

The New School Practicum in International Affairs Terms of Reference

Client: Municipality of San Fernando, El Salvador

Client contact: Rosa Damary Serrano de Soriano, principle of central school

New School Consultant Team Members: N/A

New School Faculty Supervisor: Mark Johnson/Alec Gershberg

Date: 01/15/2007

Update after trip in Dec:

Damary is “on board” with the project. She has told the other teachers about the project, and they are supportive. The mayor is interested in receiving training on Plan 2021. He claims he has never been given training and is not familiar with the goals and objectives of Plan 2021. I will include the mayor and municipal council in the training sessions when I go in May/June. It will be important to keep in mind the fact that people in San Fernando do not like to read-this includes community leaders such as members of the municipal council, and the mayor himself who has a 6th grade education. The mayor has copies of all of the Plan 2021 documents that I brought for Damary, but he had them stored away in his house-he had not shown them to Damary-his daughter brought them out for me and she had not read them either-despite the fact that she is getting a bachelors degree in education to become a teacher. The manual will have to be VERY SIMPLE. I have in mind something like what is used in Non-Formal Education trainings. I met with the director of the Youth Development section of Peace Corps El Salvador. She read my ToR, and agreed with my observations.

Background:

A brief explanation of your client organization’s overall goals.

I served as a Peace Corps volunteer from 2000-2002 in the municipality of San Fernando, Chalatenango, El Salvador. San Fernando is a small, rural municipality on the border with Honduras. The population is 1,464. San Fernando is approximately sixty kilometers from the capital of El Salvador, San Salvador. There is no paved road to San Fernando. Transportation during the rainy season is precarious, as the road to San Fernando tends to get heavily flooded, making it impossible for the bus to pass.

Since finishing my Peace Corps service in 2002, I have traveled to San Fernando yearly. I am in regular phone contact with people in the municipality, including the mayor, and people from San Fernando now residing in the United States.

I began looking into education reform in El Salvador during a class at NYU in the fall of 2005. When I traveled to San Fernando in October of 2005, I met with the principle of the central school, and informally discussed the topic-specifically the global initiative entitled Education For All which sets out specific targets in education reform and which El Salvador has agreed to participate in.

In March of 2005, El Salvador launched a fifteen-year, comprehensive education reform plan entitled “*Plan 2021 Building The Country We Want*”. Plan 2021 is expected to dramatically improve preschool, primary and secondary education in El Salvador by decreasing drop-out and repetition rates, improving quality and increasing the national budget for education (percentage of GDP going to education).

Stats on rural education in El Salvador as of 2004¹:

- ❖ 13.7% first grade repetition rate
- ❖ 16.3% of students transition to secondary
- ❖ 58.5% of students make it passed fifth grade
- ❖ 2.86% of GDP allocated to education

San Fernando is highlighted in Plan 2021 as one of the initial target municipalities that will be receiving extra attention and resources, most notably in the area of preschool, to ensure children begin school at the correct age. (see *Educacion Preescolar y Basica en la Red Solidaria*, March 2005 and *Primer Aniversario Plan Nacional de Educacion 2021* March 2006) .

In September 2006 I asked the principle of the central school in San Fernando if she would be interested in collaborating on my final project. I asked her to give me a list of her concerns related to plan 2021. I also asked other people in the U.S. and San Fernando if they would be interested in collaborating on the project. From the principle’s list of concerns, a manual describing Plan 2021 came out as a feasible project accompanied by trainings for key stakeholders (teachers, parent committee, mayor, municipal council).

A brief explanation of the specific project’s goals.

- ❖ The principle, teachers in the central school and other schools in the municipality, parent committee, students, mayor and municipal council will have a better understanding of Plan 2021 as related to education reform in San Fernando
- ❖ Teachers throughout the municipality will be “replicators” of the training-they will be comfortable with the material and be able to transmit information to their specific communities within the municipality (this is Damary’s suggestion)
- ❖ The population from San Fernando residing in the U.S. will have a clearer understanding of Plan 2021’s goals, objectives and programs as they relate to San Fernando
- ❖ The central Ministry of Education will have a better understanding of the reality (needs, capacity etc.) in San Fernando as related to Plan 2021 and rural El Salvador-*I would like to leave this in even though Damary does not want it as of now-maybe in the near future*

¹ Source: Ministry of Education

Objectives:

Spell out the specific outcome or outcomes as a result of the project work.

- ❖ To increase understanding in the municipality of San Fernando of Plan 2021’s goals, objectives, methods and programs
- ❖ To increase awareness among population from San Fernando residing in the U.S. of Plan 2021’s goals as they relate to San Fernando

Methodology:

List all the significant steps you will take in your project work.

Produce a timeline (Remember PDPM?) that shows when you will undertake and complete the different steps in the Methodology. Include deadlines.

Timeline:

Activity	Dec. 2006	Jan. - May 2007	June 10-20 2007	July 2007
Meet with principle of school, mayor, parents, students				
Disseminate project to population in U.S.				
Design accessible Plan 2021 manual				
Turn in finished manual to school, parents, students & mayor/municipal council				
Training for teachers, Mayor, municipal council and parent committee on Plan 2021				
Party to celebrate our work				
Turn in manual to New School professors				

Deliverables:

What tangible product will be produced? Written report, video, presentation, brochure, grant proposal...

Also, mention that the consultant offers a client presentation if desired.

- ❖ A manual describing Plan 2021's goals, objectives and programs in English and Spanish to be given to San Fernando, MINED and population from San Fernando residing in U.S.
- ❖ An accountability map describing roles in Plan 2021-*I am keeping this in for myself-I may give it to Damary for her personal reference-but it will not be a "formal" part of the project*
- ❖ Maybe some suggestions regarding priorities as seen by San Fernando regarding implementation of Plan 2021?

Signatures

Ask the client if they want a signed ToR or not.

Damary does not want a signature