of information system for measuring impact of transition programs for PVOs in Mozambique.

- Design of the Liberian Refugee household economic and consumption survey in Cote d'Ivoire.
- Design of targeting, monitoring and evaluation system for CARE/Moscow's food distribution system.

Highlights of Technical assistance provided in the area of nutrition monitoring systems include;

- Design and implementation of anemia surveys in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Russia.
- Analysis and interpretation of Sri Lanka's annual nutrition and health survey.
- Analysis and interpretation of Honduras national household consumption, income, expenditure and nutrition survey.

In addition, IMPACT provided assistance in the development of selected country nutrition situation documents (Guatemala, Sri Lanka, Mali, Indonesia) in preparation for 1992 International Conference on Nutrition (ICN). Follow-up activity to the ICN included two regional workshops held in Kenya and Jamaica, attended by Ministry level officials from 11 countries and 9 National Nutrition Coordinators respectively.

Methodologies developed during work with Liberian refugees, Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), and with the BHR are expected to be further developed for more general use in nutritional and food security studies of refugee populations elsewhere.

IMPACT Project staff are also providing technical expertise to USAID in responding to the new legislative mandate to prepare the annual "World Food Day Report" to Congress on the use of U.S. food aid (PL 480 Title II and III). The 1990 Farm Bill requires that food aid, under the auspices of USAID, be provided largely on the basis of need, as determined by analysis of the level of food insecurity and poverty in recipient countries, and is to be used in projects that foster improved household food security. The legislative requirement for food security was a natural fit for IMPACT activities.

Complementing the above assistance, the Project is providing assistance to U.S. PVOs. The assistance began in 1993 with AFRICARE in Guinea Bissau and gained momentum in 1994 and has generated a great deal of interest because of its possible sustainability and potential transfer of skills to PVOs, their local counterparts and with Missions. Major partners in this have been CARE, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), AFRICARE, FAM (Food Aid Management) and the Coalition for Food Aid.

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Other major activities include development of a Handbook to guide Missions and PVOs in the design and implementation of monitoring and evaluation of their variety of programs supported with food aid and other resources.

3. Collaborative Inquiries (CI)

The CI component is largely reflected by the contribution of IFPRI to the Project. The CI component was most active during the initial phases of the project in large part because IFPRI continued and adapted several of its on-going research and survey activities. Of the ten CIs that have been carried out, the early CIs were desk reviews and analyses which had broader, global implications. They included:

- Review of existing data on agriculture - nutrition linkages.
- Inventory of food and nutrition monitoring systems.
- Patterns of macronutrient and micronutrient consumption and implications for monitoring and evaluation.
- Synthesis and plan of analysis: effects of selected programs and policies on women's income, health and nutritional status. Vol. I: Synthesis of case studies, Vol. II: Case studies.

Review of this latter document led to an analysis on alternative approaches for improving the nutritional status of non-pregnant, non-lactating women. The UN Sub-Committee on Nutrition has expressed interest in publishing a book summarizing the results of the study.

Country-based CI designed to answer specific sets of questions included:

- Impacts of credit programs on food security and nutrition in Ghana.
- Impacts of credit with education for women on income, food security, and nutrition in Mali.
- Impacts of nontraditional export crops among smallholder farmers on production, income, nutrition, and quality of life efforts: A comparative analysis 1985-1991 in Guatemala.
- The medium-run food and nutrition consequences of agricultural commercialization: findings and implications in Kenya.
- Analysis of community surveys and the development and evaluation of a community-based monitoring system in Honduras.

- Alternative approaches and indicators to locating the food insecure: Evidence from South India.

A significant body of research on key food security and nutrition monitoring issues has been undertaken by the Project. Wider dissemination of the findings from these studies, including policy and program implications, have only been recently attempted. The IMPACT Project Core staff have produced the first Policy Brief directed at Missions, PVOs, and policy makers on the nutritional and food security impact of credited directed at women based on the findings of the studies in Ghana and Mali. In addition, a series of Roundtables have been conducted by IFPRI in India, Mali, and Ghana in an effort to communicate the findings of the CIs to policy makers and program managers.

4. Training

In 1992, IMPACT sent to over 50 USAID Missions a "Training Needs Survey" questionnaire in order to assess demand for 14 different areas of training. The rate of response was less than 10 percent with only four Missions (Gambia, India, Guatemala, Barbados) identifying the training needs, mostly for PVOs working in the country. No specific follow-up action was taken.

Over the life of the project, the types of training provided can be grouped into 4 categories based on the type of participant and content. The training ranged from an intensive one-on-one interaction, as was the case with analysis of the Demographic and Health Survey data, to large group sessions as experienced in support of the PVOs in developing monitoring and evaluation systems. More difficult to document but significant in its contribution has been the training provided by IFPRI in its Collaborative Inquiries in Mali, Ghana, Kenya, Guatemala, Honduras and India.

IMPACT Project training activities

TYPE OF TRAINING ACTIVITY	DURATION	NUMBER
Intensive training in data cleaning, analysis, interpretation and report writing in 4 countries	2-4 weeks	14
Training in data gathering and analysis through CI and other consumption surveys	1-2 weeks	171
Regional training workshop held in Uganda for better use of nutrition data for program planning and advocacy in collaboration with Africa Bureaus Support for Analysis and Research in Africa (SARA) project	1 week	18
Workshops in the design of the Monitoring and Evaluation system for PVOs, local NGOs, government partners and Missions have been conducted in India and Guinea Bissau	1 week	65

5. Information Gathering and Dissemination

Highlights of activity in this area include:

- With Buy-in funds provided by the Africa Bureau, Nutrition Chartbooks for 19 countries and 6 in-depth Nutrition Country Reports were produced and disseminated by Macro, International (coordinator for the DHS program). The material succinctly summarizes the nutrition situation and provides much needed country specific information that is useful to policy makers and programmers. The support provides opportunities for individualized training of host country counterparts in data cleaning, analysis, interpretation, reporting and presentations at fora in Washington DC.
- A database on Iodine Deficiency Disorders (IDD) situations in 120 countries with manuals on current prevention and control strategies were developed and disseminated in collaboration with University of Virginia.
- IMPACT, with funding from the BHR, supported the production of 6 issues of the UN's Refugee Nutrition Information System (RNIS) bulletins that are being distributed to over 700 donors, NGOs, governments and universities throughout the world.

C. Project Strengths and Weaknesses

1. Strengths

- The Project has managed effectively, within a limited budget and an ever changing political environment, both in the U.S. and in Host Countries, by focusing resources to maximize the contribution to addressing problems of food insecurity and nutritional vulnerability.
- Project staff have shown flexibility and tenacity in seeking out opportunities for advocating the importance and usefulness of nutritional information in planning for a country's development.
- The technical and managerial training of local organizations and their continued participation as partners is seen as an important contribution of the Project. These contribute to institution building of the local public and private sector to collect and analyze food consumption and nutritional status information and its use for policies, planning, programs and implementation in the food, agriculture and health sectors.

Nutrition chartbook and country nutrition reports

Nutrition Reports Published			
DHS Survey Country	Date of Fieldwork	Briefing Packet and Chartbook	In-Depth Country Report
Burkina Faso	Dec-Mar 1992/93	1994	
Burundi	1995	1993	
Cameroon	Apr-Sep 1991	1993	1993
Central African Republic	Sep-Mar 1994/95	[1995]	
Eritrea	Jun-Sep 1995	[1996]	
Ivory Coast	Jun-Nov 1994	[1995]	
Ghana	Feb-May 1988	1993	
Ghana	Sep-Dec 1993	1995	[1995]
Kenya	Feb-Aug 1993	1994	[1995]
Madagascar	May-Nov 1992	1993	
Malawi	Sep- Nov 1992	1994	
Mali	Mar-Aug 1987	1993	1993
Namibia	Jul-Nov 1992	1993	
Niger	Mar-Jun 1992	1993	1993
Nigeria	Apr-Oct 1990	1993	1993
Rwanda	Jun-Oct 1992	1994	
Senegal	Nov-Aug 1986	1993	
Senegal	Nov-Aug 1992/93	1994	[1995]
Tanzania	Oct-Mar 1991/92	1993	
Togo	Jun-Nov 1988	1993	
Uganda	Sep-Feb 1988/89	1993	1993
Uganda	Apr-Jul 1995	[1996]	
Zambia	Jan-May 1992	1993	1993
Zimbabwe	Jul-Nov 1994	[1996]	

[] Represents report in preparation

- The collaboration with PVOs and Missions, such as with AFRICARE/Guinea Bissau, CARE/India and CRS/India staff, in the design of Monitoring and Evaluation systems for implementing food aid programs is a sustainable impact.
- One of the most important outputs of the Project will be the "Food Security Indicators and Framework: Handbook for M&E of Food Aid Programs". These materials have significant potential for use not only among U.S. Cooperating Sponsors, but among indigenous NGOs.

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2. Weaknesses

- Delays in project implementation were worsened by turnovers in the Project Director during the initial phase of the project. The Food and Nutrition Specialist was not active until well into the second year of the project, leaving a heavy burden on the Director.
- The PDRC did not function beyond two meetings at the beginning of the Project. A more formal structure for input from the other bureaus and programs within the Agency would have been useful.
- Final product requirements for the Collaborative Inquiries were not clear as to who would do be responsible for interpretation of the research to make it relevant to policy and decision makers. Some CIs were presented in a format that was perceived by the prime contractor and USAID as not being usable by professionals in other sectors. A review of the CIs by a wider Peer Review Committee may have helped in defining an acceptable standard for the CIs.
- Communications between prime and subcontractors were at times poor, especially during the initial phases of the Project. A newsletter, or related format, may have contributed to better sharing of information. This situation has improved in the last two years of the project.
- More emphasis should have been given to promoting a nutrition agenda targeted to decision makers. Efforts to advocate for food and nutrition security issues were ad hoc. As a result, except in some significant but discreet cases, information has not reached the intended high level Host Country policy makers.

V. PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

A. Project Impact

In terms of deliverables, the IMPACT Project will have produced the targeted number of activities, and in some cases exceeding them. As a result, developing countries have access to more and better information and a significant number of people have gained skills and familiarity with this information. The extent to which project-generated information is utilized at the policy level, however, is debatable, with some notable exceptions.

Honduras is an excellent example of the results of a focused and integrated set of activities undertaken by the IMPACT Project. Since 1992, IMPACT has provided assistance in the design, implementation, analysis and dissemination of a national household consumption, income, expenditure and nutrition survey, designed to provide a baseline against which to measure the food security impacts of USAID's Title III food aid program.

IMPACT used its experience in the Title III survey to improve the design of the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau's Health and Nutrition Sustainability Project (LAC/HNS) Title II Cost Effectiveness Study, and help ensure comparability of the data from the Title II and Title III studies through support in interviewer training, data processing, analysis, report writing and dissemination. The Title III data have provided policy guidance to the National Action Plan for Micronutrients, which is another large activity in Honduras with long-term IMPACT Project support.

IMPACT has worked closely with private sector organizations in the course of its Honduran activities, thus developing sustainable capacity to gather, process, analyze and disseminate consumption and nutrition information. Because of this effort, CARE/Honduras is now able to contract a local firm to collect data needed to evaluate the impact of Title II program, at significantly lower cost.

The 1994-1995 work in India is another example which brought together all the Project elements in a single country. It began with the Collaborative Inquiry work on alternative food and nutrition security indicators; and was extended with an evaluation of the Title II program, and later with Technical Assistance and Training of CARE/India and CRS/India to monitor and evaluate the food security impact of their large Title II food aid program; with Technical Assistance and Training of the National Nutrition Reporting through the child clinics; and, finally, with the work to develop a handbook for use by PVOs and Missions. The combination of activities and the close and flexible working arrangement with the Mission represents a paradigm for Project operations in a given country. The culmination of these activities will continue to benefit Indian staff as well as be transferable to other countries and situations.

Another example of IMPACT's success was evident in an external evaluation of the use of DHS Nutrition Chartbooks and In-Depth Country Reports. The evaluator found that the utilization of the Chartbooks by Ministries of Health and international organizations was high, but recommended that the dissemination process could be further strengthened.

REDSO/WCA has reported that it found information contained in food security related IMPACT documents (Mali, India, Guinea and Cote D'Ivoire) to be useful in its negotiations with other donors in determining the need, duration and extent of U.S. food assistance.

B. Relationship with Other Entities

1. Other Donors and Development Entities

Certain publications, such as the CI investigating the effects of select policies and programs on women's income, health and nutrition, have attracted attention from other organizations who were interested in publishing the results. Another indication of others utilizing the materials generated by the IMPACT Project is the work on programs to address Iodine

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Deficiency Disorders (IDD), where the 166 country data base on salt iodization and prevalence of IDD has been used for programming by WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank, USAID, and others.

The IMPACT Project has been active in the lead-up to the International Conference on Nutrition as well as follow-on activities. It has supported African nutrition planners and programmers, both at the country level, and the ECSA regional coordinators, to define nutrition action plans and to share them at regional and international fora.

Work with the PVOs in training has been a high point in the project and will continue to be effective as U.S. PVOs extend the results programming framework to indigenous NGOs in training local staff.

2. Bureaus and Missions

The number of buy-ins from Bureaus and Missions grew from 0 in 1991, to a high of six in 1994. Two are already planned for 1996. The buy-in from the Africa Bureau to produce the Nutrition Chartbooks will have a sustainable effect because of the user-friendly nature of the materials produced. Technical Assistance provided to the Dominican Republic and Honduras has implications for long term improvements. Work with the BHR and the Missions for more effective programming in food aid will endure beyond the end of the project.

3. Other USAID Funded Projects

Activities involving Vitamin A, iodine and iron were undertaken as another nutrition project, VITAL, wound down and the OMNI project was starting. This bridging support provided under IMPACT activities was useful because of the cross-training which would occur from such an activity. Currently, IMPACT is working with the OMNI project in Honduras, Ecuador and Sri Lanka.

IMPACT collaborated closely with the Latin America Health and Nutrition Sustainability (LAC HNS) project's Title II Cost Effectiveness Study in Honduras. IMPACT worked with LAC HNS and USAID in the design of the study, the training of the interviewers, and the use and reporting of the nationally representative Title III household consumption, income, expenditure and nutrition study data to answer important questions about the effectiveness of targeting of the studied programs.

Other examples of coordination with other projects include the SARA project out of the Africa Bureau and selected projects in the Global Bureau.

C. Adequacy of USAID Resources

Funds expended thus far in the project have been approximately \$3.7 million under Core contracts and \$2.9 million under Q-contracts (buy-ins).

It is anticipated that approximately \$8 million will have been committed to IMPACT by its completion date. This appears to have been adequate to produce targeted project outputs.

D. Project Focus and Trends

The Project focus was broad. However, the primary focus was on changing the mind set and behavior of policy makers. Many project activities have contributed to the knowledge base in general, and in skills building of PVOs/NGOs and host-country counterparts, in particular. This will need to continue to be a focus and goal for future projects. The development of data-driven advocacy arguments and plans for food security and nutrition security needs to continue.

Given the normal Agency changes and reductions in resources, the IMPACT Project has done an admirable job of identifying trends and redirecting project resources to maximize opportunities. An example of this is the shift to an emphasis to PVOs. There are strong indications that this trend of channeling significant USAID resources through the PVOs will continue and intensify.

A critical GAO report on USAID's management of Title II food aid program provided an opportunity for IMPACT Project staff to interact with the BHR during 1993/94 as the Agency sought ways to improve the food security impact of food aid. IMPACT Project staff had much of the technical expertise BHR needed to make the improvements. The PVO food aid focus has continued with added assistance to CARE and CRS in India, AFRICARE in Guinea Bissau and plans to expand to other PVOs in Africa and Latin America. This trend of managing for results from U.S. government funded programs will make this kind of project essential to provide technical assistance and training in the design of monitoring and evaluation systems.

E. Project Monitoring and Reporting Requirements

Monitoring the progress of the project activities has been accomplished through Quarterly Technical Reports, and regular meetings with the USAID CTO. Progress toward project output targets are tracked in the Annual Work Plans and the Quarterly Technical Reports.

The contractor was responsible for the following additional reports: four semi-annual reports, project implementation plans, four different quarterly reports, annual activity reports, trip reports, buy-in reports, sub-contractor reports, nutritional assessment reports, periodic status reports to coincide with billing periods, and a final report. This is a very large number of reports to be produced with such a small staff.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Conclusions:

Project Design:

- The project, as designed, targeted an extremely important issue: a high rate of malnutrition and accompanying food insecurity in many developing countries, a situation then, as now, suspected to be worsening. The objectives of producing more and better data and promoting their use were appropriate.
- The Project Logical Framework assumption concerning the interest of host countries, missions and bureaus was overly optimistic and, therefore, affected the ability of the Project to accomplish the end of the project status.

Project Process:

In terms of the management and implementation of IMPACT, this evaluation found that:

- In the initial phase of the Project, progress was slowed by the changes in the Project Directorship, and by the lack of a Food and Nutrition Specialist.
- Project management has greatly stabilized and solidified with the hiring of the current Director and Food and Nutrition Specialist in 1992/3. The team has worked effectively together. The position of Food and Nutrition Specialist appears to have evolved beyond the original intended role of coordinating technical consultants, and now encompasses project administration, not only in the absence of the Director, but also contributing to significant programmatic input and direction.
- Project implementation may have been more effective had fewer countries been targeted.
- Project technical and contractual management of subcontractors, while not seamless, was effective and diligent given the breadth and depth of its activities.
- The USAID reporting requirements were too onerous and time-consuming for such a small project staff.

Project Outcome:

Regarding the achievement of the project's outputs, this evaluation concludes that:

- A significant amount of research has been accomplished but was not sufficiently generalized and disseminated into useful material for policy makers.
- The narrowing of focus of most principal project activities to strengthening the capacity of PVOs to better manage and monitor their food aid programs and to improve the food security impact of their programs was a defining moment in the Project's lifetime. This technical assistance and training to administer Title II food aid programs seems likely to attain measurable results of considerable importance in confronting food insecurity over the long term.

B. Recommendations

1. Remaining Life of Project

The following actions are recommended for the remaining life of the project:

- **Concentrate on assistance and training of PVOs**

The highest priority activity for the Project's core staff during the remaining life of the Project should be to carry forward with the Project's plans to conduct workshops and training sessions for PVO staff (and USAID staff who relate to PVOs). The single most important element of this training may well be the completion of the Handbook now entitled "Food Security Indicators and Framework: A Handbook for Monitoring and Evaluation of Food Aid Programs", and its use as a training aid. While much of the work to date has focused on CARE and CRS programs in India and Central America, the most important area for training is in Sub-Saharan Africa. Efforts to adjust the focus of the training to include Africa should be initiated in the remaining months of the Project.

- **Attention needs to be devoted to dissemination of results already achieved**

The IMPACT core staff should focus on the IMPACT Project's need to complete several on-going activities and to enhance the long-term impact of activities already completed. In particular, added attention needs to be devoted to the dissemination of results already achieved. Many projects fail to complete adequately the last, and often most important steps, to disseminate to USAID staff, recipient country professionals and others the important project outcomes. There are a number of significant accomplishments of the IMPACT Project which, if fully and forcefully disseminated, could greatly expand the visibility and usefulness of these accomplishments.

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- **Give priority to advocacy type information dissemination**

Pull together into a single analytical and advocacy presentation, the important findings and conclusions from the Project's experience to date. Set this in the context of the continuing serious food and nutrition security problems. This could consist of two publications: the first intended primarily for an USAID non-nutritionist policy-level audience, the second intended for non-USAID policy-level audience in developing countries, other donor organizations, and NGOs.

2. Future Considerations

During recent years, there has more attention paid by the USAID, and the larger donor community, to food security as a unifying concept that combines objectives of developmental and humanitarian assistance. The USAID definition of food security (PD-19) identifies three elements; food availability, access to food and utilization. Better food utilization combines USAID's efforts for increased food consumption and a healthy consumer to fully utilize available food.

The need for comprehensive nutrition and food security information to inform policies of USAID, and others, is greater now than it was when the Project was designed in the late 1980s. Currently, food aid constitutes over 40 percent of USAID's resources. USAID reengineering guidelines suggest that between 3 and 10 percent of program resources should be devoted to performance monitoring and evaluation. The opportunity is great for the Global Bureau to take an active role in assisting the Agency in applying technical rigor and guidance, especially for the BHR in its support of the large food aid and child survival programs.

The IMPACT Project has been essential in the development of a food security framework and indicators for use by the USAID and the Cooperating Sponsors. This effort will be seen in a handbook for monitoring and evaluating food-aid and related programs. In addition, it has directly assisted Missions, PVOs, and local NGOs in the design of programs and information systems. The handbook materials produced and technical assistance provided will ensure coherence in programming for food security and child survival outcomes and will better inform USAID and its partners of the impact of its program.

There is potential for great and enduring benefits from the launching of this timely initiative. Serious considerations need to be devoted to the continuation and expansion of these PVO and Mission related efforts. It is essential, therefore, that the Global Bureau continue to provide the technical leadership needed in this area and assist Missions, Cooperating Sponsors and the BHR in evaluating and developing performance monitoring and evaluation criteria and systems for food security programming. Based on these continuing needs, it is recommended that Global Bureau explore the possibility of a joint activity with BHR. The following suggestions are put forward in the design of a future activity

- Training/Capacity building among Cooperating Sponsors, USAID and other donor partners to design and implement performance monitoring and evaluation systems to assess the impact of USAID resources on food security.
- Continue work on materials, such as the Handbook including its field testing, to provide guidance in food-aid and non-food aid projects and for use by indigenous NGOs and other intermediaries in project design, proposal writing, implementation and monitoring of projects intended to have a food security impact.
- Design training and technical assistance approaches in such areas as; sampling methodologies, cost effectiveness criteria, interpretation of data and choice of indicators likely to engender sustainable institution building in selected countries. Channel a large portion of this training and technical assistance through PVOs and the private sector.
- Address gaps in the methodologies, in such areas as food consumption surveys and cost effective approaches to data collection and analysis strategies. Develop, refine and disseminate food and nutrition security survey and surveillance methodologies that can be used by relatively small and lightly capitalized organizations in recipient country universities, consulting firms, local governmental bodies and small developing country for-profit companies.
- Expand USAID technical leadership role in nutrition and food security. An excellent opportunity exists to influence the direction of food security programming by international donors including the World Food Program and the European Union.
- Develop approaches for promoting the use of nutrition and food security information for decision making through advocacy and training programs.

APPENDIX A

Evaluation Team

The team consisted of:

Barry Riley	Team Leader, Consultant Program Evaluation Specialist
Jere Haas, Ph.D.	Cornell University Food Security/Nutrition Monitoring Specialist
Kathryn Tucker, Ph.D.	Tufts University Food Security/Nutrition Monitoring Specialist
Carol Pearson	PAL-TECH Evaluation Coordinator

APPENDIX B

List of People Contacted

USAID/Washington:

Susan Anthony	G/PHN/HN
Kay Calavan	BHR/FFP
Mike Calavan	PPC/CDIE
Eunyong Chung	G/PHN/HN
Frances Davidson	G/PHN/HN
John Grant	BHR/PPE
Rod Knight	G/PHN/POP
Bob Kramer	BHR/FFP
Tim Lavell	BHR/FFP
David Oot	G/PHN/HN
Hope Sukin	AFR/SD/HRD
Bobbie van Haefton	LAC/DP

USAID/Missions:

Gary Alex	Sri Lanka
Julie Borne	Mozambique
Heather Goldman	India
Tom Miller	Dominican Republic
Charles North	Mozambique
Robert Sears	REDSO/WCA Corte d'Ivoire
Laura Slobey	Mozambique
Roy Thompson	REDSO/ESA Kenya
Ken Yamashita	Ecuador

PVOs:

Judy Bryson	Africare
Tim Frankenberger	CARE/Atlanta
Martita Marx	Consultant
Andrea Rogers	CRS/Baltimore
Tom Zopf	Food Aid Management

IMPACT Project Contractors/Consultants:

John Burroughs	International Eye Foundation
Bruce Cogill	IMPACT Project
Lawrence Haddad	IFPRI
Simon Hunt	Oxford University
Eileen Kennedy	USDA
Peggy Meites	Consultant
Nancy Mock	Tulane University

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Penny Nestel	OMNI/John Snow, Inc.
James Pines	Consultant
Frank Reily	Tulane University
Shea Rutstein	MACRO International
Jean Shaikh	ISTI
Elizabeth Sommerfelt	MACRO International
Anne Swindale	IMPACT Project

Field Trips

Honduras:

Eduardo Aguilar	Food and Nutrition division, Ministry of Health (MOH)
Virginia Espinoz	Vice-Minister MOH and coordinator of micronutrient initiatives
Vilma Estrada	Technical Coordinator of IMPACT's support to the National Action Plan for Micronutrients
Magdalena Garcia	Agricultural Economist, PRODEPAH and ADAI consulting
Rosalinda Hernandez	Division of Epidemiology, MOH, Survey, etc.
Ricardo Montoya	Communications expert
Georgina Nazar	Head, Food Control Division, MOH

USAID/Tegucigalpa:

Mary Ann Anderson
Armando Busmail
Stan Terrell
Mike Wise

Guatemala:

Francisco Chew	INCAP
Rafael Flores	INCAP
Benjamin Torun	INCAP
Marie Ruel	INCAP
Ricardo Sibrian	INCAP
Noel Solomons	CeSSIAM

USAID/Guatemala City:

Julia Husa
Patricia O'Connell
Jose Francisco Puac Tumax

APPENDIX C

Text of message sent by Evaluation Team to selected USAID Missions

Dear:

PAL-TECH, Inc. has been contracted to undertake an evaluation of the IMPACT Project (Food and Nutrition Monitoring Project) funded by the USAID Office of Health and Nutrition (G/PHN/HN) and implemented by ISTI and several sub-contractors (IFPRI, MACRO International, Community Systems Foundation, Tulane University and Virginia Polytechnic Institute). Your name has been provided to our evaluation team as one who might have some association with, or knowledge of, one or more IMPACT activities. As you may know, the main objective of this activity is to enhance the integration of food security, food consumption and nutrition considerations in A.I.D., NGO and host government policies, programs and projects in all relevant economic sectors such as agriculture, health, education, etc.

Your views on any of the IMPACT activities will be of great use to our evaluation. We are looking at three dimensions of each project activity: i) timeliness, ii) professional quality, iii) usefulness of the outputs. We are particularly interested in the usefulness of these activities in your on-going planning or programmatic activities and/or those of NGOs or the government. Please be as candid as possible with the assurance that your response will be treated confidentially. Of particular value will be your perceptions of what has worked and your suggestions for improving future project activities and directions in your country. Your response to the following questions will be very much appreciated:

1. Are you aware of one or more IMPACT activities in your country?
2. How were each of these project activities viewed by the mission, the government, the NGO community? How was the overall IMPACT project viewed by these organizations?
3. What have been the most notable achievements of the project? Notable problems?
4. Is there evidence of sustainable institution-building? In which organization?
5. Are you aware of any changed attitudes regarding the usefulness of nutrition and food security indicators for A.I.D. programming? If so, could you describe them?
6. Do you have suggestions for future activities relating to improving capacities in host governments, NGOs, and A.I.D. Missions to collect, interpret, report, and utilize information on food security and nutrition.

END OF LETTER

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PaL-Tech, Inc.

1700 North Moore Street, Suite 1250

Arlington, Virginia 22209

Tel: 703-243-0495

Fax: 703-243-0496

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