June 27, 1989

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jose Estrada  
FROM: Richard Hough  
SUBJECT: Cooperative Agreement Evaluation, El Salvador

I take it you will pull together our comments on the above subject and forward them to the CPD. Please find below my contribution.

Evaluation Guidelines

1. The scope and tone of the guidelines imply a systematic, serious evaluation with a three man professional team for 36 work days. We should treat it as such. The quality and level of effort projected appears to be a far cry from the piecemeal though helpful evaluation that Peter Cody did four years back -- an evaluation that at no time represented a danger or possible embarrassment to us.

2. The focus of the guidelines is more on substantive policy/program issues than on financial management questions. This slant is also reflected in the reputations of the consultant firms that have informally been noted in the back presumably as the most serious candidates. This does not necessarily mean, however, that a review of financial procedures and practices will be neglected in the actual evaluation.

3. The guidelines reflect, inter alia, sensitivity to AIFLD's political role and aims in El Salvador and are not laced with the usual economic development argot of AID documents.

4. Ample room is provided for an active role by AIFLD in the evaluation, i.e., selection of team, interviews, review of findings, etc. The sense of the text is that of a jointly-supported evaluation rather than an independent USAID evaluation. This has both advantages and disadvantages for the party being evaluated.

5. We are short in progress on programmed outputs as stated in the guidelines, particularly in C. Rural Campesino Organization Programs; also, some of the questions under Specific Concerns will present problems if pushed by the Evaluation team, e.g. (2) (5) (6) (7).
6. It should be stipulated, or at least agreed to informally, that the evaluation team should spend one to two days in AIFLD/Washington for interviews and discussions before going to San Salvador.

7. AIFLD's support for the recurrent costs of operation of our counterpart trade union and agrarian organizations figures to receive considerable attention. See A (2) and C. (6). We should be ready with a projected plan or scheme to diminish our vulnerability on this issue.

8. There apparently will be some overlap in time between the Evaluation Team and Agrarian Reform Study Group in August. This would not appear to present major problems, though there will be a need for coordination on interviews, etc. as well as some preparation of documents and answers ahead of time. The findings of the study, if ready, might indeed prove useful with the Evaluation Team.

9. I doubt if 75% of the team's time devoted to field work is practical, at least in the rural areas.

10. The guidelines should be reviewed with UNOC and its affiliated urban and agrarian labor organizations. I suggest that the guidelines be translated and given to UNOC early-on. Some preparation for the Evaluation Team by UNOC leadership is clearly necessary, as well as orchestration of positions with AIFLD/El Salvador.

CONTRACTORS

1. It is difficult to make any judgement on the firms until one knows the names of the evaluators that the individual firm is proposing. Prima facie, I would favor Development Associates for a number of reasons. They just finished an evaluation of the African Institute (AALC) which was apparently well-received and useful; they have the professional capability to work in the gray areas of politics and economic development; and the management of the firm on the international side is pro-labor.

2. It is not clear from the guidelines as to how the contract will be let, that is, through competitive bidding or by non-competitive selection off what is called the IQC List of qualified contractors. The important point here is that whatever the selection process, or whomever is selected, AIFLD should have the opportunity to approve the evaluation team members.

cc: Donovan