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**IDENTIFIERS** \*Southern Rural Development Center

**ABSTRACT**

The Southern Rural Development Center's (SRDC) first annual report documents its organizational structure and provides a point by point summary of accomplishments relative to the following goals: (1) Develop, plan, and inventory existing rural development research knowledge; (2) Inventory rural development research needs and priorities; (3) Develop a plan to inventory existing extension rural development educational programs; (4) Compile a list of extension and research personnel with rural development responsibilities; (5) Design instrument for training needs survey for professional research and extension workers; (6) Plan orientation visit schedule to campuses of participating institutions; (7) Develop plan for appointing "Career Associates"; (8) Plan 1 or more workshops for scientists and educators on economic improvement in rural areas; (9) Develop procedures and areas for appointment of regional functional networks; (10) Appoint 1 or more functional networks to study relevant research, plan information sheets, and/or workshops; (11) Plan, implement, and complete annual evaluations of SRDC program work. Among those accomplishments cited are: publication of an annotated research inventory and an inventory of research needs and priorities; development of a plan to inventory existing extension programs; and compilation of a rural development personnel list.

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## INTRODUCTION

This progress report assesses activities planned and undertaken by the Southern Rural Development Center, located at Mississippi State University, for the period February 1, 1974 - December 31, 1974.

The original plan of work for the Center was ambitious by design; still, almost all of the goals set forth have been achieved. Measurable indicators of achievement are available--publications, research projects, contacts and liasons established. For example, in the first eleven months of its operation, the SRDC has published (or readied for publication):

Research Needs in Rural Development  
Rural Development Research at Land-Grant Institutions in the South  
Personnel in Rural Development  
Program of Work  
The Southern Rural Development Center (orientation pamphlet)  
CRD Publications List for the Southern Region

The most important achievements are of course in the areas of merely setting up and running a new program, of getting it more than just "off the ground" and into active participation and leadership. The SRDC has made this transition and should be able to demonstrate even more measurable progress in its succeeding reports.

*William W. Linder*

William W. Linder, Director

*William C. Boykin*

William C. Boykin, Associate Director

## HISTORY AND ORIENTATION

During the fall of 1973, following the passage of the Rural Development Act of 1972, the Southern State Directors of Cooperative Extension Services and Experiment Stations established the Southern Rural Development Center by appointing an eight-member Board of Directors.

- Dr. W. M. Bost, Director, Coop. Ext. Service, Mississippi State University
- Dr. Charles P. Ellington, Director, Coop. Ext. Service, University of Georgia
- Dr. Jarvis Miller, Director, Experiment Station, Texas A & M University
- Dr. S. J. Parker, Dean, Agriculture and Technology, University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- Dr. John L. Ragland, Associate Director, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Kentucky
- Dr. A. D. Seale, Jr., Associate Director, Experiment Station, Mississippi State University
- Dr. John W. Sites, Dean of Research, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Florida
- Dr. Winfred Thomas, Dean, School of Agriculture and Env. Science, Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University

At the November 13, 1973 meeting of the Center Board of Directors the Board moved to solicit proposals for the location of the SRDC to be submitted by January 1, 1974. Five proposals were submitted with the following criteria used in evaluation: (1) cooperation between the endorsement by both the 1890 and 1862 institutions; (2) support of state plans on a region-wide basis; (3) faculty expertise of host institution; (4) evidence of cooperation and participation between Extension Service and Experiment Station; (5) organization and administrative arrangements; (6) proposed

program of work; (7) maturity or state of readiness to initiate and implement the functions of the Center; (8) relationships with existing committees: Southern Regional Rural Development Research Council, and Southern Extension Regional Community Resource Committee.

At a Board meeting in Atlanta on January 28 and 29, 1974, the joint proposal from Alcorn State University and Mississippi State University received the highest ranking from the Board. At this meeting Mr. Sam H. Booker, Vice President for Marketing of the Alabama Power and Light Company, was elected as the ninth member of the Board. It was February 1, 1974, that the center actually began operation. The Board of Directors met again March 28, 1974, at Mississippi State University and approved the proposed FY 1974 plan of work for the Center.

From the earliest discussions of the Board of Directors emphasis for the Center's orientation has consistently centered on the regional influence and Research Extension interaction necessary for success. From the start, the Southern Regional Rural Development Research Council (SRRDRC) and the Southern Extension Regional Community Resource Committee (SERCRC) were involved in developing the Center's plan of work. The regional center has always been conceived as an interpretative gathering point for research in the South. Coordination of SRDC activities through the SRRDRC and the SERCRC has focused on:

providing and developing knowledge essential to assist and support rural development in the region, and to provide for technical consultation and personnel development of the Research and Extension staff in the several states of the region to help them be more responsive to rural development needs and activities.

Utilizing this approach, the Center has organized its efforts around problems identified in the various State Title V Plans of Work. The FY 1974 plan of work sets forth problems of information need--inventories of personnel, research needs, research currently in progress, training needs and expertise available--which had to be met. In other words, problems had to be identified before constructive problem solving could be sought with effective interdisciplinary support.

As documented elsewhere in this report, the SRDC has made substantial progress toward amassing, publishing, disseminating, and acting upon the information gathered in these areas. Toward acting effectively, the Center has established procedures to name a number of Center Associates to serve as technical resource persons in the various areas of rural development. Each Center Associate will be assigned to an appropriate Functional Network of expertise available for immediate, on-site problem solving where needs are felt.

## CENTER ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Although physically located in Mississippi, the SRDC organizational structure permits active involvement by representatives of other states in program determination. To insure the opportunity for strong regional participation,

1. The SRDRC and SERCRC have representatives from the respective states of the region. Each organization serves as an advisory group to the SRDC.
2. The functional networks will involve scientists and educators from two or more states in collaboration.
3. Selected scientists and educators with particular interests in areas of rural development will be designated as Center Associates, professionals to provide leadership in their specific areas of work and to serve as consultants.

Numerous other regional groups concerned with rural development have been contacted during the formation of the SRDC: the Southern Regional Education Board, the Regional Multi-County Planning Districts Organization, the Regional Commissions such as the Coastal Plain Regional Commission, and the Southeastern Federal Regional Council in Atlanta.

Chart 1 shows the organizational structure described above. The Director and Associate Director are appointed on a four-fifths and one-half time basis, respectively, and the position of the editor/administrative assistant has now been approved for full-time because of the load of publication and diffusion of information.

Depending upon the future growth and funding of the Center, other part-time or full-time professional positions are anticipated, for example a Research Coordinator and Extension Coordinator. These two positions would possibly be filled initially on a part-time basis at no cost to the Center.

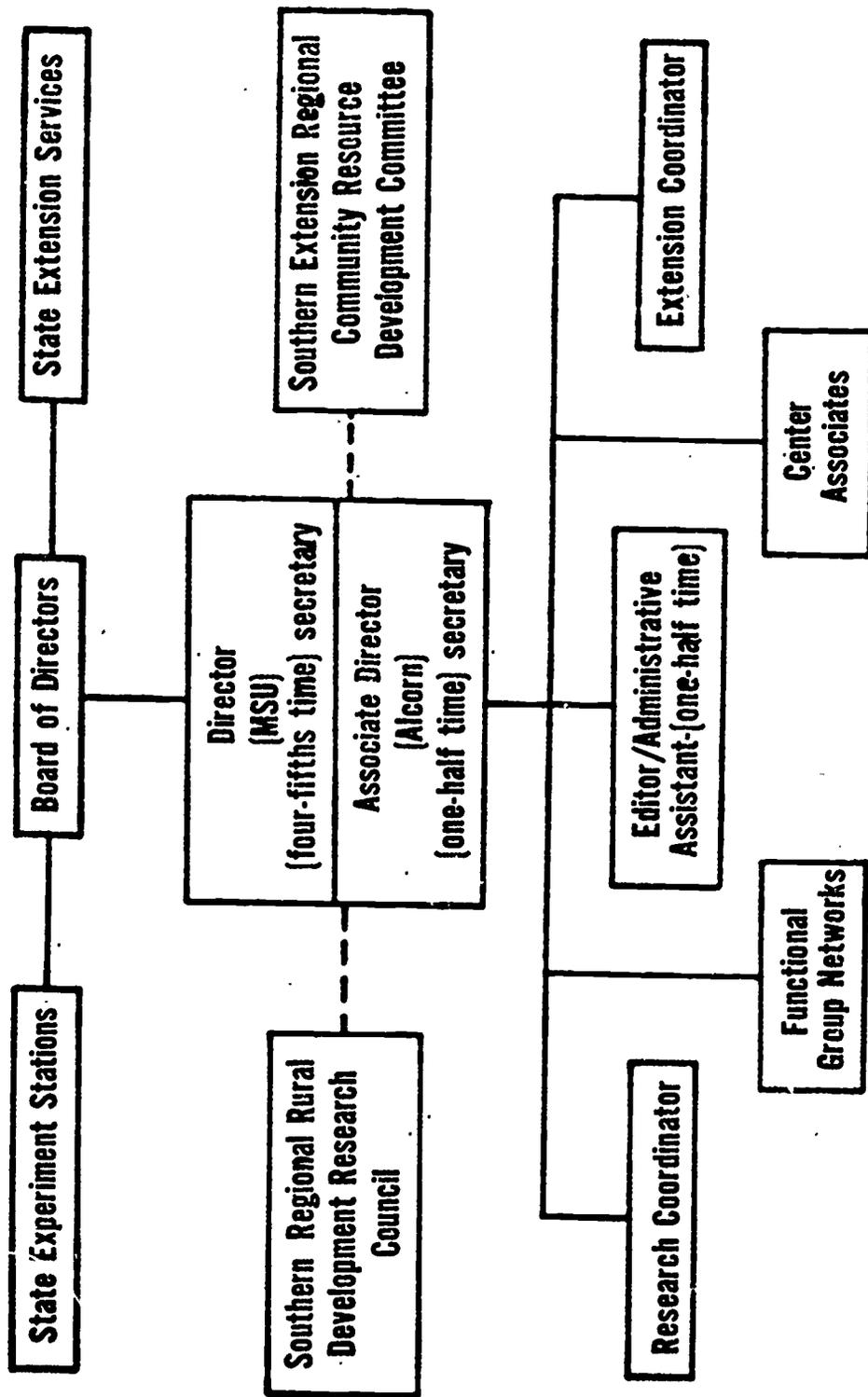
Chart 2 defines the line responsibilities existing between the Center Director, the SRDC Board of Directors, the State Experiment Stations and Extension Services in the fourteen states, and the administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Three Functional Networks are currently being established to synthesize the current state of knowledge in selected functional areas of rural development under a PL 89-106, CSRS grant. The Center Associate chairing each network will be responsible for securing involvement of other researchers and action-oriented professional personnel in his Network. A 15-person Research Network has been appointed to advise the project director of the selection of rural development areas to be synthesized and to help develop a program of work for each of the Networks. The members of this network are:

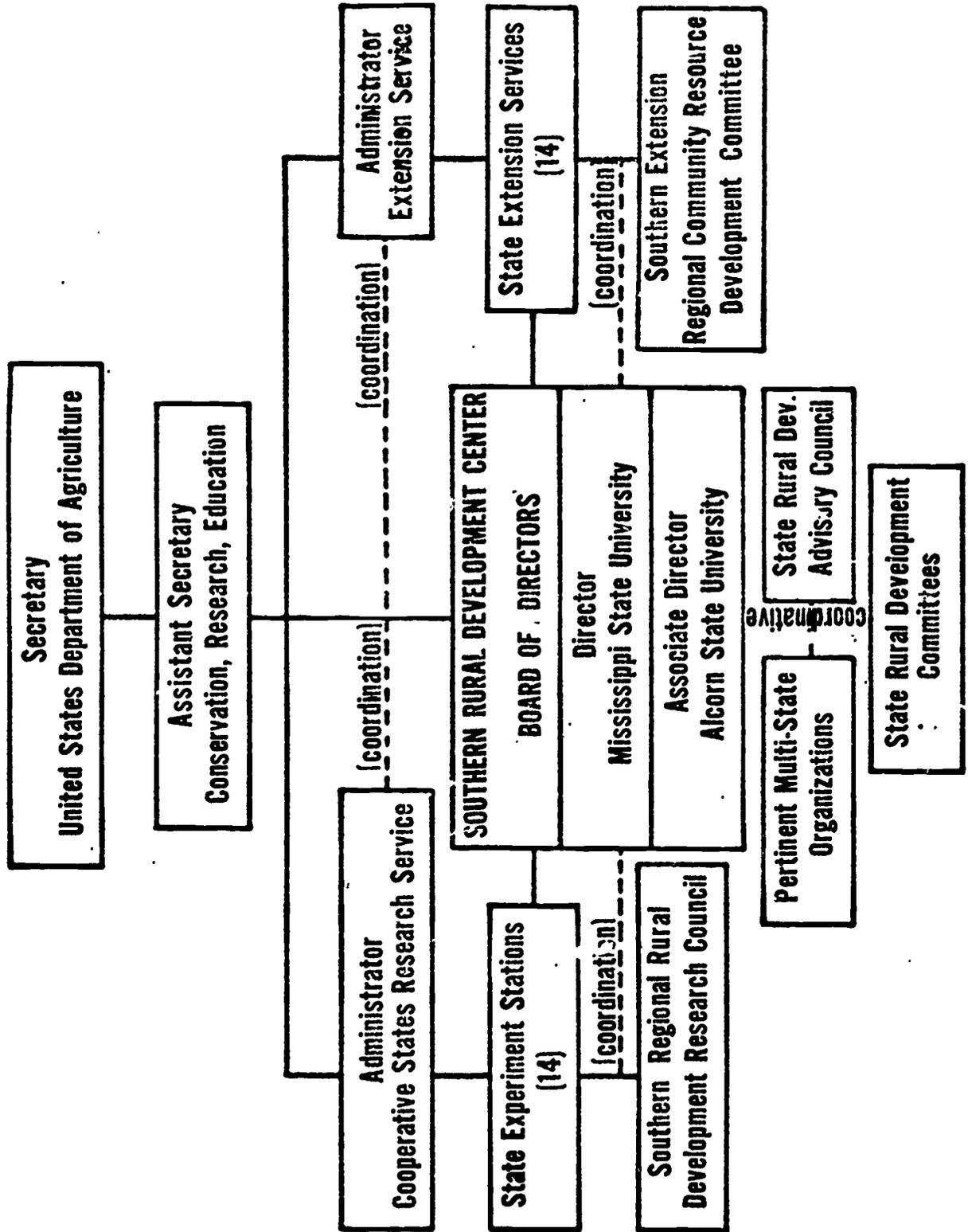
Name	Title	Location	Representing
Mr. V. A. Boyd	Dept. of Agr. Econ. & Rural Sociology	Clemson	Southern Rural Sociology Research Committee
Dr. B. L. Dillman	Dept. of Agr. Econ. & Rural Sociology	Clemson	Southern Regional Rural Development Research Council

Dr. Fred Tyner	Dept. of Ag. Econ.	Mississippi State	Southern Regional Rural Development Research Council
Dr. David Ruesink	Dept. of Ag. Econ. & Rural Sociology	Texas A & M	Southern Ext. Regional Comm. Resource Development Committee
Dr. James H. Coop	Dept. of Rural Sociology	Texas A & M	Southern Regional Rural Development Research Council
Dr. J. E. Dunkelberger	Dept. of Ag. Econ.	Auburn	Southern Rural Sociology Research Committee
Dr. Adger Carroll	Ext. Community Resource Development Programs	Clemson	Southern Extension Regional Community Resource Development Committee
Dr. Ray Cavender	Resource Use Division	Auburn	Southern Extension Regional Community Resource Development Committee
Dr. Doris Tichenor	Home Economics Programs	University of Kentucky	Home Economics Administrators
Dr. Ruth Hovermale	School of Home Economics	Winthrop College	Home Economics Administrators
Dr. David Hamilton		Tennessee State	1890 Institutions
Dr. James Moseley		Langston U.	1890 Institutions
Dr. Charles Cleveland	Dept. of Ag. Econ. & Rural Sociology	U. of Tennessee	Southern Rural Sociology Research Committee

# SRDC Basic Organization Structure



# National, Regional, & State Levels



Through the first eleven months of operation, both "internal" and "external" organizational structures have functioned well. There has been maximum cooperation and interaction between the SRDC and its advisory and supervisory groups and much productive assistance has been generated toward guiding the priorities and goals of the Center. "Internal" staff has proved adequate for the first eleven months but with the establishment of the functional networks and the continuing press of publications and activities, more personnel, as described above, will probably be required.

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## PROGRAM OF WORK EVALUATION

The following is a point-by-point summary of the work of the SRDC in its first eleven months of operation, in accordance to the Plan of Work submitted for FY 1974.

## GOAL 1. DEVELOP PLAN AND INVENTORY EXISTING RD RESEARCH KNOWLEDGE

Accomplishments:

The Center has published Rural Development Research at Land-Grant Institutions in the South. This annotated inventory of research was distributed to over 300 persons involved in rural development in the South, to institutions involved, and to certain public and private agencies. The area of community services and facilities claims 19.64 percent of reported research, people building 52.68 percent, Economic Development 23.66 percent, and Environmental Improvement 4.02 percent. Many academic disciplines, including economics, sociology, behavior sciences and biological sciences were found to be engaged in RD research.

## GOAL 2. INVENTORY RD RESEARCH NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Accomplishments:

Research Needs in Rural Development was prepared by the Joint Southern Regional Rural Development Task Force. This report compliments Rural Development Research at Land-Grant Institutions in the South by delineating the economic, social

and cultural problems peculiar to the South as a rationale for approaches to current and projected research. The highest priority research needs in rural development were indicated in the general area of community services and facilities, followed by economic development.

**GOAL 3. DEVELOP A PLAN TO INVENTORY EXISTING EXTENSION RURAL DEVELOPMENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**

Accomplishments:

A plan has been developed and sent to the State Leaders of Extension Community Resource Development in the 13 Southern States and Puerto Rico for their critique. Initial reaction indicates that the extension educational programs in rural development may be more difficult to inventory than research projects. At the present time the results of these reviews are still being received and the goal is being re-evaluated.

**GOAL 4. COMPILE A LIST OF EXTENSION AND RESEARCH PERSONNEL WITH RURAL DEVELOPMENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Accomplishments:

A survey was conducted of Directors of Experiment Stations and Extension Services in the South to determine the number and location of personnel with rural development responsibilities. A total of 280 individuals was so identified. A breakout by type of institution revealed 190 persons at 1862 institutions, 37 at 1890 institutions and 39 at other locations including businesses, industry, and as private citizens. The results of this survey

were published under the title Personnel in Rural Development.

A copy was sent to each person listed, plus administrators and USDA. The list is constantly being updated.

**GOAL 5. DESIGN INSTRUMENT FOR TRAINING NEEDS SURVEY FOR PROFESSIONAL RESEARCH AND EXTENSION WORKERS**

Accomplishments:

A draft of the survey instrument has been designed and is now in the process of revision. Upon completion, the survey will be conducted with persons in the region with rural development responsibilities. Particular analysis of the schedules from individuals with Title V responsibilities will be made. The rationale for conducting a survey is the feeling that workshops, seminars, and conferences should address the felt needs of highest priority of the individuals to be trained.

**GOAL 6. PLAN ORIENTATION VISIT SCHEDULE TO CAMPUSES OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS**

Accomplishments:

A pilot visit was made to Texas A & M University to finalize the agenda and other procedures for the orientation visits. During these visits the slide series describing the Center functions and operations was shown, the program of work of the Center reviewed, and dialogue begun regarding Center support for State programs. The Associate Director also presented a similar program to the staff at Alcorn State University.

Plans have been made for additional visits to Louisiana State University, Southern University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Virginia State College during the first quarter of CY75.

GOAL 7. DEVELOP PLAN FOR APPOINTING "CENTER ASSOCIATES".

Accomplishments:

The Center has developed a proposal for the "Synthesis of Research Findings Relevant to Rural Development." This proposal was approved and funded through CSRS and involved the appointment of a 15-member "Advisory Committee" and three "Functional Networks." Under the plan, the chairman of each Functional Network will be designated as a "Center Associate."

GOAL 8. PLAN ONE OR MORE WORKSHOPS FOR SCIENTISTS AND EDUCATORS ON ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT IN RURAL AREAS

Accomplishments:

Fuller development of this plan and the staging of the workshop will await the completion of the training needs survey (see item 5 above) for more specific priorities.

GOAL 9. DEVELOP PROCEDURES AND AREAS FOR APPOINTMENT OF REGIONAL FUNCTIONAL NETWORKS

Accomplishments:

The procedures have been developed, presented, and discussed and approved by the Board of Directors. Some of the problems involved have been discussed with the SRDC Advisory

Committee with suggestions from this committee on improving the regional focus.

GOAL 10. APPOINT ONE OR MORE FUNCTIONAL NETWORKS TO STUDY RELEVANT RESEARCH, PLAN INFORMATION SHEETS AND/OR WORKSHOPS.

Accomplishments:

The Center is currently in the process of extending requests for proposals (RFP). These Functional Networks will consist of a number of knowledgeable persons designated as "Center Associates." They will serve the major function of synthesizing relevant research and developing popular publications, based on research, for busy CRD personnel.

GOAL 11. PLAN, IMPLEMENT AND COMPLETE ANNUAL EVALUATIONS OF SRDC PROGRAM OF WORK.

Accomplishments:

The evaluation of the plan of work has been a regular item on the agenda at each meeting with the SRDC Board of Directors. The evaluation report has normally been accepted by the Board following discussion of individual items.

## ADDITIONAL PROJECTS

In addition to the planned goals, the SRDC has been involved in other activities as a result of interaction with scientists and educators in the region. A brief description follows.

Community Resource Development Publications. In cooperation with the Southern Extension Regional Community Resource Committee, the SRDC is publishing a listing of rural development publications available from state Extension Services and Experiment Stations. Coordination of this effort through the 13 SRDC members has facilitated preparation of a thoroughly accurate, relevant, and up-to-date listing which should be of value to users.

National Agricultural Library Bibliography. The SRDC has accepted a grant from the National Agricultural Library to prepare a manuscript for a bibliography of rural development to be published in 1975. The seven topic areas covered are: Fire and Emergency Services, Health Care Delivery Systems, Sanitary Services and Sewage Systems, Local Government Structure and Taxation, Public Recreational Facilities and Planning, Manpower Training and Vocational Education, and Housing. These areas were identified specifically as those in which no thorough compilation of available sources has previously been attempted, so the published bibliography will provide heretofore unavailable sources of information for an audience of rural development personnel throughout the nation. The SRDC staff has been reviewing, assaying, and preparing notations for publication of hundreds of reports, articles, and other publications for inclusion in the bibliography.

Involvement of other colleges and universities. Five universities in the South--Georgia Tech, Duke, Memphis State, Florida State, and the University of Texas-Austin were contacted concerning their research efforts in rural development projects being undertaken outside the land-grant system. Significant work is being done in the areas of priority interest identified by the research needs survey, especially economic development, manpower training, and improvement in the quality of rural life. Liaison with these universities (and with others) will serve as a broader base for the exchange of rural development research expertise and information according to the purpose of the Center.

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## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The "tone" of Congressional intent with respect to the goals and work of the Southern Rural Development Center is to base each project on appropriate objectives determined from priority needs with the highest possible measurable indicators built in. In its first eleven months of operation the SRDC has largely occupied itself with identifying, describing, amassing expert assistance, and attacking those priority needs. The SRDC has made much measurable progress towards this overall objective.

Identifying Priority Needs. Through such projects as the inventory of existing research knowledge, the summary of rural development research needs and priorities, the plan for inventory of existing Extension educational programs, the compilation of the names and responsibilities of those engaged in rural development work, designing the instrument for the training needs survey, and the preparation of a list of rural development publications available from land-grant institutions in the region, a base of knowledge is established. From this base we can more clearly see: what is known--what needs to be known--who can assist in achieving these goals--how they can best be achieved--when they are likely to be achieved. Concrete results from this foundation work include publications, contacts with knowledgeable and influentials, dissemination of knowledge, and progress towards solving many pressing problems of rural development knowledge. Amassing this base of knowledge has of necessity occupied much of the time and attention of the SRDC as it established its operation.

Goals for Priority Needs. Much measurable progress has also been made in acting upon this accumulated base of knowledge. With the first few orientation visits the Center Director and Associate Director have established rapport and interchange of information with the land-grant university system, broadened the base of support for the Center, and spread knowledge of the availability of the Center as an information and support source for their rural development interests.

With the work in progress for appointing Center Associates the SRDC will soon have in operation its professional advisory capability. The availability of the Associate's knowledge for the Functional Networks will facilitate synthesis of research knowledge, which in turn will result in the publication of pertinent information and development of workshops for appropriate personnel.

The Center's first year of operation, then, has been a period of building, organizing and developing a base of information upon which to proceed. FY 1975 will see the fruit of these efforts in the work of the Functional Networks, Center Associates, the increased frequency of orientation visits and the provision of workshops in needed areas. Publications, inventories of perceived research needs, and updating of already published material will continue to assure that the SRDC is able to supply the most current and useful information to its clientele.