VITAL

VITAMIN A FIELD SUPPORT PROJECT

A project of the A.I.D. Office of Nutrition managed by the International Science and Technology Institute, Inc. (ISTI)
THIRD ANNUAL WORKPLAN

October 1, 1991 - September 30, 1992

Introduction

VITAL will enter its third year as a mature project with valuable experience behind it, and important challenges ahead. As we approach project mid-point it is appropriate to assess performance to date, set concrete end-of-project targets, make management and budgetary changes required to meet those targets, and implement our third year work plan as an integral part of the larger strategy.

The project performance will be evaluated in December as part of an overall evaluation of the ST/N Vitamin A for Health Project. We will incorporate its recommendations for changed or new initiatives into a re-planning process in February at which time the overall project goals, concrete targets, and measures to achieve them will be addressed. We will be prepared to revise this Plan accordingly.

Our plans for the next year derive from work begun during the first two years, and from identification of new initiatives required to meet the overall project goals. This workplan is presented according to the four Project components, and the highlights of each component are summarized below.

Management and Administration

We anticipate utilizing project staff and consultants at a higher rate of person months during this year than was previously planned, in order to plan and implement the high volume of activities projected. However, most of the excess will be charged to the Buy-In contract. Also, staff and consultant travel will increase substantially commensurate with the increased level of field activities described below.
Technical Assistance & Interventions

The volume and diversity of country-specific technical assistance and intervention support activities will increase substantially this year. In Latin America, our most active region to date, we will become involved in intervention design and implementation support in a number of countries. Our sensitization work in year one led to VITAL assistance for prevalence assessments in several countries during year two. We will continue to assist with some surveys in year three, but the year will mark VITAL's entry into, or continuation with, intervention assistance in Bolivia, Peru, Haiti, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras.

VITAL strengthened its Africa program capability substantially in year two by adding Mohamed Mansour and Charlotte Johnson-Welch to its consultant staff to concentrate exclusively on that region. As a result, the pace of program development has increased and many country-specific activities will be initiated in year three. Like Latin America, the first step in some countries will be a prevalence assessment (Uganda, Cameroon, Nigeria). But we expect to participate in direct intervention design and implementation support in other countries where prevalence has already been sufficiently documented to proceed with action programs (Niger, Zambia, Burkina Faso).

The Asia region is different from Africa and Latin America in that the major countries (India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Philippines) have already documented their vitamin A problems and taken a variety of actions independently, or with the support of various donors. It has been, therefore, less clear as to the most appropriate role that VITAL should play. It appears that we will do relatively little prevalence assessment work in year three (Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea), and concentrate instead on projects intended to improve state-of-the-art of vitamin A program interventions (Nepal, India, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines).

On a global basis, we will make a major effort in year three to introduce and implement several high priority interventions in many countries. These are 1) vitamin A supplementation of measles patients, 2) solar drying of vitamin A rich fruits and vegetables, and 3) appropriate management systems for vitamin A supplementation programs.

Collaborative Inquiries

VITAL will expand its portfolio of explicit collaborative inquiry projects during the next year as the result of substantial exploratory and start-up work performed during the past year. We have attempted to identify several high priority opportunities, or constraints to improved program performance, on which to focus our attention. These include delivery of vitamin A supplements as part of immunization programs, increasing nutritional impacts from gardening projects, increasing consumption of beta-carotene from preserved foods, and determining effects of cooking and preservation practices on beta-carotene.
content of foods consumed.

But, VITAL's efforts to improve service delivery effectiveness is not restricted to explicit collaborative inquiry projects. Many of our technical assistance activities include quality improvement elements which will add to our stock of lessons learned for dissemination to others. For example, we will test the validity of the CIC prevalence assessment methodology in high altitude regions through a small activity in Bolivia, strengthen management systems for supplement distribution programs in several Latin American countries through management assessments of the ongoing programs, improve food preservation techniques to enhance beta-carotene retention in Haiti, and monitoring of the consumption of the vitamin A-rich foods produced and/or preserved in Haiti and Niger.

Information Gathering & Dissemination

We will intensify our efforts in this component in year three by: 1) sponsoring a number of problem-specific seminars and workshops in at least two regions (vitamin A supplementation for treatment of measles patients, solar drying techniques), 2) extensive application of the new VITAL orientation training modules in English, Spanish and French, 3) implementation of the Africa region information centers (ORANA and TDRC) and initiation of a center in Latin America (INCAP) and a center in Asia, 4) strengthened information sharing with other donor organizations, and 5) strengthening the database on A.I.D. vitamin A programs. This strategy is based on recommendations of a comprehensive management review of the component conducted by VITAL in September.

FIRST QUARTER
October 1 - December 31

Technical Assistance

Global

Mid-term Evaluation - December 1991: VITAL staff will be available and provide requested information to the evaluation team. The VITAL project will be included in the mid-term evaluation of the overall ST/N Vitamin A for Health Project, of which VITAL is one component.

Vitamin A/Measles Seminar - October 1991: VITAL will hold a seminar for A.I.D. staff on initiation of a world-wide program to introduce vitamin A supplementation as a routine treatment regimen for measles patients in less developed countries. The
seminar and follow-up may be done in conjunction with the REACH project.

**Micronutrient Meeting in Montreal - Oct. 10-12, 1991:** Several VITAL staff will attend the international micronutrient meeting "Ending Hidden Hunger."

**Africa Region**

**Food Preservation Reconnaissance Trips in Africa - Oct-Dec 1991:** Mohamed Mansour and a food technologist will travel to four Sahelian countries to gather information about traditional food preservation and preparation techniques, food processing and preservation resources and fortification opportunities. Dr. Mansour will make similar investigations in additional African countries during project visits in subsequent months.

**Botswana**

VITAL will communicate with the mission regarding a letter of interest received from Dr. Abbas R.M. Kingo at the Princess Marina Hospital in Gaborone.

**Burkina Faso**

During this quarter, VITAL will follow-up food preservation initiatives generated during a fact-finding mission undertaken in September 1991. VITAL also will follow-up with FAO regarding strengthening the monitoring/evaluation component of their gardening project.

**Cameroon**

A two-week visit in early December will be made by Mohamed Mansour and Dr. Roy Wilson, Drew University, to identify in-country technical, financial and administrative resources for the design and implementation of a blindness and vitamin A prevalence survey. During the visit, in-country capabilities and resources in food preservation and food technology will be identified.

**Chad**

Dr. Mansour will visit Chad to assess the mission's interest in developing a vitamin A activity within the CDD component of the mission's new MCH project.

**Niger**

VITAL will review the revised FAO/Niger project document and VITAL's contribution to the planned horticulture and food preservation project.

**Togo**

VITAL will follow-up with the USAID mission and others working in Togo on any initiatives identified during a visit in September 1991.

**Uganda**

Implementation of the VITAL/UNICEF/MOH blindness and vitamin A sub-national survey will begin in October. Data will be collected, analyzed and interpreted during this quarter.
Zambia

VITAL will follow-up with food preservation initiatives identified during Dr. Mansour's September 1991 visit.

Asia Near East Region

Regional

SEARO Network C.I. Projects Begin - November 1991: VITAL collaboration with the SEARO Research-cum-Action Network will begin in November. Specific food preservation, preparation and weaning food development activities will be designed by three nutrition research institutions in the Network (National Institute of Nutrition - India, Center for Research & Development in Nutrition - Indonesia, and Institute of Nutrition of Mahidol University - Thailand).

Indonesia

Indonesia Eastern Islands prevalence assessment data will be analyzed and appropriate follow-on activities in Indonesia will be planned with the USAID mission and the Ministry of Health. VITAL will attend a workshop to present the findings of the prevalence assessment in November, and meet with the mission and MOH to plan follow-on activities.

South Pacific

Program support funded under the 1990 ANE Buy-In will continue, including technical assistance to the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific for the vitamin A project in Kiribati, and completion of the regional vitamin A prevalence survey.

A preliminary visit to Papua New Guinea is planned for December, to plan the vitamin A deficiency survey with the MOH and the Institute of Medical Research.

A formal presentation of the Tuvalu survey findings is planned for November in Tuvalu.

Nepal

The vitamin A supplementation/immunization collaborative inquiry operations research project will begin, following several revisions of the proposed protocols and changes in the Ministry of Health in Nepal.

A collaborative inquiry to measure the impact of home gardening on vitamin A status will be conducted with CARE/Nepal beginning in November. VITAL will provide technical assistance in gardening, education, monitoring and evaluation.
Latin America & Caribbean Region

Regional

**Mango Drying Training Workshop in Haiti - Nov. 1991:** VITAL will sponsor a training workshop for Latin American nutrition and food technology experts on opportunities and methods for preserving mangos, and other vitamin A-rich foods. VITAL will provide follow-up assistance to countries to design and implement interventions.

**Vitamin A/Measles Workshop in Latin America - November 1991:** VITAL will review with selected Latin American experts the measles vitamin A treatment protocols and the VITAL training package for use in Latin America. An action plan for ensuring integration of the treatment into LAC health services will be drafted.

**Bolivia**

The data from the vitamin A deficiency survey will be analyzed in November.

VITAL funding of NGO community nutrition projects through PROCOSI will begin in October. VITAL will provide technical assistance in program start-up, especially development of monitoring and regular reporting systems.

**Dominican Republic**

Based on the findings of the vitamin A deficiency survey in the western provinces, VITAL will provide technical assistance to the MOH in developing a strategy and action plan for addressing vitamin A deficiency and appropriate interventions will be planned.

**Guatemala**

VITAL will provide a two person team in October to assist INCAP to develop a regional strategy and action plan for implementation of its vitamin A program supported by ROCAP.

In November VITAL will conduct an assessment of vitamin A capsule distribution and sugar fortification in Guatemala in collaboration with the MOH and INCAP.

**Haiti**

A national vitamin A capsule distribution assessment will take place in November. The purpose of the assessment is to determine how successful the existing capsule distribution system is in reaching populations at risk for vitamin A deficiency, and to identify gaps in coverage for future program modification.

The solar drying project in Maissade will shift from drying mangos to experimenting with other vitamin A rich foods, such as green leaves, pumpkin, etc. during this season when no mangos are available. This will increase the usefulness of the dryers for increasing food availability and expand the recipe.
development, marketing and nutrition education components of the project.

**Honduras**  In response to a request from the MOH, VITAL will provide technical assistance for a vitamin A deficiency assessment in two provinces in November. Assessment methods will include CIC, clinical exams and serum retinol.

**Information Gathering & Dissemination**

**ORANA (Senegal)**  VITAL will continue support to ORANA to serve as the regional information collection and dissemination center for French-speaking Africa. Dr. Mansour will visit ORANA during this quarter.

**TDRC (Zambia)**  TDRC will begin services in October as VITAL's information collection and dissemination center for English-speaking countries in Africa with vitamin A information services. Dr. Mansour will visit TDRC during this quarter.

**Newsletter**  The fourth issue of the VITAL NEWS will be published in October, in preparation for the Micronutrient Meeting.

**Annual Report**  During October and November VITAL will prepare the annual report of its second year, in accordance with contract guidelines.

**A.I.D. Vitamin A Database**  VITAL will complete the development of this database consisting of quantitative and descriptive information on A.I.D. supported vitamin A programs.

**Collaborative Inquiries**

The Nepal EPI C.I. will begin this quarter.

The SEARO Network food preparation C.I. activities will begin this quarter, looking at the level of beta-carotene retained in foods prepared in a variety of traditional methods.

The Nepal gardening C.I. will begin this quarter, to measure the impact of gardening on vitamin A food consumption. Baseline data will be gathered, and monitoring and evaluation guidelines will be drafted.

VITAL will meet with INCAP to discuss their collaboration in food preparation C.I. activities in the LAC region.
SECOND QUARTER
January 1 - March 31

Technical Assistance

Global

Prepare Nutrition Communications Guidelines for Vitamin A Nutrition Programs - January 1992: As follow-on to the Vitamin A Nutrition Communications Assessment, VITAL will prepare a handbook of guidelines for nutrition education program development for program managers.

Home Gardening C.I. Projects Meeting - March 1992: The key implementors of each project will meet with VITAL and FAO to review project issues, methodologies and plans.

SEARO Network C.I. Projects Investigators' Meeting - January 1992: The key investigators of each project will meet with VITAL and SEARO/WHO to review project start-up issues, methodologies and plans.

Africa Region

Regional

Food Preservation Program Planning and Implementation: Based on the findings of the Sahelian food preservation reconnaissance visits, specific site visits will be made and follow-up activities will be planned during February and March.

Solar Drying Workshops in Africa: French West Africa - February 1992; Eastern/Central Africa - March 1992. VITAL will sponsor training workshops for African nutrition and food technology experts on opportunities and methods for preserving mangos, and other vitamin A rich foods. VITAL will provide follow-up assistance to countries to design and implement interventions.

Burkina Faso  VITAL conduct a baseline survey for the HKI vitamin A project, and in conjunction with FAO, begin food preservation initiatives and strengthening the monitoring and evaluation component of the gardening project.

Cameroon  VITAL will continue to work with Drew University and the MOH in developing data collection protocol and forms.

Chad  During this quarter, VITAL will follow-up with the mission, FAO and other donors and/or institutions on food preservation initiatives.

Malawi  VITAL will make a reconnaissance visit to Malawi in March for identification of vitamin A activities, including food preservation collaborative inquiries.

Mali  VITAL will follow-up with the mission, FAO and others on food preservation and other activities.

Niger  In January the FAO gardening project will begin. VITAL will plan the collection of baseline data for monitoring and evaluation. In March the food preservation and nutrition education components will begin, with VITAL assistance in design and implementation.

Nigeria  In February VITAL will make a reconnaissance visit to Nigeria for the design and implementation of a vitamin A prevalence assessment.

Uganda  VITAL will participate in the end-of-survey information sharing and intervention planning workshop, and will identify possible VITAL assistance to follow-on activities.

Asia Region

Regional


South Pacific  The findings of the Vanuatu and Solomon Islands surveys will be presented at workshops in each country. Based on the findings, appropriate follow-on activities will be planned with USAID and the Ministries of Health.

The vitamin A survey in Papua New Guinea will be planned in February, in conjunction with Institute for Medical Research (IMR). Assessment methodologies may include clinical exams, dietary assessment and MRDR.
Dietary assessment data from Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the Solomons will be analyzed and compared to identify varied dietary practices as related to vitamin A status of populations in the region.

**Philippines**

VITAL will make a visit to the Philippines to meet with USAID and local staff regarding gardening and food preservation activities.

**Bangladesh**

VITAL will visit USAID to discuss appropriate activities in Bangladesh.

**LAC Region**

**Bolivia**

VITAL will provide technical assistance to the MOH in the development of a strategy and action plan for vitamin activities in January.

VITAL assistance through PROCOSI will continue.

**Dominican Republic**

A workshop will be held in January to disseminate the findings of the vitamin A deficiency survey in the western provinces. VITAL will provide technical assistance to the MOH in implementation of appropriate interventions, perhaps through PVOs working in the country.

**Ecuador**

VITAL will provide technical assistance for the planned vitamin A deficiency survey of the highland provinces in January and February.

**Salvador**

VITAL will provide technical assistance to the two Child Survival projects in program planning and implementation to integrate vitamin A nutrition education and gardening in February.

**Guatemala**

VITAL will provide technical assistance to the International Eye Foundation in developing a monitoring and information system.

A collaborative inquiry measuring the impact of home gardening on vitamin A status will also be conducted with IEF, over two years.

Based on the assessment of vitamin A capsule distribution and sugar fortification, appropriate interventions will be planned.

**Haiti**

The solar drying project in Maissade will gear up for another mango season, this time with more dryers and a kitchen/training facility. Nutrition education, recipe development, marketing and training of other women’s groups will be the focus of this year’s work.

VITAL will expand its work in solar drying in Haiti during this quarter, in
conjunction with USAID Agriculture and Private Enterprise offices. Based on the November planning meeting joint efforts in marketing, nutrition education and technical improvements will be developed.

**Honduras**

Building on work in Malawi, VITAL will provide technical assistance to IEF in the development of an MIS system for their vitamin A capsule distribution program.

VITAL will also provide technical assistance in training and horticulture for IEF in peri-urban settings in Honduras.

**Panama**

VITAL will assist in a vitamin A deficiency assessment in three provinces close to the Costa Rican border. The assessment methods will include serum retinol and dietary. INCAP will visit to assess the country's local ability to do the serum analysis.

**Peru**

VITAL will provide technical assistance for development of a national strategy and action plan in February.

VITAL will provide technical assistance to PRISMA in its gardening activities in urban settings in Peru.

**Collaborative Inquiries**

VITAL support for the Nepal EPI C.I. will continue this quarter.

The SEARO Network food preparation C.I. activities will continue. As results from laboratory work become available, data from the different labs will be compared and validated by a USDA lab in Beltsville.

The Nepal gardening C.I. will continue.

**Information Dissemination**

**IVACG Dietary Assessment Guidelines Analysis, Phase 2 - January 1992:** VITAL will continue its analysis of the IVACG Simplified Dietary Assessment Guidelines, adding the feedback from users whose dietary assessments were not completed at the time of the initial analysis. The report will be finalized for review by IVACG.

**Newsletter** The fifth issue of VITAL NEWS will be published in February.
THIRD QUARTER
April 1 - June 30

Technical Assistance

Global

In collaboration with FAO, VITAL will undertake a world-wide investigation of food preservation activities and techniques, which may be useful in increasing the availability of vitamin A-rich foods at the household level.

Africa Region

Burkina Faso

VITAL will follow-up with the mission and HKI on baseline assessment activities.

Cameroon

VITAL will visit Cameroon in April to assist with the pre-test of data collection instruments for the blindness and vitamin A sub-national survey, and to train local technicians in the dietary assessment component of the survey. VITAL also will follow-up with any food preservation initiatives identified through an earlier site visit.

Niger

VITAL will continue its assistance to the FAO home gardening project.

Nigeria

VITAL will work with the GON, Africa Bureau, USAID mission, UNICEF and the World Bank in the design and implementation of a vitamin A survey.

Uganda

VITAL will work with the MOH and others in designing a national vitamin A intervention strategy.

Asia Region

Indonesia

VITAL will assist the Government and USAID design a concrete vitamin A nutrition action plan for the Eastern Islands, based on the results of the Eastern Islands survey.

South Pacific

A mid-term evaluation of the Kiribati vitamin A program will take place in April. VITAL will conduct this evaluation in conjunction with FSP and UNICEF.
The Papua New Guinea vitamin A survey will be conducted beginning in April.

**LAC Region**

**Bolivia**

VITAL will provide technical assistance to NGOs, through PROCOSI, for capsule distribution in high risk areas identified in the vitamin A survey.

VITAL assistance through PROCOSI for gardening and food preservation activities will continue.

**Ecuador**

Results will be available in June from the vitamin A deficiency survey of the highland provinces. VITAL will assist in planning for follow-on activities, especially to incorporate vitamin A interventions into the overall nutrition strategy of the country. Home gardening and nutrition education are interventions of particular interest.

**Salvador**

VITAL will provide technical assistance to the two Child Survival projects in program planning and implementation to integrate vitamin A nutrition education and gardening.

**Guatemala**

VITAL will provide technical assistance to the International Eye Foundation in developing a monitoring and information system.

A collaborative inquiry measuring the impact of home gardening on vitamin A status will also be conducted with IEF, over two years.

Based on the assessment of vitamin A capsule distribution and sugar fortification, appropriate interventions will be planned.

**Haiti**

The solar drying project in Maissade will continue its drying activity during the mango season. A mid-term evaluation will take place in May.

**Honduras**

VITAL will assist in the planning and implementation of follow-on activities, following the assessment, especially in home gardening, where Honduras has a good deal of experience on which to build.

**Peru**

VITAL will provide technical assistance for follow-on activities based on the national strategy and action plan, especially to incorporate vitamin A interventions into the overall nutrition strategy of the country. Home gardening and nutrition education are interventions of particular interest.

VITAL will continue to provide technical assistance to PRISMA in its gardening activities in urban settings in Peru.
Information Dissemination

**IVACG Dietary Assessment Guidelines Analysis - December 1991:** VITAL will assist IVACG make revisions to the IVACG Simplified Dietary Assessment Guidelines, in response to the feedback of users.

**ORANA (Senegal)** VITAL and ORANA will assess their first year's collaboration and determine if/how this will be continued. If it is decided not to continue the agreement, VITAL will identify a substitute organization, such as the Sahel Institute in Mali, and develop a working agreement to serve as the regional information center for vitamin A.

**TDRC (Zambia)** Dr. Mansour will make a site visit to TDRC to provide on-sight technical support.

**Newsletter** The sixth issue of the VITAL NEWS will be published in June.

**Collaborative Inquiries**

The Nepal EPI C.I. will continue during this quarter.

The Nepal gardening C.I. will continue with VITAL technical assistance in monitoring.

The SEARO Network institutions will continue their work on the affects of food preparation practices on the vitamin A content of foods consumed.

Collaborative Inquiries projects similar to those conducted by the SEARO Network institutions will be started in Latin America and Africa during this quarter.

A collaborative inquiry looking at the operational issues associated with integration of vitamin A supplementation into an existing EPI program will begin in a Latin American country during this quarter. This will be an effort to conduct a C.I. similar to the Nepal EPI study in another setting. Protocols will be developed.
FOURTH QUARTER  
July 1 - September 30

Technical Assistance

Africa Region

Cameroon  
Dr. Mansour will assist with the data analysis from the blindness and vitamin A survey, and will participate in the end-of-survey information sharing and intervention design seminar.

During this quarter, VITAL will follow-up on initiatives (food preservation, prevalence assessments, monitoring and evaluation plans, intervention design and implementation) as identified through site visits and communications with the field in earlier quarters.

Asia Region

South Pacific  
The PNG survey will continue during this quarter and data will be analyzed. Based on the findings, appropriate follow-on activities will be planned with the MOH.

Nepal  
VITAL will visit the two C.I. projects in Nepal to follow-up on project progress.

LAC Region

Bolivia  
VITAL assistance to NGOs through PROCOSI will continue.

Haiti  
VITAL will provide assistance to PROVAX and the MOH in developing MIS systems for the national vitamin A distribution program. Based on the findings of the capsule distribution assessment, program assistance will be planned with USAID and the MOH.

In September the Maissade solar drying activity will be assessed and appropriate follow-on activities will be planned, especially training of other PVOs.

Salvador  
Vitamin A capsule distribution in El Salvador will be assessed in collaboration
with the MOH and UNICEF.

Peru  VITAL will provide technical assistance to the MOH for implementation of the vitamin A strategy developed during the second quarter, especially in gardening and nutrition education.

Information Dissemination

**ORANA (Senegal)** The RTA will make a site visit to ORANA (or an alternative center) to provide technical support for information activities.

**TDRC (Zambia)** TDRC and VITAL will assess their first year of collaboration, and determine if/how it will continue. A second agreement will be prepared for signature. Dr. Mansour will make an on-site technical support visit.

Collaborative Inquiries

The Nepal EPI C.I. will continue during this quarter.

The Nepal gardening C.I. will continue with VITAL technical assistance.

The SEARO Network institutions will continue their work on the affects of food preparation practices on vitamin A content of foods consumed.