Evaluation of the JTPA Title IV Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This report summarizes the results of a study that investigated the JTPA Title IV, Section 402 program for migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). The program, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) through 53 grants, assists farmworkers in obtaining or retaining upgraded agricultural or non-agricultural employment, and provides services to farmworkers and their families that will contribute to their occupational development, upward mobility, and eventual economic self-sufficiency. In July, 1991, DOL contracted with Berkeley Planning Associates (BPA) and Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) to conduct a 24-month study of the effectiveness of the training, employment, and supportive services in meeting the goals of the program.

The study's objectives included: describing variations in the program's provision of services to MSFWs, assessing the quality of services being provided, describing the influence of factors such as federal policies and local economic conditions, describing the coordination practices of programs, and analyzing program outcomes. In order to address these objectives, BPA and SPR study staff employed a number of data collection and analysis methods. These included:

- *Case study site visits.* The study team visited the same 18 randomly-chosen MSFW programs during each of the two study years. These case study visits provided the data for the **qualitative cross-site analysis** that forms the basis for much of this report.

- ***Quantitative data analysis*** of a number of data sets, including:
  - -- aggregate-level data from the universe of programs, consisting of Annual Status Report (ASR) data reported to DOL for several recent program years;
  - -- client-level data on characteristics, services, and outcomes on terminees from nine programs, consisting of existing data sets voluntarily transmitted to BPA for analysis;
  - -- databases containing information about the eligible farmworker population, including the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) and the Agricultural Work Force Survey.

The study team developed a conceptual framework that offered a system-level picture of the §402 programs. It represented the constraints within which the funded programs must operate, including federal, state, and local factors. These factors influence the grantee service design, the adaptations made for service delivery at the local level, and the outcomes experienced by participants. The study team also used a model of quality training, which was developed during a previous study, to investigate the effectiveness of services provided by MSFW programs. The criteria for quality training were adapted for the §402 program. Together, these substantive paradigms governed the development of topic guides and subsequent analyses.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE VISIT SAMPLE

The site visit sample consisted of a random sample of 18 of the 51 programs (i.e., all programs with the exceptions of those in Hawaii and Puerto Rico). These were chosen to represent programs of varying allocations (small, medium, and large), client mix (high vs. low percentage of migrants), service designs (high vs. low use of classroom training), and all of the USDA agricultural regions. Field offices within these 18 programs were purposively sampled, based on their proximity to the central office and their representativeness of the state's MSFW environment and the program's service design. A total of 33 field offices were visited over the two years of the study.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ELIGIBLES AND PARTICIPANTS

One of the study team's first tasks was to analyze the characteristics of farmworkers eligible for the §402 program, to suggest the general level of need and the characteristics of the eligible population. Because no single source of data about farmworkers is completely adequate for this purpose, the study team used two data sources: the 1990-91 wave of the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS), conducted by the Department of Labor, and the 1987 Agricultural Work Force Survey supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). Using two data sources with very different sampling frames allowed us to bracket the actual characteristics of the eligible population. Proxies for the §402 program eligibility criteria were developed and applied to the two databases.

The NAWS and CPS both suggest that eligible farmworkers are predominately male, and are unlikely to have graduated from high school. However, NAWS eligibles are much more likely to be Hispanic, with limited English and less than an eighth grade education. Characteristics of §402 program participants are generally closer to the characteristics of eligibles estimated from the NAWS. Terminees are predominantly male, aged 22-44, Hispanic, and with less than an eighth grade education.

There are pronounced differences between terminees from services-only and those receiving employment and training services. Services-only terminees are nearly three times more likely than employment and training terminees to be migrants, twice as likely to be grade school dropouts, and much less likely to be high school graduates. However, compared with the terminees from JTPA Title IIA programs, MSFW employment and training terminees are still much more likely to be dropouts (62%, compared to 24% for Title IIA), members of racial and ethnic minorities (81%, compared to 37% for Title IIA), and have limited English proficiency (31%, compared to 4% of Title IIA participants). This evidence clearly speaks to the need for a specially targeted job training program for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

GRANTEE SERVICE STRATEGIES AND OPERATIONS

Service Designs

The sample programs generally offered the full range of allowable §402 services, including both services to provide emergency assistance to farmworkers who want to remain in agriculture (services-only) and employment and training services. Nationally, about 6% of funds overall are spent on services-only, but 57% of all participants terminated from this service category. Typically, services-only consists of vouchers or in-kind assistance for families in need of food, transportation assistance, or housing; often the average amounts expended are quite small, on the order of $50 per family. In our sample, the percentage of terminees from services-only ranged from 0% to 92%, representing the range of emphasis placed on this component by the programs and their positions in the migrant stream, with upstream[1] programs having higher proportions of terminees in services-only.

Programs also had varied emphases on the various employment and training components. Most offered both classroom training and on-the-job training as the main forms of skills training available to participants, but some relied very heavily on one or the other. Also, the relative emphasis on these two kinds of training was changing over time, with more programs placing an increasing emphasis on classroom training. This shift was a result of several factors, including DOL's increasing emphasis on reaching harder-to-serve individuals and providing long-term training services to obtain high wage jobs, and the recent long-lasting recession, which has affected programs' abilities to develop OJT positions for their participants.

[1]Although there are no strict definitions, "upstream" states are generally those states north of the "homebase" states in the southern tier of the country, the largest of which are California, Texas, and Florida. Migrants are a subset of seasonal farmworkers, who may live in either homebase or upstream states. Farmworkers who migrate may travel within the states where they live ("intrastate migrants") or to other states ("interstate migrants"). While migrant farmworkers are traveling, they are said to be "in-stream," and when they decide to live somewhere permanently, they are said to "settle out."

Other employment and training components include work experience and tryout employment, and training assistance only. Work experience and tryout employment were used less often than either classroom training or OJT, although they formed a significant part of the service design for a small number of programs in our sample. Work experience slots were usually viewed as appropriate for fairly limited groups, such as youth or those with substantial barriers to employment (e.g., ex-offenders).

Training assistance includes assistance with job development and placement. Thus, terminees from all categories generally received this service. However, a small number of programs in our sample, all in upstream states, served more than a quarter of employment and training terminees with training assistance alone (i.e., without providing them training of another type). Clients receiving training assistance may receive considerable preparation for entry into employment, in the form of job search assistance, world of work counseling, and assistance with applications and interviews.

Use of Service Providers

Only four of the 18 sample programs subcontracted with service providers to operate §402 programs or provide class-size training, although most made individual referrals to existing classroom training providers. In general, the programs preferred to hire their own staff to operate programs, due to the unique needs of the farmworker population. Many of these staff were former farmworkers or had some connection with and knowledge of the population, and many were bilingual. In addition, §402 agencies often offered services beyond employment and training, such as housing assistance, referrals to agricultural work, Head Start programs, and advocacy, and thus were visible in the community as the only organization concerned with the many needs of farmworkers and their families.

Non-Section 402 Funding and Coordination

There was considerable variation in the amount of non-§402 funds available to the sample §402 programs, ranging from limited in-kind resources or none at all (six programs), to moderate amounts of about 15% or less of the total budget (eight programs), to substantial amounts equal to 50% or more of the overall budget (four programs). Almost all outside funds utilized by §402 programs were used to provide supportive services, either to participants in training or as services-only. Another use of outside resources was to provide basic skills training, either in the form of teachers paid for by the school system or funds to hire teachers.

All of the sample programs engaged in interagency coordination of some kind, primarily in order to enhance the resources they could offer their clients, and in some cases, in order to contribute to improvement of policies and programs for farmworkers across the state or region. For a majority of grantees, coordination was closest and most effective with other agencies in their cultural network -- with agencies whose main mission was to serve Hispanics or farmworkers, as opposed to agencies such as PICs serving a more general population of which farmworkers might be a part. Cooperation with Title IIA JTPA, while achieved by some programs, was difficult to accomplish on a regular basis. Among reasons commonly cited were differences in eligibility requirements, targeting, and performance standards of the two programs.

Engaging in interagency coordination and drawing on multiple funding sources are to some extent alternative strategies for accomplishing the same end. Either approach was effective in the right circumstances. Programs that were most actively and effectively engaged in interagency coordination had little or no non-§402 funding, and therefore had a financial incentive to coordinate. In contrast, programs with high proportions of non-§402 funds could offer their participants a wide variety of services under one roof.

PRE-TRAINING SERVICES

Targeting, Outreach, and Recruitment

The characteristics of terminees varied considerably across the sampled programs. While some of this variation can be accounted for by underlying variations in the eligible population and the programs' position in the migrant stream, the targeting and recruitment practices of programs also had a large influence.

The sample §402 programs recruited widely and would do whatever they could to meet the needs of any eligible farmworker who came for services. In addition, all of these programs explicitly targeted groups within the eligible population, either because they believed that intervention would have the most pronounced effect when directed at certain types of clients, or because they felt their specific resources were better suited to meeting particular needs. The groups most often mentioned as particular targets were: youths -- and often also explicitly youth who were not household heads (six programs); household heads or adults (five programs); the hard-to-serve -- generally those with low education or who were basic-skills deficient (eight programs); and migrants (six programs) or seasonal farmworkers (two programs).

Recruitment strategies generally fell into two major categories. Such methods as word of mouth or accepting referrals from other agencies can be viewed as relatively passive recruitment devices that require little or no supplemental financial or staff effort. The second category consists of more active methods that require the commitment of extra resources. These methods included: using the services-only component to explicitly recruit participants for employment and training; sending outreach workers to make visits to migrant camps, farmworker homes, or worksites; and using flyers, radio and TV public service announcements, and advertisements.

The mix of these passive and active recruitment methods and the way they were implemented influenced the program's eventual client mix. Migrants were hardest to recruit through passive methods, but were well served by personal outreach from ex-

farmworker staff. Programs needed bilingual staff and flyers to reach those with limited English proficiency. Developing specific referral networks of organizations serving youth was important to recruit youth. Many programs made effective use of their services-only components to make prospective participants aware of available employment and training services.

Consistency between targeting, outreach and recruitment, and service design was highly variable, with some programs demonstrating weak consistency and others exhibiting especially innovative recruitment and service design strategies. A number of programs will need to revamp substantially their outreach and recruitment practices and service designs to implement recent DOL directives that call on JTPA programs to focus services on the hard-to-serve. In particular, to follow this mandate many programs will need to be much more conscious about their outreach and recruitment practices, relying less on word of mouth and general advertisements and more on home and worksite visits and targeted ads. In addition, they will need to ensure that their service design can meet the needs of clients with extremely weak basic skills and other barriers to employment.

Assessment and Matching to Services

Assessment practices varied among the sampled programs. In the case of basic skills assessment, the emphasis on formal assessment varied widely, which can be attributed to differences in clientele and service design among the programs. Programs that served a more homogeneous clientele and offered limited training options tended to rely less on formal testing. Programs that used service providers for training tended to do little testing, preferring to leave most assessment to the better-trained provider personnel. Finally, programs that served a diverse clientele and/or offered a variety of training options used the greatest amount of formal testing. On average, programs have reduced the number of basic skills tests they administer to clients to one or two.

Emphasis on formal assessment of vocational skills has been reduced significantly. All programs conducted informal interviews to assess vocational skills; only a few also administered formal tests. Because many MSFWs have limited non-agricultural work

histories and little idea of long-range career goals, the adequacy of informal assessment is uncertain.

All programs used an Employability Development Plan (EDP) to develop, document, and monitor client services, but they varied in the degree of vocational exploration and service and training options provided to each client. Ideally, programs should actively involve clients in career exploration, offer a variety of service options, and aid clients in dealing with barriers to employment. Providing a variety of quality service options is dependent on what the community can offer, so programs must work within this limitation. Programs tended to rely heavily on client input in determining career goals. Since farmworkers have been forced by their occupation to think in the short-term and are often unaware of alternatives, staff need to educate clients about other occupations in order to broaden their options.

There was variation in the amount of support that programs provided to clients to help overcome barriers to training. In many programs, clients with significant barriers tended to be placed in OJT or direct placement. Some program staff stated that these clients lacked the ability, time, or financial resources to stay in classroom training. Efforts to address these barriers are increasing, such as providing tailored training and counseling, stipends, and supportive services; but more are needed, especially as the MSFW population becomes increasingly hard-to-serve.

In case management practices, the trend was from a team approach towards a one-on-one or hybrid (one-on-one and team) approach. Programs have found that intense, personal interaction with clients is necessary to keep them in training. A few programs' designs made it difficult for case managers to spend quality time with each client, due to large service areas and/or large caseloads. Programs have also found that clients respond better to staff that have backgrounds similar to their own. However, as the role of case manager grows to one involving more life and personal counseling, programs are realizing the need for formally trained staff. Several programs have recently changed or are contemplating upgrading staff qualifications.

CLASSROOM TRAINING

All of the sample programs offered classroom training, and the relative emphasis on classroom training has been increasing in recent years. There were differences in emphasis on the kind of classroom training available, with eight programs placing an emphasis on basic skills training over vocational classroom training, five emphasizing both kinds of classroom training, and five placing more of an emphasis on vocational classroom training.

Basic Skills Training

Basic skills training was considered a priority by a majority of the sample programs, and all made some sort of training available, if only by referral. Basic skills training could consist of English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes, and General Educational Development (GED) diploma preparation. Some programs emphasized basic skills remediation for its own sake, and others saw it primarily as preparation for vocational training.

Five programs offered basic skills training only by referral to outside providers; these five programs did not consider basic skills training a high priority and/or did not target basic skills training to particularly hard-to-serve groups. In the remaining programs, some training was offered in-house, and some was available by referral. In-house programs were viewed as superior because they could be targeted to the unique needs of farmworkers, by offering intensive training at hours and locations convenient for participants. In-house programs were also able to incorporate world of work topics into their basic skills curricula.

Overall, the quality of the observed basic skills training was high. However, there were significant gaps in the availability of training. Four programs had no ESL training available, and at the remaining programs, it was not uniformly available at all field offices or for participants who wanted it as a stand-alone service. In-stream migrant workers, whose needs were arguably the highest for this service, were particularly

difficult to design services for, although a few programs have made steps in this direction. However, even seasonal workers or migrants who had settled out could not always obtain ESL instruction from the §402 programs. In some areas of the country, §402 programs chose not to offer ESL because classes were available elsewhere in the community; in other areas, however, classes were generally unavailable. One barrier to providing ESL was the difficulty of finding qualified instructors in some upstream states.

Another gap was the availability of ABE or GED courses tailored to the farmworker population. Programs that offered instruction in-house tailored their instruction, but when participants were referred to programs in the community, they seldom found intensive instruction or bilingual teachers. Such tailoring often meant the difference between program completion and dropping out.

The recent introduction of employability enhancements as a positive termination for adults may well encourage programs to rethink their approach towards basic skills training. Programs are already finding that they can shift their program designs to accommodate their desire to provide more basic skills training without increasing the risk of falling short on their performance goals. A number of programs had been offering stand-alone basic skills training even before the change in the performance standards, illustrating that improving clients' basic skills and obtaining job placements were not incompatible goals.

Vocational Classroom Training

Four of the sample programs provided vocational classroom training in-house, operating their own skills centers where both basic and vocational classroom training were provided in an integrated way. This model was a viable option mainly for large programs with high concentrations of farmworkers, and in these cases could be highly effective. However, it had the disadvantage of offering training in a small number of occupations. The other programs made individual referrals to existing service providers, such as vocational-technical schools, community colleges, and proprietary schools. These schools often provided high-quality training, but also had high entry requirements

(i.e., a GED or high school diploma), lacked any tailoring of instruction to farmworker needs, and were not always available throughout service areas (e.g., rural areas were often less well served than urban areas).

While the observed vocational classroom training was generally of high quality, it was quite difficult to provide it to the farmworker population. Training was not available and accessible to many §402 participants. Only the four programs that provided training in-house had vocational classroom training that was accessible to farmworkers with a broad range of basic skills preparation. Elsewhere, participants without a GED or high school diploma had a very low likelihood of receiving formal vocational training, although a few programs offered the opportunity for sequential or concurrent training in both basic and vocational skills. Only a few programs had approached service providers to try to influence the kinds of training provided, so that tailored programs for farmworkers could be developed.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

On-the-job training is an alternative to vocational classroom training that offers the advantage of providing immediate income to participants. The sample programs varied considerably in the extent to which they used OJT, with six programs having fewer than 20% of their employment and training terminees from this component, and four programs providing it to more than 40%. In some instances, programs relied more on OJT than other types of training because classroom training in vocational or basic skills was limited or too distant from program field offices for participants to reach. In some programs, OJT was used especially for the hard-to-serve; other programs reserved OJT primarily for those who were nearly job ready.

Study staff both interviewed program personnel about their overall OJT strategies and investigated 56 current and past OJT positions, through both case file reviews and interviews with participants and employers. Programs typically expected their OJT participants to be retained in jobs that offered stable, year-round employment. Arriving at the length of the training period for OJT positions was generally a matter of

negotiation between the program and the employer, often with the training times from the Dictionary of Occupational Titles as a starting point. Most OJTs we observed were of medium duration (from 4 to 12 weeks), and the longest observed duration was 16 weeks.

We evaluated OJTs according to several quality criteria, including the general quality of the match of participants to employers, the stability of the job, the match to participants' financial needs, the skills developed, and the extent to which the training addressed participants' barriers to employment. Of the 56 OJT positions we examined, 19 were judged highly or adequately responsive to participants' needs, offering relatively high wages with benefits to participants with low skills and little non-agricultural work experience. In 17 cases, OJTs were marginally responsive, typically providing participants with immediate employment, but not responsive to all of the participants' needs. Wages tended to be low, and the jobs provided no fringe benefits. The skills imparted in these OJTs were often low, and some participants with severe basic skills deficiencies received no remediation.

Finally, about a third of the OJTs (20) were judged inappropriate and largely unresponsive to participants' needs. They included OJTs in which participants were laid off during training or shortly after permanent placement on the job, reverse referrals or placements with participants' previous employers, and instances in which participants with few barriers to employment learned few or no new skills.

These observations suggest that many §402 programs could use additional technical assistance on practices that promote quality OJT positions.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

MSFW programs offered two types of supportive services: support for training, which includes both training-related supportive services and stipends for training, and supportive services-only. These two components had similar service content but different target populations and purposes.

Most programs provided a diverse and flexible set of training-related supportive services, available to all training participants based on an informal assessment of need. Programs offered assistance with transportation to and from training, and many also provided tools, supplies, or clothing needed for training. Other services, more likely to be addressed on an emergency or one-time only basis, were for medical care, food, transitional housing or emergency rent, and utility payments. Child care assistance and personal or financial counseling were provided to a small number of clients. Sixteen of the sample programs offered stipends to clients participating in classroom training. Stipends ranged from $1.00 to $4.35 per hour of training, sometimes with a maximum of about 20 hours per week, but other programs paid for a full 35 or 40 hours per week. Some programs' stipends were so low that many participants could not support themselves through training, and other potential participants were unable to undergo training to begin with.

Types of support available as part of services-only were similar to training-related supportive services. Although services-only is not immediately related to the programs' employment and training mission, it provides humanitarian aid that is valuable in its own right. Emergency assistance for food, transportation, housing, and health care was commonly offered. Services-only was administered in a flexible way based on individual circumstances. Programs did not have strict targeting guidelines for this component, other than eligibility for the §402 program and demonstration of need. While many services-only recipients were migrants, most programs provided services-only to seasonal workers as well.

MSFW programs inevitably faced tradeoffs between providing funds for supportive services and for training, and between funding services-only and training-related supportive services. In some programs, non-§402 funds were a significant source of funding for both kinds of supportive services, but were used in large part as a substitute for rather than a supplement to §402 funds, thus freeing §402 funds for training.

PLACEMENT SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

Job placement services can be divided into two groups: indirect placement, which provides services for clients who have completed a training program, and direct placement, which provides services to clients who are job ready, and thus not in need of additional services. Both kinds of placement services were generally provided on an individualized basis by either specialized job developers or the case managers who had worked with clients. Half of the programs provided indirect placement services oriented toward a particular job, and half also offered job search skills training. Direct placements were emphasized very little by six programs, while seven programs claimed a substantial proportion (15-33%) of their placements as direct. In these programs training assistance as a stand-alone service was perceived as an important component.

Service Outcomes

A client-level database was compiled for this study, consisting of data on PY 91 terminees from half of the sample programs, for a total of 4,426 individual cases. These data were analyzed to explore the relationships between client characteristics, services, and outcomes. Both bivariate and multivariate analyses were performed.

Bivariate analyses showed variations in the characteristics of participants receiving different services. Classroom training was more likely to be received by women than men, migrant workers more than seasonal workers, and younger participants more than older participants. Males, Hispanics, and those with limited English were more likely to receive OJT. When outcomes were examined, males, whites, and high school graduates were most likely to be placed in a job. Females, migrants, students, Hispanics, and youth were most likely to receive an enhancement only. Males received a higher average wage than females. Hispanics received the lowest average wage among both males and females. High school graduates made significantly more than dropouts.

Terminees from OJT were more likely to be employed at termination, but made a lower average wage. About half of the sample had termination wages below

$5.00/hour, and OJT terminees were more likely to be in this category. Classroom training terminees were most likely to be in the $6.00 and over category. However, by follow-up the average wages for all service categories had increased and evened out. Terminees from OJT were more likely to retain their jobs at follow up, and more likely to have benefits.

Results from the multivariate analyses generally confirmed these results. Two outcome variables were examined: placement at termination and wage at termination. Once client characteristics were controlled for, OJT still had a higher probability of leading to placement at termination. Receiving classroom training or work experience led to higher wages at termination than OJT, but there was no significant difference for those receiving training assistance only. These analyses seem to indicate that increasing clients' skills through classroom training leads to higher wages, although trainees may find it hard to find employment initially. Since clients were not randomly assigned to service categories, these results should be viewed as suggestive only.

Another source of data about outcomes was case file reviews performed by site visit staff. Six terminees were randomly selected in each of the 18 programs, for a total of 108 clients. These data allowed us to investigate whether job placements were related to the training received. Among the classroom training participants who got a job at termination, 71% were placed in a training-related occupation. For OJT, the question of training-related placement does not arise. However, the case files allowed us to examine completion and retention issues. A large proportion of the OJT recipients in the sample (72%) completed their training and were hired by the OJT employer; 14% lost their jobs between termination and follow-up.

Agricultural Upgrades

Agricultural upgrades are a subset of placement outcomes that consist of jobs in agricultural areas that are nonetheless higher-skilled or higher-paying than the kinds of agricultural work previously performed by farmworkers. DOL has encouraged agricultural upgrades in order to "improve opportunities for farmworkers in a manner

which will also strengthen the nation's agricultural economy" (Farmworker Bulletin No. 90-6). Agricultural upgrade placements are reported separately, but otherwise there are no different requirements associated with these placements. DOL envisioned that up to 10% of §402 participants might obtain upgraded agricultural employment.

Half of the sample programs placed little or no emphasis on agricultural upgrades as an outcome, viewing them as incompatible with their missions to help farmworkers leave agriculture. Another seven programs had been influenced by the DOL directive to seek out upgraded agricultural positions, but most of these programs felt that the placements provided very little in improved conditions for farmworkers. The types of jobs included: work in poultry plants, meat packing, canneries, and mushroom farms, and occasional mechanics or other year-round farm employees. The remaining two programs had developed training programs to prepare a small number of participants for upgraded agricultural employment, but otherwise felt that there were limited opportunities in agriculture.

Employability Enhancements

Beginning in PY 91, §402 programs could use employability enhancement as an outcome for terminees. DOL established five categories of enhancements:

- Entered non-§402 training;
- Returned to full-time school;
- Completed major level of education;
- Completion of worksite training objective; and
- Attained basic/occupational skills proficiency.

The introduction of the employability enhancement as a reporting item was designed to recognize programs' efforts to improve the long-term employability and earnings of participants. These enhancements can be flexibly designed to meet the needs of the particular participants served by each program.

Programs differed greatly in how they operationalized some or all of the five outcomes. Many were confused about how to document participants' progress and achievement to show that an employability enhancement has occurred. During our second round of site visits during PY 91, the operationalization of employability enhancements was still evolving and programs were continuing to modify their training designs to integrate the new outcomes. The large variation in definitions of enhancements and documentation of outcomes poses serious challenges for those who wish to compare outcomes across programs.

In nearly all programs, participants targeted to receive employability enhancements were among the hardest to serve, typically those in need of basic skills training, including youth. An emerging trend was to offer language training to in-stream migrant farmworkers. These participants would typically not have received employment and training services prior to the implementation of the enhancements.

FACTORS INFLUENCING PROGRAM DESIGN AND OUTCOMES

Numerous external factors influence programs' service designs and operations. These include federal policies, such as program regulations and performance standards, state and local level factors, such as general economic conditions, and resource constraints and opportunities, such as the size of a program's grant.

The performance standards system was not perceived as having a large influence on day-to-day operations; however it has formed the backdrop of the program for nearly a decade, leading to an emphasis on certain outcomes that are measured by the standards. In some cases, the recently eliminated cost standard still acts as a sort of "shadow" standard, influencing programs' service designs. Summary data from the ASR illustrated that any changes emerging in the overall program have not yet been captured in changes in client characteristics or outcomes, but a shift towards classroom training and away from job placements was in evidence.

It was difficult to disentangle specific effects of federal policies in designating allocation levels. All programs admitted that funds met only a fraction of the need. The overall funding level was usually felt as more of a constraint than restrictions on cost categories when designing programs. The inadequacy of funds was felt equally by multi-state and single state grantees, although a few multi-state grantees were able to realize some administrative cost savings, thus freeing up more funds for client services.

State and local environments influenced program service designs and operations, often in ways that were difficult to predict. Client characteristics varied from region to region and within regions -- and sometimes within service areas. Client flows could be disrupted by unexpected events such as natural disasters or shifts in weather patterns. Programs in different areas also operated in different social and economic environments, which influenced the kinds of programs they designed (e.g., how much emphasis to place on supportive services, depending on whether alternative agencies existed in the community), the training available, and the eventual outcomes for their clients.

Because programs operate in different environments, no one program design is appropriate for the country as a whole. What is needed is thoughtful planning that understands and addresses the needs of the particular eligible population in light of the constraints of the social and economic environment. For the most part, site visitors observed sensitivity to these factors on the part of §402 program operators.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study team was impressed at the dedication of the §402 program operators, and found that many programs were effectively serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers. Many of the recommendations below grew out of exemplary practices already in place in some programs. The following recommendations are for actions that could be taken at the local and federal levels to further improve the program.

Outreach, Recruitment, and Targeting

1. **Program resources for employment and training services should be further focused on the hard-to-serve.** In most cases "hard-to-serve" means those farmworkers who have not graduated from high school, have limited English, are otherwise deficient in basic skills, or have multiple barriers to employment. These are the clients for whom very few alternative services exist in the community; hence they are most in need of specialized instruction. While most programs were targeting their services to the hardest-to-serve farmworkers, there were a number of instances where better-prepared individuals who had done intermittent farmwork were the focus of program services. Section 402 funds should be reserved for those farmworkers who cannot be effectively served by other providers.

2. **Programs should institute specialized recruitment techniques to reach migrant and hard-to-serve seasonal farmworkers.** We found that migrants and to a lesser extent hard-to-serve seasonal farmworkers were difficult to recruit through passive methods such as word of mouth and referrals. Programs that were more successful in recruiting these groups used more personal techniques such as visits to migrant camps and homes. Because migrant farmworkers are more likely to be Hispanic in all areas of the country, it is increasingly important that outreach personnel be bilingual, and many of the most effective are former farmworkers themselves.

3. **Programs should use their supportive services-only components as recruitment devices for employment and training services.** A number of programs described their practice of using services-only as an effective recruitment tool, by offering information about employment and training services to those clients coming for emergency assistance. While the objective of services-only is primarily to alleviate immediate needs, it is also an opportunity to inform groups that might not otherwise be reached, especially migrants.

Programs that have had difficulties recruiting migrants should especially consider adapting their services-only practices with this purpose in mind.

Classroom Training

4. **Programs should offer a range of basic skills training, preferably in-house or otherwise tailored.** The basic skills deficiencies of farmworkers are their primary barrier to mainstream employment; without improvement in basic skills, they generally cannot obtain either vocational skills training or jobs with the potential to support a family. Most existing community programs did not meet the specific needs of farmworkers. Therefore, §402 programs should develop tailored training, both for farmworkers who want to settle out of agriculture and those who wish to continue in farmwork, using §402 or non-§402 funding.

5. **Programs should make available vocational classroom training that is tailored to the needs of farmworkers.** As in the case of basic skills training, much vocational training available in the community is inaccessible to or inappropriate for farmworkers. Therefore, we recommend more assertive efforts on the part of §402 programs, especially those with large numbers of participants, to work with existing providers to adapt their training to the needs of farmworkers.

On-the-Job Training

6. **Programs should improve their OJT practices by more carefully matching clients to available positions, ensuring that reimbursements are used for extraordinary training costs, and better monitoring of the quality of training.** The study team found that a number of the OJT positions examined were not responsive to the needs of farmworkers, and often represented a subsidy to the employer while providing little training to the participants. However, the study team also observed examples of OJT positions that addressed the barriers faced by farmworkers in suitable ways. Improved OJT practices would better ensure that this type of training meets the needs of farmworkers.

Supportive Services

7. **The Department of Labor should consider raising or eliminating the current 15% cost limit on supportive services-only, thus giving programs more freedom to respond to fluctuating needs. It should also consider whether full-fledged eligibility determination, including documentation of work history and income, is necessary for services with low value (e.g., under $50).** While programs should be held accountable for services-only funds, the eligibility determination process uses considerable staff time that could be better spent on training or other activities.

8. **Programs should reserve the bulk of supportive services-only funds for migrants away from their homes, and emphasize connections to existing community resources for seasonal workers.** While migrants are the majority of services-only recipients, a fair proportion are seasonal farmworkers, for whom there are more likely to be mainstream community resources. Using §402 funds for seasonal workers only as a last resort would allow programs to serve more migrants, who are often refused services by community providers when they are on the road.

9. **Support for training should be sufficient to allow MSFW clients to maintain themselves through training.** Support for training included both stipends and supportive services such as transportation and child care assistance. The level of this support varied considerably among programs and in some cases was so low that participants found it difficult to undertake training. Stipends that are at or near the minimum wage and other necessary supports would allow more farmworkers to participate in classroom training.

Program Management

10. **Programs that contract with providers for services should increase their oversight to ensure that the needs of farmworkers are being met.** We found

some circumstances where farmworkers were not well-served by contractors who had multiple responsibilities, and by some individual training providers. Therefore, programs must be vigilant about their providers' activities, by maintaining clear objectives, on-site monitoring, and if necessary withdrawal of funds when providers fail to serve farmworkers effectively.

11. **Programs should examine their staff qualifications, to determine whether the needs of farmworkers are being met. The Department should continue to encourage and support capacity-building activities that improve the qualifications of existing staff.** Many programs are currently involved in self-examination on the question of staff qualifications, and desire to upgrade the counseling or language skills of existing staff. However, there is little room in program budgets for such activities. DOL could facilitate these efforts through means such as offering special grant funds for this purpose, or offering training workshops directly (e.g., on assessment or case management techniques).

Department of Labor Policies and Practices

12. **Departmental capacity building and technical assistance efforts should be expanded to enhance the quality of all facets of §402 program design and operations.** Although the quality of MSFW programs is generally adequate and even exceptional in some instances, programs could benefit from improved expertise in a number of areas, including assessment, basic skills and vocational classroom training, on-the-job training, and leveraging and coordination. DOL is in the best position to spur these efforts and exercise broad leadership. These activities could take the form of developing additional Technical Assistance Guides or an information clearinghouse, sponsoring workshops and training seminars, supporting regional networks or staff exchange programs, or disseminating information on best practices.

13. **Further clarification needs to be provided to MSFW programs about the purposes of employability enhancements.** The introduction of employability

enhancements as an outcome is already changing the way many programs think about their service programs. However, there were considerable differences in the activities considered to be enhancements, and in the ways programs documented and measured enhancements. Greater guidance from the Department about the meaning and definitions of enhancements would be helpful to programs.

14. **The Department should provide further clarification about whether it will monitor programs based on their performance relative to standards or relative to their plans.** We found that programs were sometimes unsure which was more important -- to make sure that their "planned vs. actual" numbers were in order, or to focus on outcomes, especially when these two things were in conflict. DOL should further clarify the purposes of both kinds of program assessment and be clear about its monitoring goals.

15. **A system whereby eligibility determination can be transferred across §402 programs should be facilitated by the Department.** Farmworkers who travel from state to state may obtain services from more than one §402 program. Re-establishing eligibility uses considerable staff time; a national system to document eligibility would eliminate inefficiency. As a longer-range goal, this system might be expanded to allow for the transmittal across programs of assessment results, service planning, and services received for individual clients.

I. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

This report summarizes the results of a study that has investigated the JTPA Title IV, $402 program for migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). The program, administered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) through 53 grants, is designed to assist farmworkers to obtain or retain upgraded agricultural or non-agricultural employment, and to provide services to farmworkers and their families that will contribute to their occupational development, upward mobility, and eventual economic self-sufficiency. In July, 1991, DOL contracted with Berkeley Planning Associates (BPA) and Social Policy Research Associates (SPR) to conduct a 24month study of the, effectiveness of the training, employment, and supportive services in meeting the, goals of the program. Below, we describe the farmworker population and give an overview of the $402 program.

CONDITIONS OF FARMWORKERS IN THE UNITED STATES

Due to the seasonality of agricultural employment and the transiency of much of the farmworker population, precise counts of the size of the hired agricultural workforce in the United States are notoriously unreliable. Recent estimates included in the Report of the Commission on Agricultural Workers (1992) place the number of persons who did any hired farmwork during the year at about 2.5 million persons, including domestic workers, legally admitted foreign nationals (e.g., those admitted under the H-2A program), and undocumented foreign workers. A substantial part of agricultural employment is highly seasonal. For example, fruit and nut, vegetable, and horticultural specialty farms need large numbers of workers for short periods during peak planting and harvesting seasons only. C:onsequently, many of those hired to work as farmworkers do so for only part of the year. Recent estimates show, for example, that roughly one-third of hired farmworkers worked less than 25 days during the year and another 20% worked fewer than lS0 days (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1989). Many of these seasonal

workers earn substantially more from non-agricultural employment than from farmwork. Others are students or others (e.g., housewives or retired persons) who are out of the labor force for most of the year. However, some seasonal workers work nine or ten months and would work year-round if work were available.

Migrancy also is a response to the needs of agricultural producers in meeting peak labor needs. The most recent source of data about the characteristics of the hired farm workforce is the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS). This survey was designed to provide information on the impact of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) on farmwork. According to the NAWS, in 1990 about 42% of the seasonal agricultural workforce were migrant workers. This estimate is probably an upper bound estimate, and contrasts greatly with the 8% migrancy rate estimated by the USDA Hired Farm Working Force Survey. There are also many kinds of migrancy: some workers leave their homes to follow the crops for up to half the year, while others may only travel locally and stay a week. A large number of migrants are single men, but others are families including young children.

Most seasonal farmworkers live in southern parts of the United States, primarily in Florida, Texas, and California. Three migrant streams are typically identified: the Eastern, Midwestern, and Western. The typical patterns are for migrants from Florida to move up the east coast into the Carolinas, the mid-Atlantic states, and then into New York and New England, migrants from Texas to move into the Midwest, and migrants from California to travel throughout the state and into Oregon and Washington. During site visits, however, $402 program operators indicated that there were considerable exceptions to these patterns, with migrants from Texas moving to Florida and California, migrants from Florida ending up in the Midwest, and California-based migrants moving throughout the country.

According to most recent studies, a large majority of seasonal farmworkers (about 70%) are Latino, with the majority being Mexican or Mexican American. The current situation has its roots early in this century, when Mexicans came to the United States to seek work on the railroads and in agriculture, and was perpetuated by governmental

policies such as the Bracero Program in the 1940s. Although that program was ended in 1964, it had established a pattern of "sending areas" in Mexico and family patterns of migration for agricultural work. In addition to the large Mexican populations performing farmwork, other groups, such as southern African-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Haitians, Guatemalans, Southeast Asians, Native Americans, and Punjabi Indians, perform seasonal farmwork throughout the country.

The deplorable conditions under which migrant and seasonal farmworkers live and toil have been well chronicled. Those who rely primarily on agricultural employment for their livelihood suffer chronic deprivation and enjoy few opportunities for improving their lot. Housing in labor camps, when it is available, often fails to satisfy even the most basic requirements for sanitzition and decency. When employer-provided housing is unavailable, as is increasingly the case, farmworkers must compete with other disadvantaged groups for substandard low-rent housing or attempt makeshift arrangements such as sleeping in trailers, shacks, cars, or in the fields. The physical health of farmworkers is very poor. due to the lack of regular medical care, exposure to pesticides, high incidence of injury, and lack of sufficient sanitation facilities in both housing and work environments to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. According to the NAWS, nearly one in four surveyed workers lacked access to at least one basic worksite sanitation facility (toilets, drinking water, or water to wash with), and in some areas half the farmworkers had no access. The physical labor involved in farmwork is debilitating and gives rise to disability and lowered life expectancy.

Although weekly earnings during peak harvest periods for select pickers in their prime productive years may seem ample, annual earnings of most farmworkers are meager. The NAWS found that farmworkers' pay amounted to about $4.85 per hour during 1990. and that real hourly wages and earnings were flat from 1989 through 1991. for these three years. Average earnings for the year from farm and non-farm work were only between $5,000 to $7,170. Farmworkers typically do not receive employer-provided benefits such as medical insurance or paid vacation. and coverage by Unemployment Insurance and Workers' Compensation varies throughout the country. While farmworkers are eligible for Social Security retirement and disability insurance.

there are widespread anecdotal reports that the required contributions are not submitted by employers, especially farm labor contractors, which jeopardizes future payments.

Although the plight *of* farmworkers has periodically gained the attention of policy makers since the broadcast of Harvest *of Shame* in 1960, there is much that has remained the same about their situation. As vividly portrayed in the 1978 report of the presidential Task Panel on Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers:

> *American farmworkers and their families still live and work under conditions which are cruel and harsh by any standard: They are ill-housed, ill-clothed, under-noutished, face enormous health, hazards, are underpaid, underemployed, undereducated, socially isolated, politically powerless, excluded ,from much of the work-protective legislation that other Americans take for granted, and unable to compete in the labor market for the higher wages that would permit them to resolve their own problems or ameliorate the bleak reality of their existence (quoted in Dement. 1985).*

All of these conditions make the task of any employment and training program for this population very difficult. The farmworkers they seek to serve have considerable barriers to non-agricultural employment, including low levels of education, poor English skills, poor health, inferior housing, and few assets to sustain them through a period of retraining. Often the employment of all family members, including children, is necessary to the continued economic survival of the family. Farmworkers may have limited or no experience outside of agriculture, and thus lack job skills that make them competitive in the labor market. This also means that they are likely to be unfamiliar with the workplace culture of mainstream employers, and may lack the clothes or grooming ‘habits necessary for success in that arena. Thus, employment and training programs must be equipped to address the needs of the whole person, and indeed the whole family, in order to improve the conditions of their participants.

THE FEDERAL. RESPONSE: SECTION 402 OF JTPA

The federal government has responded to these conditions with employment and training programs especially targeted to farmworkers. Early efforts date at least as far

back as the National Migrant Labor Program, established in 1971 under the Manpower Development and Training Act. Special provisions for the establishment of services to farmworkers were continued under Title III of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and, later, under Title IV of the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Section 402 of Title IV, which establishes the MSFW program, states that:

> ***The Congress finds and declares that --***
>
> ***(1) chronic seasonal unemployment and underemployment in the agricultural industry, aggravated by continual advancements in technology and mechanization resulting in displacement, constitute a substantial portion of the Nation's rural employment problem and substantially affect the entire national economy; and***
>
> (2) ***because offarmworker employment and training problems, such programs shall be centrally administered at the national level.***

The program for migrant and seasonal farmworkers is federally administered by the Office of Special Targeted Programs, Division of Seasonal Farmworker Programs within DOL's Employment and Training Administration. In PY 92, services were provided through 53 programs, with one providing services in each of 47 states, five serving California, and one serving Puerto Rico. No program was operating in Alaska, Rhode Island, or the District of Columbia. Most of the 53 grants are awarded to community-based organizations (CBOs), nonprofit organizations providing services, to the needy. Some CBOs run programs in several states under separate grants. Several other grants are run by agencies of state governments (e.g., the state Department of Education in Florida).

Eligibility for services in the MSFW program is limited to any individual who:

- Has been a seasonal farmworker or migrant farmworker within the last two years, and

- Received at least 50% of total earned income from farmwork or been employed at least 50% of total work time in farmwork, and

- Is a member of a family receiving public assistance or one whose annual family income does not exceed the higher of either the poverty level or 70% of the lower living standard income level, or

- Is a dependent of any individual eligible by the above criteria.

Federal allocations to serve the pool of persons meeting these criteria amounted to about $70.3 million for PY 91 (the program year running from July I, 1991 to June 30, 1992). These appropriations, less a small set-aside for the national account, are distributed to each of the states using a funding formula. The formula takes into account the number of farmworkers in poverty (based on information from the decennial Census) and the number of special agricultural worker (SAW) applications tiled in the service area. In PY 91, the allocations ranged from less than $150,000 to more than $12 million.

Grantees used these funds to serve about SO.000 participants in PY 91, with a range of services that included classroom training, on-the-job training, job search assistance, and counseling and assessment services much like programs funded by other JTPA titles. Unique to the MSFW program. however, many participants receive supportive services only. The "services-only" component of MSFW programs is primarily geared towards providing emergency assistance (e.g., gas money, emergency health care, meals) to migrant farmworkers who are not participating in employment and training activities. Over one-half of program terminees received "services-only" in PY 91, but these accounted for only about 6% of the total funds expended.

Among terminees who received employment or training assistance in PY 91, about 45% were primarily enrolled in classroom training, another 33% received on-the-,job training, and the remainder received tryout employment, work experience, or training assistance only (e.g., job search assistance and counseling). Across the

programs, the duration of participation among clients in any of these activities averaged about 21 weeks.

To focus their efforts and improve accountability, MSFW programs are held to standards of performance. These standards are outcome based and relate to the kinds of achievements attained by participants who received employment and training services and who terminate from the program. Until PY 90, only two performance outcomes were in effect:

- The entered-employment rate (EER), defined as the percent of terminees (exclusive of those who received services-only as well as youth who received employability enhancements only) who entered unsubsidized employment at termination. These job placements are primarily in non-agricultural jobs, although agriculture placements can be counted if they represent an upgraded position within agriculture and one that does not result in the continued underemployment of the individual.

- The cost per entered employment (CEE), defined as total program costs, less administrative costs and the costs of providing services-only, divided by the number of terminees who entered unsubsidized employment.

With the advice of an Ad Hoc Technical Workgroup consisting of members of the MSFW grantee community, DOL recently undertook a reconsideration of whether the performance standards and reporting system then in place supported the goals that had recently been enunciated for the JTPA system. These goals are that JTPA programs should:

- target services to a more at-risk population;

- improve the quality and intensity of services that lead to long-term employability and increased earnings;

- place greater emphasis on basic skill acquisition to qualify for employment or advanced education or training; and

- promote comprehensive, coordinated human resource programs to address the multiple needs of the at-risk population.

The collective opinion of the Workgroup members was that the existing performance standards and reporting requirements contravened these goals by implicitly promoting short-term training geared towards ensuring quick job placements for a job-ready clientele. After extensive deliberations, a comprehensive packet of changes was promulgated by DOL to modify these requirements and bring them in line with the goals of the program, while enhancing the effectiveness of DOL's broad oversight and monitoring responsibilities. Among the changes to new performance standards:

- The cost per entered employment was eliminated as a performance outcome. Although intended as a measure of the efficiency with which grantees use their funds, DOL was concerned that use of the CEE as a performance outcome had encouraged grantees to provide relatively short-term training in place of the more intensive remediation that participants may need. The elimination of CEE is in keeping with recent changes to the Title II-A performance standards and is expected to encourage more intensive services to a more disadvantaged clientele.

- The average wage at placement was added as a new performance outcome to focus grantee efforts on the attainment of job placements that are of high quality.

- The entered employment rate was retained as a performance outcome, but was redefined to eliminate adults receiving enhancements only from the denominator.

In conjunction with these changes to performance standards, a number of changes were made to the reporting requirements for the Annual Status Report.

- Programs are now required to collect information on and report additional terminee characteristics. These include the number of terminees who are long-time agricultural employees and the number with reading skills below the 7th grade level. The second of these requires grantees to use standardized reading tests to assess the literacy skills of program participants.

- Programs now report follow-up outcomes (measured for the 13th week after termination) for terminees who were placed in jobs at termination. These outcomes are the number employed at follow-up, their average wages, and the number employed with a packet of fringe benefits that includes health insurance coverage.

- Programs now record the number of their terminees who have received an employability enhancement, including those who entered non-§402 training, completed a major level of education, returned to school, successfully completed worksite training objectives (e.g., completed a work experience or tryout employment assignment), or attained basic or occupational skills proficiency.

Standards on the EER and wage at placement outcomes are established individually by DOL for each grantee based on an adjustment process that takes into account the characteristics of terminees who were served (e.g., their demographic characteristics, educational levels, and other indicators of job-readiness) and characteristics of their local area economies. MSFW grantees have generally been quite successful in meeting their performance standards and, until PY 91, attained entered-employment rates that exceeded 70% on average. Average costs per entered employment were about $4,500 in PY 90. In PY 91, as grantees shifted their programs to attain the goals cited above, job placements declined and many terminees attained

employability enhancements. No performance standards have yet been developed for the enhancement or follow-up outcomes.

Serving the Unique Needs of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

Grantees operating MSFW programs face constraints common to programs operating under other titles of JTPA. Most programs find that federal allocations are inadequate to serve all those eligible for services. A recent report by the General Accounting Office, for example, found that service delivery areas (SDAs) operating under Title II-A serve as few as 2%.3% of all those eligible, and there is little reason to think that penetration levels are much higher in the MSFW program. Indeed, job training programs targeted to the farmworker population suffered massive cutbacks during the transition from CETA to JTPA, with current allocations in inflation-adjusted dollars only about one-third of those in effect a decade ago. Using available' JTPA dollars as effectively as possible is, therefore, a central challenge, as are leveraging funds from other sources and developing coordinated program strategies.

The MSFW grantees in common with programs operating under other JTPA titles also face the difficult task of addressing the multiple needs of program participants. Notwithstanding allegations that the JTPA system encourages "creaming," or serving the most job-ready from among all those eligible for services, many JTPA participants clearly are hard to serve (i.e., deficient in basic skills and/or with other formidable barriers to employment) and can have their labor market prospects significantly enhanced only if the job training program delivers high quality and intensive services, including careful assessment and remediation geared towards each participant's needs and abilities. The further challenge is delivering these services while meeting the need many participants have for an immediate steady stream of income to support themselves and their families.

Beyond these considerations, however, the MSFW grantees face unique constraints and obstacles posed by the special needs of their clientele and the characteristics of their service areas. To begin with, the farmworker population must

stand as among the **hardest to serve** of all JTPA participants. A substantial number of MSFW participants (over 40% of those terminated in PY 91) speak only a foreign language or have limited proficiency in English. Nearly as many others dropped out of school before completing the 8th grade, and about 75% have not attained a high school diploma. Redressing the basic skill deficiencies implicit in these figures stands as a formidable challenge for MSFW programs.

Problems that are just as daunting are posed by the very limited work skills of program participants, many of whom have **no non-agricultural work experience** whatsoever. Acclimating such persons to the world of work, making them aware of available job opportunities, assessing their vocational interests and aptitudes, and providing them with marketable job skills require careful, comprehensive, and very intensive program services.

The **transiency** of the farmworker population is another obstacle that MSFW grantees must confront. Over 50% of all terminees (in PY 91) and 26% of those receiving employment and training services were migrants -- persons who very well may be away from their principal place of residence at the time they enroll for services. As transients, many program participants lack the support of personal networks and have limited access to the support (financial or otherwise) that other social service agencies might otherwise provide. In light of this, MSFW grantees often assume a broader role than is typical elsewhere in JTPA. The very important services-only component of MSFW programs, unique within the JTPA system, is a further reflection of this. As the only service agency to which migrant farmworkers may have ready access, MSFW grantees must be able to respond to the pressing but short-term emergency needs that migrants experience, even those who have no intention of settling out or finding non-agricultural employment. At the same time, they must not let these efforts detract from their more basic goal of providing high quality and intensive employment and training services.

Further adding to challenges in program planning and implementation, the press of economic imperatives means that many transients may move away from the grantee's

service area before a program of training has been completed. Thus, grantees must recognize that many program participants at once need basic and occupational skill training of long duration but are unable or unwilling to remain in a job training program for very long. Providing transients with the incentives and security to settle out of the migrant stream and/or providing them with shorter-term interventions that are still meaningful can be significant challenges to program effectiveness.

Finally, dealing with a transient population means that many grantees experience substantial uncertainty regarding both the timing and extent of participant flows. This fact poses special problems for planning. Programs must retain flexibility and have the capacity to respond quickly to what at times are overwhelming demands for assistance, while still maintaining high quality program operations on an ongoing basis.

The **volatile labor markets** common in agricultural employment are another feature demanding flexibility of program operators. Traditional migratory patterns -- and, consequently, the demand for services -- can be easily upset by unexpected climactic changes. The severe drought that struck the Midwest in the summer of 1989 and the devastation of Hurricane Andrew are two instances that come easily to mind. Under these circumstances, program operators must be prepared to deal with potentially large changes in the participant flow (i.e., either very large increases or decreases in the number of persons in need of services) and in the kinds of services that are needed most.

Service areas in most cases also are **geographically large.** Most grantees are nominally responsible for providing services in an entire state. Although grantees concentrate their attention in those parts of their service areas where agricultural activity is most prevalent, even this implies that services must be rendered by many single grantees to areas that are enormous in size. Providing effective outreach to participants and ensuring coordination among field offices, therefore, become administrative challenges of considerable importance and complexity.

Adding to the difficulty, areas where many grantees concentrate their efforts are often **physically remote and have poorly developed infrastructures.** Other social

service agencies with which MSFW grantees might ideally like to coordinate may be absent, and appropriate classroom training sites may be far away. Public transportation often is nonexistent and housing is poor, making it particularly difficult to settle participants out of agriculture and get them access to employment and training opportunities.

Effective services to farmworkers also must take into account the generally **limited employment opportunities** in rural America. Of course, some MSFW programs operate in close proximity to active urban labor markets. Moreover, few rural communities are completely dependent on agriculture for their economic vitality. Only one-fourth of rural counties depend mostly on farming for their aggregate incomes (Martin and Olmstead, 1987). Nonetheless, rural areas often suffer unemployment rates that are substantially higher than those in urban areas, and their growth rates are typically much lower. Consequently, MSFW participants often have limited opportunities for non-agricultural employment. Under these circumstances, job development activities must be prime matters for the grantees' attention.

The implementation of the **1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act** (IRCA) is another development that has called for a response from MSFW programs. This legislation allowed for the legalization of large numbers of individuals who were seasonal agricultural workers (SAWs), persons who worked at least 90 days in American agriculture on perishables during the 12 months preceding May 1, 1986. Some 1.3 million persons applied for amnesty under this special provision, substantially more than the 350,000 Congress anticipated. This resulted in an expansion of the pool of farmworkers eligible for the §402 program, leading to an increased demand for services. Furthermore, SAWs were expected to constitute a substantially more disadvantaged population (i.e., have poorer literacy skills, limited English proficiency, little non-agricultural work experience, and so on), and, therefore, require more extensive and intensive remediation than persons served formerly by the §402 program. A report prepared by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP) showed that SAWs constituted about 15% of the §402 participants in PY 88 and about 13% in PY 89. A comparison of the characteristics of enrolled SAWs and non-SAWs showed that, as

expected, the SAWs were more likely to have low levels of education (less than 8th grade), be Hispanic, and have limited English skills. Over the course of the two program years examined by the study, §402 grantees had to make adjustments in their eligibility procedures and outreach strategies to accommodate this new group; on the other hand, the data showed that SAWs seemed to become indistinguishable from other §402 participants in terms of their participation in training activities (AFOP, 1992).

OBJECTIVES, TIMELINES, AND STUDY COMPONENTS

The study undertaken by BPA and SPR had the following objectives:

(1) To describe variations in program provision of services to MSFWs, including differences by type of worker (e.g., seasonal versus migrant, youth versus adults), and differences by type of grantee (e.g., administrative type, size).

(2) To assess the quality of services being provided to MSFWs.

(3) To describe the influence of federal policies and regulations on program operations.

(4) To describe the influence of local economic conditions on program operations.

(5) To describe the coordination practices of §402-funded programs.

(6) To describe outcomes for different types of clients, and analyze the effects of local economic conditions and services received on outcomes obtained.

In order to address these objectives, BPA and SPR study staff employed a number of data collection and analysis methods. These included:

- *Case study site visits.* As described more fully in Chapter II, below, the study team visited 18 randomly-chosen MSFW programs during each of the two study years. These case study visits provided the data for the **qualitative cross-site** analysis that forms the basis for much of this report.

- *Quantitative data analysis* of a number of data sets, including:
  - -- aggregate-level data from the universe of programs, consisting of Annual Status Report (ASR) data reported to DOL for the last several program years;
  - -- client-level data on characteristics, services, and outcomes on terminees from 9 programs, consisting of existing data sets voluntarily transmitted to BPA for analysis;
  - -- databases containing information about the eligible farmworker population, including the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) and the Agricultural Work Force Survey.

During the first study year, BPA and SPR delivered to DOL a *Design Report* that detailed the plans for selecting the sample of programs to be visited, the procedures for site visits, and the data analysis plans. This report included a conceptual framework (described below) that guided the development of a detailed set of research questions that addressed each of the study's objectives. These questions in turn guided the development of the topic guides for the site visits and the analysis plans for qualitative and quantitative data analysis.

At the end of Year One, BPA and SPR delivered to DOL an *Interim Report* that gave an overview of the study's major activities during the first year, including the characteristics of the sampled programs and the analysis of existing databases to describe the characteristics of the eligible population; it also described the issues to be addressed during the second round of site visits. The contents of the *Interim Report* have been incorporated into this *Final Report*, which stands as a complete summary of the results of the study.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND QUALITY OF TRAINING MODEL

The activities of this study have been guided by two substantive paradigms: a conceptual framework and a model of quality training. The conceptual framework, which was developed during the design phase (Figure I-1), depicts the influences of federal, state, and local factors that affect service delivery and ultimately, outcomes experienced by program participants. As can be seen from the figure, some of the factors affecting program outcomes are within the control of programs (such as program design) and others are not (such as state and local economic conditions, the nature of the service area and the available service providers, and the characteristics of the eligible population in the service area).

The conceptual framework offers a **system-level** picture of the §402 program. It represents the constraints within which the funded programs must operate. These system-level factors can vary considerably from place to place, and are what give each program its own "flavor." They are generally hard to capture in summary statistics, but rather must be investigated qualitatively. Exploring in detail these system-level factors was the main activity of the first round of program site visits.

Figure I-2 shows a **client-level** model of quality training that was developed during the study "Improving the Quality of Training Under JTPA."[1] It was grounded in the extensive literature on vocational training and adapted for the JTPA system. This model shows the three processes whose effective operation enable potential participants to obtain quality jobs: the client selection and matching process, the training process, and the placement process. There are no absolute definitions of "quality training" or "quality jobs." Rather, they result from a three-way match between the skills deficiencies of the participants, the skills taught in a particular training program, and the skills requirements of demand occupations in a particular local labor market. Therefore,

[1]Department of Labor Contract No. 99-8-3229-75-087-01, by Berkeley Planning Associates and SRI International.

Figure I-1
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION OF TITLE IV MSFW PROGRAM

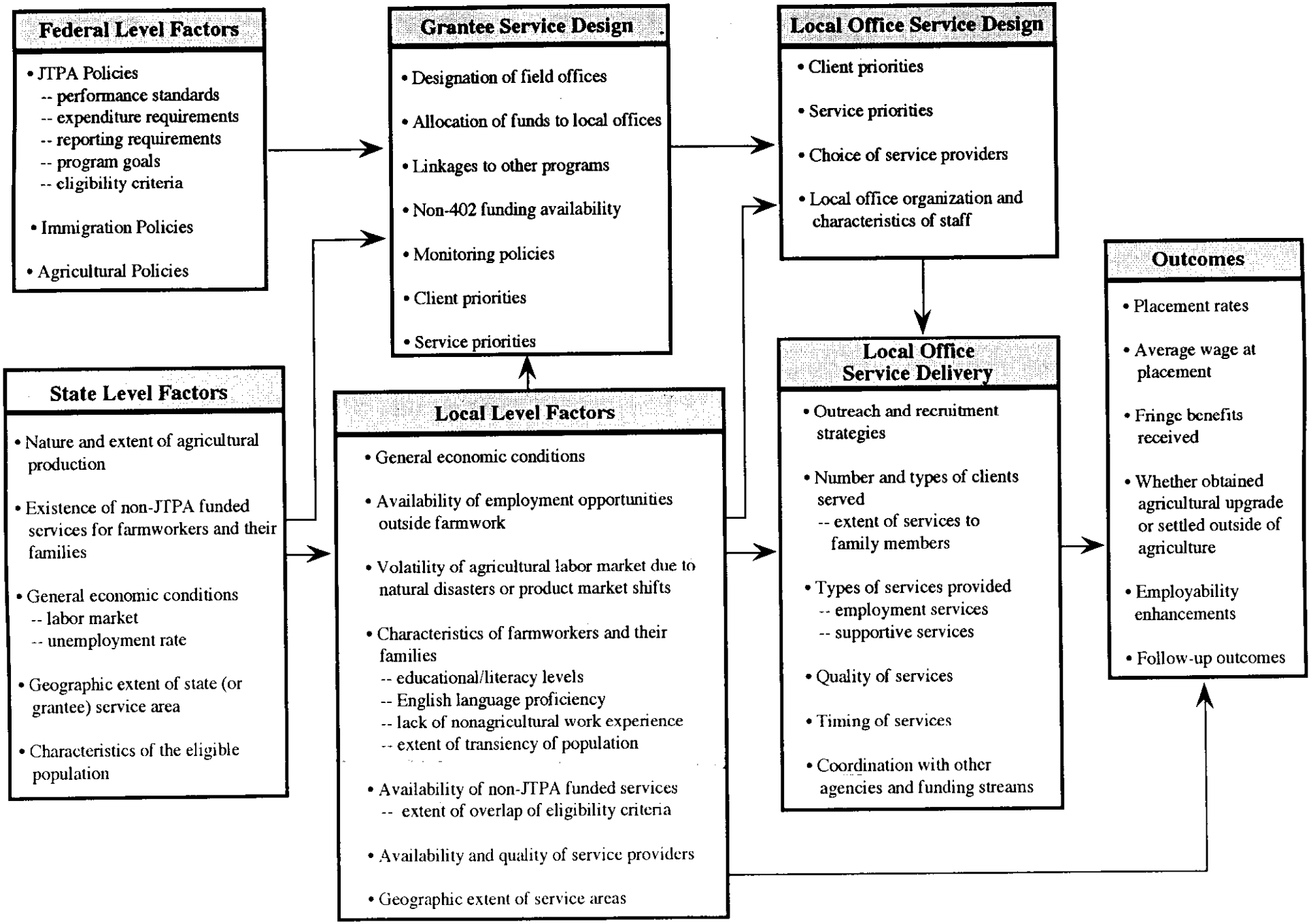
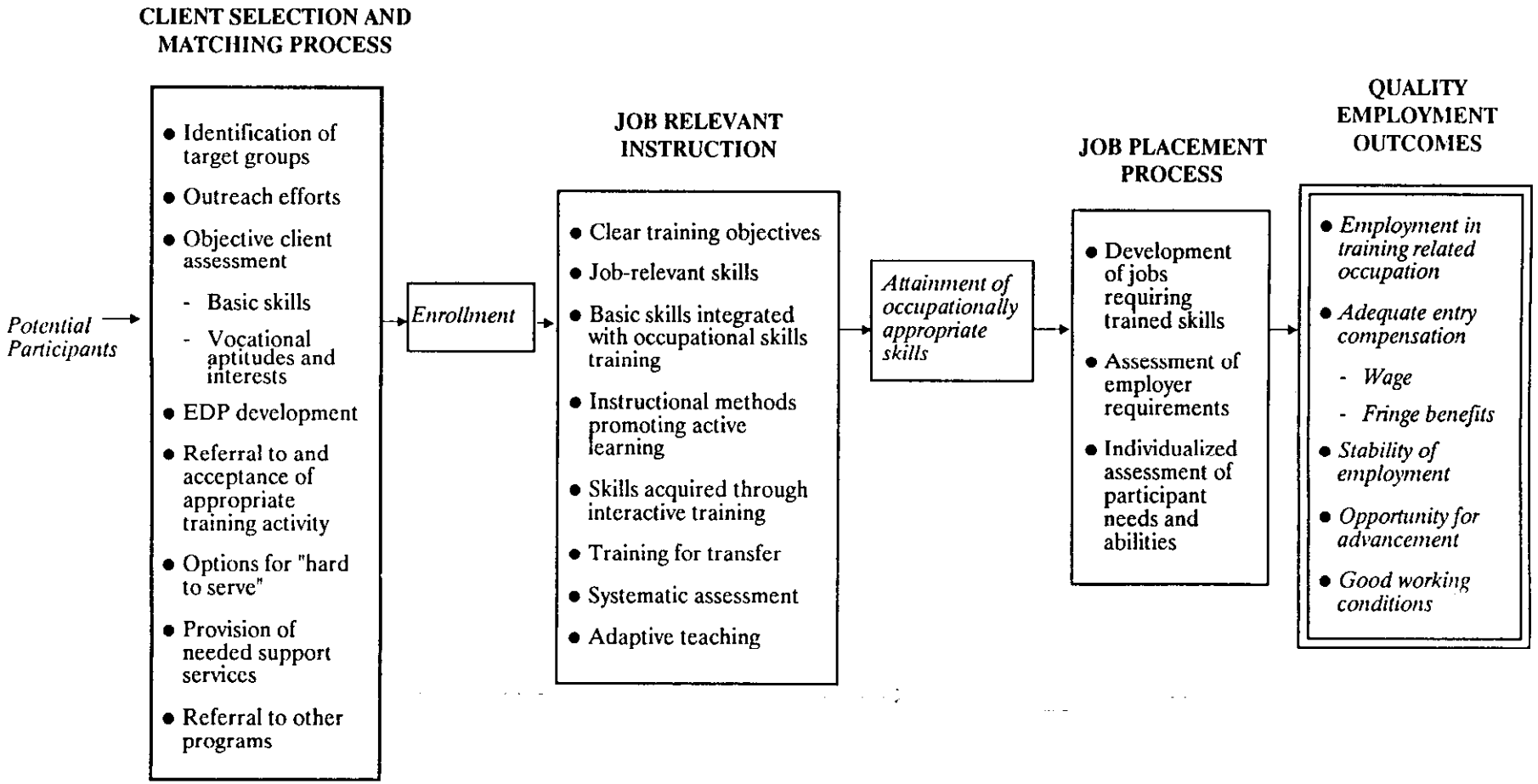


Figure I-2
CLIENT-LEVEL MODEL OF QUALITY TRAINING



Source: Improving the Quality of Training Under JTPA: Summary of Findings (report submitted by Berkeley Planning Associates and SRI International to the U.S. Department of Labor, January 1990)

the quality of training model is as applicable to MSFWs as it is to Title II participants, or anyone who seeks to upgrade their skills and obtain employment.

While the quality of training model may be a generic one, it was necessary to develop specific criteria indicating quality training for the §402 program. These criteria are listed in Figure I-3. As can be seen, the criteria address both system-level factors and client-level factors, since both contribute to the development of a quality training program. It is unlikely that a particular program would meet all the quality criteria. Rather, they represent an ideal set toward which programs could move. In addition, contextual factors can constrain the extent to which programs can meet the quality criteria. Therefore, these criteria are used as a framework for analysis, rather than a judgment about particular visited programs.

Quality of training criteria were developed for the following areas of program design and operations:

- *Client Recruitment, Selection, and Assignment to Services.* A program should have a clear understanding of its eligible population and know the needs of the subset of the eligible population it elects to serve. Its program design should be flexible and change as the needs of the eligible population changes. Outreach and recruitment practices and assessment procedures should be tailored to the needs of the eligible population and sufficient to match applicants to available training options (or refer them to alternative services if the program cannot serve them). Assessment results should be used to develop a service plan and employment goals appropriate for each applicant.

- *Program Design and Management.* Programs should have designed their available services to meet the needs of the eligible population. The training provided should also meet the needs of employers in the local labor market, and be aimed at year-round, stable jobs. Training should be provided in a way that is sensitive to the needs of MSFW clients, including being of sufficient intensity

Figure I-3

CRITERIA INDICATING QUALITY MSFW TRAINING

1. Client Recruitment, Selection, and Assignment to Services

   a. The program has a clear understanding of the eligible population in its state or substate service region.

   b. The program is clear about the subset of the eligible population for which its service design is appropriate.

   c. The program adjusts its service design in response to shifts in the characteristics of the eligible population.

   d. The program attempts to serve that subset of the eligible population for whom no alternative service exists in the community.

   e. The program's outreach and recruitment strategies are tailored to the targeted subsets of the eligible population.

   f. Program staff assess applicant strengths and weaknesses in order to develop a service plan and employment goals appropriate for each applicant.

   g. Assessment instruments and procedures are sufficient to measure the characteristics of the population being assessed and to match applicants to the available training options. This should include assessment of basic skills (including English language proficiency), vocational skills and prior work experience, vocational aptitudes and interests, world of work skills, and barriers to employment.

   h. The program has a clear understanding of the alternative services in the community and refers applicants there when the program cannot serve them.

2. Program Design and Management

   a. The program has a clear idea of what services it wants to provide, based on an assessment of the needs of the applicant population.

   b. The program offers a variety of services to meet the full range of employment barriers of the participants, including basic skills remediation, occupational skills training, and supportive services.

   c. The program offers training for occupations in demand in the local labor market.

   d. The program offers training that is oriented toward year-round, stable jobs paying at or above the minimum wage, in agricultural or non-agricultural labor markets.

   e. Each type of training (i.e., basic skills remediation, on-the-job training, classroom vocational training, work experience, and training assistance) is offered in sufficient intensity to assist participants in increasing their employment potential, either as a stand-alone service or in combination with other types of training.

   f. The program selects service providers that are sensitive to and responsive to the particular needs of MSFW clients.

   g. The program retains enough control over the service design and implementation process to ensure that its service priorities are met by its service providers.

Figure I-3 (continued)

h. The program oversees service provider performance in order to identify weaknesses in service quality and suggest corrective action.

3. Provision of Training

a. Particular training activities have clear skills training objectives and employment or employability enhancement goals for participants.

b. Particular training activities enroll participants whose skills levels and prior preparation are appropriate for the activity.

c. Particular training activities meet the needs of prospective employers.

d. Particular training activities:
- present the training content in a logical developmental sequence;
- present training content that is relevant to the jobs for which MSFW participants are being trained;
- utilize a curriculum that is matched to the learners' level (i.e., adapted to the skills deficiencies and employability barriers of MSFW participants);
- stress "training for transfer," that is, training in how to apply the particular knowledge or skill in a variety of work environments;
- stress active rather than passive learning;
- respond to the cultural and language barriers of MSFW participants, and adapt to student needs as expressed by feedback in the classroom;
- spend class time effectively, focusing on the task at hand;
- include systematic meaningful evaluation of student progress;
- coordinate occupational skills training with basic skills remediation;
- coordinate skills training with the delivery of needed supportive services;
- coordinate skills training with the job development/job placement process.

4. Job Placement Policies and Practices

a. The program has a clear placement strategy and placement goal for each participant.

b. Job development and job placement activities are adequate to further placement goals.

c. Job matches take into account employer needs, client skill levels, and client employment goals.

d. Job placements build on the skills participants acquired during training and are consistent with the employment goals established in their EDPs, including full-time work for those who want it.

e. Participants are assisted in obtaining the highest quality job appropriate to their level of employability.

f. Job placements emphasize quality outcomes, including:
- stable, year-round employment;
- wages at or above the minimum wage;
- good benefits packages, including health insurance;
- safe working conditions; and
- opportunities for advancement.

to increase their employment potential. Finally, programs should maintain oversight of training activities in order to monitor service quality.

- *Provision of Training*. The actual training activities should have clear objectives, enroll appropriate participants, and meet the needs of prospective employers. In addition, they should follow effective methods of service delivery, including: have a logical sequence, have job-relevant content, be matched to the learners' level, stress "training for transfer," stress active learning, spend class time effectively, include systematic evaluation of student progress, coordinate occupational skills training with basic skills remediation and needed supportive services, link well with job development/job placement activities, and respond to the cultural and language barriers of MSFW participants.

- *Job Placement Policies and Practices*. Programs should have clear placement goals for each participant, have adequate activities to attain these goals, and take into account both employer needs and client skills and goals in making placements. Job placements should be at the highest level appropriate to clients' levels of employability, and should emphasize quality outcomes, including: stable, year-round employment, wages at or above the minimum wage; good benefits packages, safe working conditions, and opportunities for advancement.

In order to assess how well the §402 program is meeting these quality criteria, the study team used a number of data sources. The primary source of information was obtained from two rounds of site visits to 18 randomly sampled programs. During both rounds, study staff conducted discussions with central office and field office staff about overall program design and management, as well as interviews with intake staff, job developers, trainers, and participants. During the second round of site visits, an emphasis was placed on observation of particular services and training activities, including assessment, classroom training in both vocational and basic skills, and on-the-job training. Interviews were held with service provider staff and employers as well as program staff. Also during the second study year, data were extracted from a sample of six terminee case files at each program, to obtain a more detailed picture of how the

observed service strategies worked for particular clients. Another source of information about quality outcomes were the client-level databases obtained from a non-random sample of programs. This source allowed us to examine the characteristics of clients obtaining quality jobs, and the kinds of service strategies that led to better outcomes. All of these sources will be discussed as appropriate to the particular topics in the remainder of this report.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

The remainder of this report is organized as follows. Chapter II presents the criteria for selecting sites for the study and describes their characteristics. Chapter III presents our analysis of the characteristics of the eligible population. Chapter IV gives an overview of the service strategies of the §402 programs and describes the coordination practices of programs. Chapter V discusses the services available prior to actual skills training, including outreach, recruitment, and assessment. Chapter VI describes classroom training, including basic skills training and occupational skills training. Chapter VII describes on-the-job training. Chapter VIII describes the supportive services available to §402 participants, including both training-related and non-training-related services ("services-only"). Chapter IX presents information about the kinds of outcomes obtained by §402 participants. Chapter X discusses some factors affecting both program design and outcomes, including federal policies such as performance standards. Chapter XI is a summary of findings and recommendations.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE VISIT SAMPLE

BPA and SPR study staff conducted two rounds of site visits to 18 of the 53 MSFW programs, one visit during each of the two years of the study. The Year One site visits were conducted during the months of November, 1991 through April, 1992. These site visits were four days long (three days for smaller programs) and included one or two days at the state/central office and two days at a field office. Discussions at the state/central offices took place with the executive director and other key program planners and personnel in order to gain an understanding of the overall program design, operation, and management. State level discussions also focused on the program MIS, available client services, and coordination with other state agencies serving MSFWs. Where possible, meetings were also held with state-level representatives from coordinating agencies.

At the field offices, discussions centered on understanding the local context, including the eligible population, the agricultural and larger economic context, and the availability of services other than those provided by the §402 program. Site visitors also explored any variation in the state service design necessitated by the local context, as well as the actual delivery of services including all aspects of the service program from recruitment to placement. Information was obtained through interviews with program personnel, service providers, coordinating agencies, and participants.

The Year Two site visits were conducted from August, 1992 through January, 1993. These visits lasted three days (two days for smaller programs), with one day at the central office and two days at a field office. Discussions at the state/central office mainly focused on any changes in service design or the eligible population since the previous visit, as well as clarifying general administrative topics. Interviews were conducted with the executive director and other key program planners.

At the field office, the second round of site visits concentrated on quality of training issues (discussed in more detail in Chapter I, above). There was a focus on observation of actual classroom training (vocational and basic skills), as well as examination of curricula, and interviews with teachers and participants. Where programs emphasized on-the-job training, OJT contracts were reviewed and work sites visited, including interviews with employers and trainees. In all cases, assessment practices were investigated, and if possible, an assessment session was observed. At either the field office or the central office, depending on the location of case files for closed cases, study staff extracted data from six case files of participants who had terminated from the §402 program three to six months earlier. Data were obtained on the client's characteristics, assessment results, EDP, services received, and outcomes obtained, including follow-up data.

The remainder of this chapter describes the sampling criteria and characteristics of the programs and field offices visited for both years of the study.

STATE LEVEL SAMPLING DESIGN

Following the plan presented in the Design Report, the 51 MSFW programs in the sampling pool[1] were divided into 3 equal-sized (17 programs each) strata based on their PY 91 allocations. The size of allocation also will be used during the analyses below, and was chosen because the administrative issues faced by small and large programs differ considerably. The three groups were defined as:

Small: Consists of programs with PY 91 allocations of less than $770,000. The smallest allocation is $127,664;

Medium: Consists of programs with PY 91 allocations of at least $770,000 but no more than $1,320,000; and,

[1]Puerto Rico and Hawaii were excluded from the sampling pool.

Large: Consists of programs with PY 91 allocations in excess of $1,320,000. Most of these programs had allocations over $1.32 million but less than $3 million; two had allocations between $3 million and $5 million; and, two had allocations over $5 million.

The programs were also divided into two strata based on the percent of terminees who were migrants from among all those who received employment or training services (i.e., exclusive of terminees who received "services-only"). This dimension was chosen because it was hypothesized that the service designs for highly mobile migrant workers would differ from those for the more stable seasonal population. The two groups were defined as:

Low percent migrant: Consists of programs who reported on their PY 89 ASRs that the percent of employment and training terminees who were migrants was 18% or less (below the national median); and,

High percent migrant: Consists of those programs serving more than 18% migrants. (Utah was placed in this stratum; it did not file a PY 89 ASR, but served 40% migrants in PY 88).

A crosstabulation of the strata defined by allocation and percent migrants served yields a six-celled table. The following figure shows the number of programs in each cell:

Allocation	Percent Migrant Served	
	Low	High
Small	8 programs	9 programs
Medium	10 programs	7 programs
Large	7 programs	10 programs

Three programs were chosen randomly from within each of the six cells, with the further stipulations that:

- At least one program and no more than three programs from each of the nine agricultural regions were to be selected; and,

- The sample would have a wide dispersion on the percent of terminees from employment and training who received classroom training, with a mean on this variable near 33% and a median near 28% (the statistics for the sampling pool).

The initial random sample did not meet the regional distribution criterion, and the mean and median of the percent in classroom training were above the targets. A second random sample contained a new grantee, and, at DOL's request, this program was omitted and a replacement was randomly chosen that maintained the desired sample characteristics.

The final sample, categorized by the six strata, is illustrated in Figure II-1.

Characteristics of the Sampled Programs

Agricultural Regions

The agricultural regions are represented in Figure II-2. As desired, there was at least one program and no more than three programs from each of the nine agricultural regions.

Classroom Training

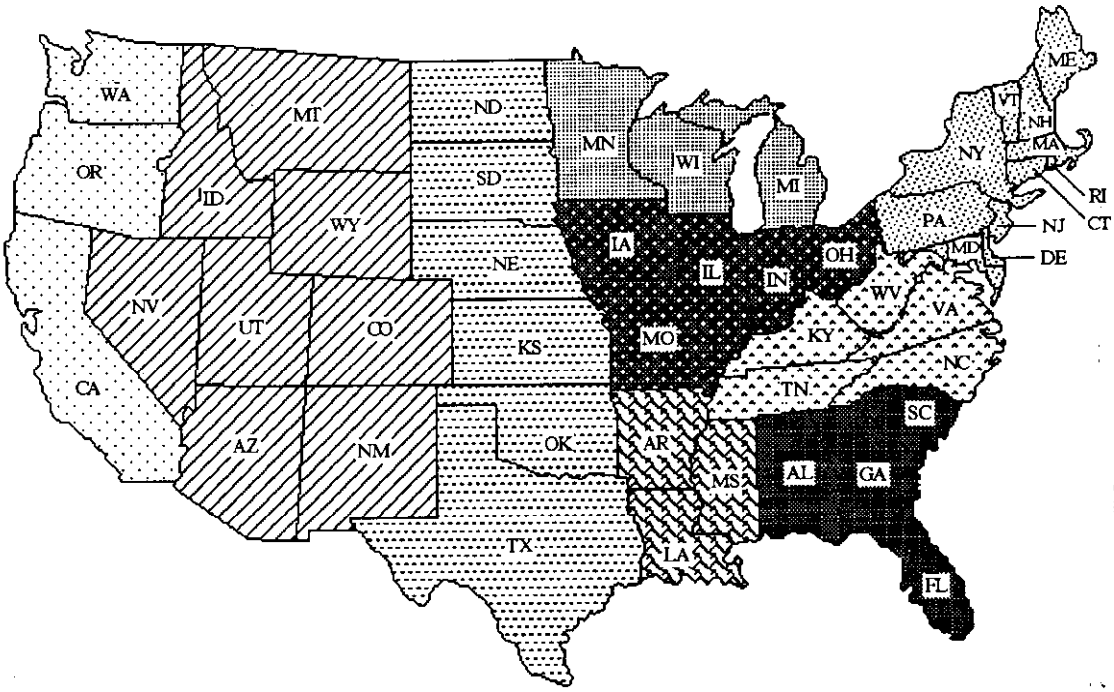
The sampled programs had a mean percent of terminees in classroom training of 41% and a median value of 39%. These are somewhat high, but still reasonably close

Figure II-1

SITE VISIT SAMPLE

	Low Percent Migrant			High Percent Migrant		
	State	Allocation	Percent Migrant	State	Allocation	Percent Migrant
Small (Below $770,000)	NV	$168,461	0.00	WV	$247,399	28.89
	CT	213,629	10.34	MD	321,938	50.00
	MT	756,934	2.93	ND	531,773	38.02
Medium ($770,000 - $1.32m)	CA-CVOC	944,405	8.79	SD	786,754	18.72
	MO	1,237,716	1.61	IN	875,629	64.74
	AR	1,311,695	7.41	OH	1,019,389	46.93
Large (Above $1.32m)	CA-HDC	2,150,476	8.81	WI	1,386,828	60.36
	NC	3,315,336	11.31	FL	4,518,737	47.40
	CA-CET	5,696,299	7.81	TX	5,816,777	35.10

Figure II-2
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FARM PRODUCTION REGIONS*



Region	Number of Grantees in Region	Number of Grantees in Sample	Sampled Grantees
Pacific	7	3	CA-CET, CA-CVOC, CA-HDC
Mountain	8	2	MT, NV
Plains	6	3	ND, SD, TX
Lake	3	1	WI
Cornbelt	5	3	IN, OH, MO
Delta	3	1	AR
Northeast	10	2	CT, MD
Appalachia	5	2	WV, NC
Southeast	4	1	FL

**For sampling purposes, the North Plains (ND, SD, NE, KS) and South Plains (OK, TX) regions have been combined into a single region*

to the targets of 33% and 28%, respectively. More importantly, the sampled programs spanned the distribution of the percent of terminees from classroom training by including some programs who used classroom training very sparingly (with percents close to zero), others who used classroom training heavily (with percents that exceed 50%), and others who fell between these extremes.

Type of Grant Administrator

Various types of grant administrators were represented by the sample: nonprofit community-based organizations (CBOs) operating in multiple states, CBOs operating in single states, and two state agencies (Department of Education in Florida, and Department of Industrial, Labor, and Human Relations in Wisconsin). Most of the multi-state CBOs were represented through at least one of their grants.

Type of Farmworker Population

Programs differed by their position in the migrant stream, and thus had different types of farmworker populations in the service area. Florida, Texas, and California, usually considered homebase states, were each represented, with three of the five California programs in the sample. In the homebase states, there was often very little difference between farmworkers who were seasonal or migrant, since the same people could, at various times, do seasonal work only around their homes, migrate within the state, or travel outside the state in search of work. Sometimes farmworkers did only seasonal work one year and combined seasonal work and migrant work in other years.

The remainder of the states in the sample are generally considered to be upstream states. In these states, there were generally two very different groups of farmworkers. Seasonal workers were farmworkers who lived in the state and performed farmwork part of the year. During the rest of the year, they either worked at different jobs, received unemployment insurance benefits or public assistance, or tried to survive on the income they had earned during the season. These seasonal farmworkers tended to resemble the state's overall poor population, whether that was Caucasian, African-American, Native

American, or Latino (e.g., Mexican-American or Puerto Rican). In many cases, these seasonal workers had finished high school and were literate in English. Migrant workers in these states, on the other hand, tended to be of Hispanic origin with very low levels of educational and language skills. Many of them had permanent homes in California, Florida, or Texas, and had no intention of settling out and obtaining training and non-agricultural employment. When they did settle out, however, they often faced considerable discrimination. Once settled out, they might perform seasonal farmwork prior to entering the §402 program, which meant that their status as former migrants is not always captured by the reported statistics.

Thus, both upstream and homebase states contained both seasonal and migrant populations. What varied was the extent of the difference between these two groups, and their relative size. In many states, more and more work that was previously done by seasonal farmworkers is being performed by migrants, and these migrants are increasingly of Hispanic origin. The challenge for many grantees was to shift their programs to be able to serve these Hispanic migrants, whether in settling out or in addressing their low skill levels through enhancement activities.

FIELD OFFICE SAMPLING

Field offices were purposively, not randomly, selected for site visits. Two programs in the sample had no field office apart from the central office, and two programs had only one field office apart from the central office, so those offices were visited for those programs. In the remaining programs, the number of field offices ranged from three to 25. Not surprisingly, the number of field offices varied by the size of the program's allocation. The mean number of field offices for the six programs in the small allocation stratum was 3.0, the mean for medium allocation programs was 7.6, and the mean for large programs was 17.0. These figures are for year-round offices; however, a number of the sampled programs operated some field offices only during the peak growing and harvest seasons, which meant that they had a larger number of field offices during certain times of year.

Several factors were considered in choosing which field office to visit. We were interested in offices that were representative of the state's MSFW environment and the program's service design; established, not newly opened; and, for practical purposes, not more than half a day's drive from the central office.[2] Beyond these factors, offices were selected with the goal of variation across the sample in the following areas: urban versus rural service area; unemployment rates; type of population served (seasonal or migrant); and service emphasis (CRT or OJT). Descriptions of the field offices were obtained through review of grant plans and discussions with program staff prior to site visits.

For the return site visits in Year Two of the study, in some cases study staff returned to the same field office and in some cases visited a different one. In most cases, it was not possible to visit a new field office for practical reasons (i.e., distance). However, in cases where another field office was close to the central office and represented an opportunity to observe a new aspect of the program's service design, a new field office was visited. In a few cases, two field offices were visited during the same trip, in order to understand all parts of the service design (e.g., if different field offices placed an emphasis on different activities, a field office representing each type might be visited).

Characteristics of the Sampled Field Offices

A total of 33 field offices were visited over the two years of the study. Eleven of these offices were located in urban areas with populations of 100,000 or more. The remaining offices operated in rural environments, ranging from very rural (small towns with populations of less than 2,000, with limited job opportunities outside of agriculture) to semi-rural (small cities of 25,000 or more, or rural areas near large cities with a variety of non-agricultural work available). Whatever the size of the city or town where the field office was located, in all cases the area served included the surrounding county, and in most cases a number of counties. In one case a field office's official service area

[2]Exceptions to this last criterion occurred in two Plains states, where intrastate flights made it possible to visit offices that were further away.

included 33 counties. The large size of the service areas meant that field office staff often were "on the road" to conduct outreach and recruitment. Participants who lived in outlying areas often had to commute large distances to take advantage of training services.

Unemployment rates in the areas served by the field offices varied widely. A few urban areas had quite low unemployment rates ranging from 3% to 5%. However, most of the service areas visited, especially those in the most rural areas, had higher unemployment rates that were usually above the averages for the states where they were located. These rates ranged from about 10% to as high as 20%, especially during the winter months when agricultural activities were at their low point.

The vast majority of field offices were located in areas where migrant farmworkers worked or traveled through on their way to work. In addition, however, most of the field offices also served areas where at least small numbers of seasonal farmworkers lived. As discussed above, in the homebase states, the characteristics of the two kinds of workers were usually more similar than in the upstream states, where seasonal and migrant workers could have very different characteristics. Most field offices in the study offered both supportive services to migrant or seasonal workers who wished to remain in agriculture, as well as employment and training services to migrant farmworkers who wanted to settle out or seasonal farmworkers living in the area who wished to find non-agricultural employment. However, the amount of emphasis placed on these activities varied across field offices, and within the same office at different times of year.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF ELIGIBLES AND PARTICIPANTS

As the conceptual model presented in Chapter I makes clear, an important determinant of the services designed and provided by MSFW programs is the characteristics of the population eligible for services. Indeed, the JTPA legislation established the §402 program explicitly in recognition of the unique needs of farmworkers. For example, the transiency, limited English proficiency, and low levels of basic skills that characterize so many farmworkers imply that MSFW programs must devise specialized outreach and recruitment methods and skills training.

In an effort to understand this context and by way of establishing the backdrop for the evaluation, this chapter uses existing data to describe in general terms the characteristics of farmworkers eligible for MSFW services and compare these to persons actually being served. Specifically, our objectives are to:

- Describe the characteristics of farmworkers eligible for MSFW services. This analysis suggests the general level of need in farm communities and the characteristics of the target population.

- Compare the characteristics of those eligible to those of persons actually receiving services provided by §402 programs. This analysis will suggest whether those most in need of JTPA services are finding their way into the program.

MEASURING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ELIGIBLE POPULATION

Data Sources

A variety of data sources have been used to estimate the size and characteristics of the farmworker population nationwide, including those based on surveys or censuses of the nation's farm employers (such as the Census of Agriculture, the Farm Costs and

Returns Survey, and the Farm Labor Survey) and others of workers or households (such as the Decennial Census, the Current Population Survey, the Agricultural Work Force Survey, and the National Agricultural Workers Survey). These have produced a plethora of often widely contradictory estimates for a number of reasons:

- There is not complete agreement on what constitutes a farm, let alone a farmworker. For example, the Census of Agriculture defines a farm as any place that sells or normally would sell $1,000 or more of agricultural products annually. Other surveys, such as the Current Population Survey, implicitly allow respondents to self-define what it means to work on a farm. Similarly, farmworkers can be variously defined to include persons on the payroll of farmers or farm labor contractors, persons who performed work for wages in farming, family members or other relatives and acquaintances working on the farm but not on the payroll, and farmers who provided labor on their own farms.

- There is not clear consensus on the industries or occupations that should be used to define farmwork. For example, those working in animal production or agricultural services are included in some definitions and not others.

- Differences in the look-back period. For example, some surveys identify those performing farmwork during the survey week, while others ask respondents if they have conducted farmwork anytime during the year. Given the seasonality of farm employment, this distinction can be important.

- Differences in sampling frames. Some surveys randomly select for interview from the nation's housing units (e.g., the Current Population Survey); others develop sampling lists from farm employers.

In light of this array of possibilities, we have relied on two data sources to estimate the characteristics of the population eligible for §402 services, to produce a range of estimates within which the actual distribution is likely to fall. The data sources

we have chosen are the National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) and the Agricultural Work Force Survey.

The NAWS is an ongoing annual survey begun by the U.S. Department of Labor as a response to the need for information on the impact of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) on the supply of farmworkers. The NAWS is designed to be nationally representative of agricultural workers in designated perishable commodities by drawing a sample from lists of employees provided by agricultural employers in 73 counties nationwide. Interviews are conducted with different respondents three times a year, with about 2,000 persons interviewed annually. Extensive information is collected from respondents, including their basic demographics, job history in both farmwork and non-farmwork, years of education completed, facility with reading and writing English, household composition, and family income.

The Agricultural Work Force Survey is a supplement that has been included in the Current Population Survey (CPS) every other December. The CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households and is the nation's foremost source for monthly estimates of employment and unemployment. The Agricultural Work Force supplement specifically asks whether the respondent or any family member conducted farmwork anytime during the year preceding the survey. Those who respond affirmatively are asked questions regarding their farm and non-farm employment during the year, in addition to the standard CPS sequence on household composition, basic demographics, and current employment status. The Agricultural Work Force Survey was discontinued with its last administration in December 1987, when plans for the first NAWS survey were being made.

For the purposes of estimating the characteristics of the population eligible for MSFW services, these surveys have varying strengths and weaknesses relating to their sampling frames and the different purposes for which the surveys have been designed. For example, respondents to the CPS are selected from a random sample of housing units. Thus, farmworkers living in non-standard housing units may be missed. The fact that interviews are conducted in December, generally a slack time for farmwork, gives

rise to the additional problem that many Latino farmworkers, who may be staying in Mexico for some part of the winter months, also will not be counted. For these reasons and others, there is widespread concern that the CPS Agricultural Work Force Survey undercounts farmworkers who are more disadvantaged. Moreover, the CPS is dated, because it was last administered in 1987. The enactment of IRCA in 1986 and subsequent changes in American farming may have substantially changed the composition of the farmworker population since then. Thus, CPS results can yield a portrait of persons eligible for MSFW services that imperfectly reflects current levels of need.'

By developing sampling lists from farm employers, the NAWS was designed explicitly to address the limitations of the CPS sampling frame, and, because it is an ongoing survey, its results are current. Nonetheless, it potentially has limitations of a different sort when used for our purposes. First, it excludes from its sampling frame those working in sugarcane, silage, or select other crops and all livestock workers. These persons, who are covered by MSFW eligibility rules, may constitute 30% of all agricultural workers.*

Secondly, the NAWS sample was designed to be representative of the *amount of* farmwork performed, rather than the *number of farmworkers.* Because persons with longer spells of farmwork are more likely to be enumerated than those with shorter and sporadic spells, NAWS may tend to undercount casual farmworkers as a proportion of those who did farmwork ever during the year. Although ad hoc sampling weights have been developed to permit generalizations to farmworkers (rather than the amount of farmwork), their adequacy for the purpose of describing those who ever did farm work during the year remains unclear.

[1]Another criticism often leveled at the CPS supplement is that undocumented workers will generally avoid survey interviewers and, hence, are missed. However, because illegal aliens are not eligible for JTPA, their undercount in the CPS supplement is not a serious problem for our purposes.

[2]Gabbard, Mines, and Perloff (1991). However, workers in industries not covered by NAWS are probably a smaller percentage of those eligible for MSFW services.

Proxying MSFW Eligibility

Persons who can be served in the MSFW program must be eligible farmworkers or their dependents. As detailed in the program's regulations (20 CFR 633), eligible farmworkers are those who meet each of these conditions:

- Performed seasonal farmwork. During the eligibility period, persons must have performed farmwork for wages in selected industries at least 25 days or earned at least $400 from farmwork. They also must have been employed in farmwork on a seasonal basis without a constant year-round salary.

- Is dependent on farmwork. To be eligible, the farmworker must as well be dependent on farmwork, which is defined to mean that those eligible must have received at least 50% of their total earned income or been employed at least 50% of their total work time in farmwork.

- Is economically disadvantaged. The farmworker must also be a member of a family that receives public assistance or one whose annual income does not exceed the higher of either the poverty level or 70% of the lower living standard income level.

- Has citizenship or general work authorization. Undocumented workers or illegal aliens are not eligible for participation.

The identification of eligible farmworkers was proxied using data items available in both the CPS supplement and the NAWS. The exception was that utilization or work authorization is not measured in any fashion in the CPS. Also, we did not identify dependents of farmworkers, who would be eligible. Although most eligibility criteria are measured imperfectly, both data sets allow the development of reasonable proxies. The precise operationalization of these guidelines using these data, and their limitations, are described in Appendix A.

Reasons for Ineligibility

As already has been documented in other sources, the CPS and the NAWS describe overall farmworker populations that are dramatically different in many ways. For example, substantial proportions of farmworkers described by the CPS are students, housewives, retirees, or others not primarily dependent on farmwork for their livelihood and who perform farmwork only for several weeks out of the year (see Oliveira and Cox, 1989). By contrast, NAWS farmworkers are overwhelmingly young, poorly educated Hispanics who are very dependent on farmwork for their livelihoods (see Mines, Gabbard, and Boccalandro, 1991).

Given this, it is perhaps not surprising that the percentages of all farmworkers estimated from each survey to be eligible for the MSFW program are rather different. As shown in Table III-1, the CPS results suggest that 13% of all persons who performed paid farmwork during the year qualified, while the estimate using the NAWS is 33%.

Reasons for ineligibility also are rather different. More than half of the farmworkers in the CPS were ineligible either because they worked year-round (operationalized as having worked at least 11 months in farmwork during the year) or worked and earned less than the minimum requirements. By contrast, only 31% of farmworkers in the NAWS were ineligible for these reasons.

Over 67% of CPS farmworkers but 85% of NAWS farmworkers were dependent on farmwork. Thus, proportionally twice as many farmworkers in the CPS than the NAWS spent at least 50% of their total work time and earned at least 50% of their total earnings in non-farmwork.

Perhaps because greater proportions of CPS farmworkers are not dependent on farmwork, only 31% are found by the CPS to be economically disadvantaged. By contrast, 62% of NAWS farmworkers are so classified.

Table III-1

FARMWORKERS ELIGIBLE FOR THE MSFW PROGRAM AND REASONS FOR INELIGIBILITY

	CPS	NAWS
Percent eligible for the MSFW program	13.4	33.3
Percent of all farmworkers meeting individual eligibility criteria		
Was a seasonal farmworker	43.5	69.3
Was dependent on farming	67.4	85.0
Was economically disadvantaged	31.1	61.9
Was a citizen or had work authorization	NA	81.4

Finally, 81% of NAWS farmworkers are citizens, permanent residents, or otherwise have work authorization (comparable estimates are not available from the CPS). Conversely, this suggests that appreciable numbers of farmworkers are undocumented workers, despite the passage of IRCA.

COMPARING THE ELIGIBLES WITH THOSE RECEIVING SERVICES

Characteristics of the Eligibles

The NAWS and CPS also paint a very different picture of the farmworkers who are eligible for §402 services. As the first two columns of Table III-2 show, both surveys suggest that those eligible nationwide are generally male. According to the CPS, they also typically are seasonal workers rather than migrants. But NAWS eligibles are less likely to be very young, with 14% under age 22, compared with 36% for the CPS. Although both sources describe a population with very low levels of education, NAWS eligibles are substantially more likely to be dropouts. According to the NAWS, about two-thirds are dropouts with less than an 8th grade education and another 18% are high

Table III-2

ELIGIBLE FARMWORKERS AND SECTION 402 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

	Characteristics of Eligible Farmworkers Using		Characteristics of MSFW Terminees	Characteristics of Title II-A Adult Terminees
	NAWS	CPS		
Farmworker Group				
Migrant	NA	8.7%	52.5%	--
Seasonal	NA	91.3	47.5	--
Sex				
Male	74.8%	74.4	65.2	40.2%
Female	25.2	25.6	34.8	59.8
Age				
15 and under	0.3	7.8	0.5	--
16 - 21	14.2	28.5	18.1	--
22 -44	60.6	43.5	64.7	--
45 and over	24.8	20.2	16.7	--
Education Status				
Dropout: 8th grade or less	65.8	25.4	43.1	} 24.4
Dropout: 9th - 12th grade	18.1	29.9	29.8	
Student, high school	NA	12.6	1.2	0.5
High school graduate	16.0	32.1	25.9	75.1
Race/Ethnicity				
White (non-Hispanic)	7.5	56.8	12.6	62.8
Black (non-Hispanic)	4.1	12.9	18.7	24.7
Hispanic	85.5	27.4	66.6	9.3
Other	2.8	3.0	2.1	3.2
Other Barriers				
Limited English	81.2	NA	39.2	4.0
Single head of household	2.1	12.9	14.6	36.4
Welfare recipient	7.3	NA	11.5	33.5

NOTE: Data for Section 402 and Title II-A adult terminees are taken from PY 90; the MSFW data include both employment and training and services-only terminees. NAWS data are taken from the 1990-91 wave, a period that corresponds closely to PY 90. CPS data are taken from the survey administered in December 1987. Neither the NAWS nor CPS includes coverage of Puerto Rico; therefore, the MSFW grantee serving Puerto Rico has been excluded from the computation of the MSFW terminee characteristics to promote comparability.

school dropouts. By contrast, analogous estimates from the CPS are 25% and 30%, respectively, while 32% are high school graduates.

NAWS eligibles also are overwhelmingly Hispanic, and 81% have limited English proficiency[3]; only 8% are non-Hispanic whites and 4% are blacks. A majority of CPS eligibles, by contrast, are white (57%), and three times as many are blacks (13%).

Finally, generally small proportions of eligibles are single household heads with dependent children, and few are welfare recipients.

As these tabulations have shown, the differences between the eligibles described by these two surveys are striking. To some degree these differences can be accounted for by the surveys' different sampling frames. For example, by sampling from standard dwelling units, the CPS may be disproportionately missing recent Hispanic immigrants. By contrast, because it does not include farmworkers in all farm commodities and its design may cause it to focus on longer-term farmworkers, NAWS may be yielding a portrait of eligibles that is weighted towards those working in select commodities or who are heavily dependent on farmwork for their livelihoods.

Important too is the time that has elapsed from the administration of the CPS supplement, in 1987, to the NAWS (1990-91 data have been used here). With the enactment of IRCA in 1986, over 1.2 million farmworkers applied for residency as Special Agricultural Workers (SAWs), many of whom thereby gained eligibility for MSFW services. This represents an enormous influx of potential participants and one that has changed the characteristics of the pool of eligibles.

It is hard to imagine that the dramatic differences described by these two surveys can be entirely attributed to the passage of just three years; indeed, there is no reason to suppose that the 1987 CPS missed SAWs entirely. Nonetheless, these results suggest that real and dramatic changes in the characteristics of eligibles have occurred. Estimates

[3]Limited English proficiency was defined from the NAWS as those whose primary language is not English and who, when asked how well they speak English, reply not at all, a little, or somewhat.

from the NAWS, for example, suggest that nearly half of farmworkers eligible for the MSFW program were granted work authorization as SAWs under IRCA. A sense of the dramatic pace of recent change was suggested as well from our study team's conversations with §402 program operators, many of whom described pronounced shifts in the composition of farmworkers in their service areas, towards a more disadvantaged, more predominately Hispanic, and more migrant population.

Based on a consideration of their sampling frames, industry coverage, dates of administration, and other issues, the study team believes that the NAWS provides a more nearly accurate characterization of the eligible population than the CPS supplement. Nonetheless, the CPS results are useful in that they appropriately draw attention, first, to probable pronounced changes in the farmworker population that have occurred in recent years, and, second, to a degree of uncertainty that still exists with respect to describing farmworkers eligible for the §402 program.

Comparisons with Section 402 Program Participants

The third column of Table III-2 shows by comparison the characteristics of persons who terminated from the §402 program in PY 90, including those who received employment and training services or services-only. A comparison of the characteristics of these participants with farmworkers who are eligible for services is hampered somewhat by the fact that dependents of farmworkers, who are eligible for §402 services, are included among those being served but are not represented in the NAWS and CPS estimates of the eligibles. In light of this non-comparability, Table III-2 is appropriate for making comparisons in general terms only.

Results show that MSFW terminees are much more likely than the eligibles (at least as estimated from the CPS) to be migrants than seasonals. Females are served in excess of their proportion among eligible farmworkers, although they still constitute only about one-third of the client mix. The age distribution of MSFW terminees matches that of the NAWS quite closely, although older workers may be slightly underserved.

Comparisons of levels of education are somewhat more problematic, primarily because the NAWS and CPS distributions are so disparate. Nonetheless, even using NAWS as the point of comparison, with the very low levels of education it describes, MSFW terminees are only somewhat more likely to be high school graduates (26% for MSFW terminees versus 16% for NAWS eligibles). Conversely, 73% of terminees are dropouts -- quite close to the NAWS estimate of 84% among eligible farmworkers and well above the CPS estimate; among dropouts, both terminees and NAWS eligibles also are unlikely even to have gone beyond the 8th grade, although the proportion who are high school dropouts is much higher among terminees than among NAWS eligibles.

Two-thirds of MSFW terminees are Hispanic. This figure falls equidistant between the widely divergent NAWS (86%) and CPS (27%) estimates. Finally, 39% of MSFW terminees have limited English proficiency, about half the proportion with this condition among NAWS eligible farmworkers (81%). However, compared with NAWS estimates of eligibles, terminees are more likely to be single heads of households (15%) and welfare recipients (12%).

To provide another context within which the characteristics of §402 program participants can be judged, the final column of Table III-2 presents the characteristics of adults served in the Title II-A program in PY 90. The JASR (Job Training Annual Status Report), used for reporting in the Title II-A program, of course does not report migrant status, and it uses different age and education categories. Nonetheless, the combined percentage of Title II-A adult terminees who have not completed high school or attained a GED is just 24%, well short of the 73% of dropouts provided services in the §402 program. Put differently, three-quarters of Title II-A terminees were high school graduates (or equivalents) compared with only 26% of §402 terminees who had attained this level of education.

Further drawing attention to the comparative basic skills deficiencies of §402 terminees, only 4% of Title II-A terminees have limited English proficiency, a small fraction of those served by the §402 program who have this disadvantage.[4]

Table III-2 further shows that the §402 program's terminees are much more likely to be members of minority groups (87% are Hispanics or members of racial minority groups, compared with just 37% of Title II-A adult terminees), but they are less likely to be single heads of households (15% versus 36%) or welfare recipients (12% versus 34%).

Differences Among MSFW Terminees

Thus far we have made comparisons of eligibles and Title II-A adult terminees with MSFW terminees. But, consistent with the regulations, the MSFW program consists of two separate tracks, which provide very different services to participants. The first track, which accounts for the bulk of program resources by far, provides employment and training services, including basic skills and vocational classroom training, job search assistance, work experience, and on-the-job training; the second track, which serves over half of all terminees but uses just a small part of the program's funds, provides "services-only," consisting of usually emergency food, medical, or transportation assistance to persons who have no intention (at least at the time services are rendered) of undergoing training or seeking non-agricultural employment.

Not surprisingly, the characteristics of terminees served under these two program tracks are quite different. Table III-3 shows that participants who terminated from services-only are nearly three times more likely than employment and training terminees to be migrants, twice as likely to be grade school dropouts, and much less likely to be

[4]PY 90 data are being used for these comparisons, because they correspond most closely to the NAWS survey dates. However, in PY 91 the ASR for the §402 program was revised, requiring grantees to report the percentage of their terminees who read below the 7th grade level. A comparable item has been included on Title II-A's JASR for several years now. This comparison also highlights the relative disadvantage of the §402 population. Specifically, 45% of §402 employment and training terminees were tested as reading below the 7th grade level in PY 91, compared with 18% of Title II-A adult terminees in PY 90.

Table III-3

CHARACTERISTICS OF E&T AND SERVICES-ONLY MSFW TERMINEES

	Characteristics of MSFW Terminees	
	E&T	Services Only
Farmworker Group		
Migrant	24.6%	70.7%
Seasonal	75.4	29.3
Sex		
Male	62.6	66.5
Female	37.4	33.5
Age		
15 and under	0.6	0.3
16 - 21	28.1	11.6
22 -44	63.1	65.6
45 and over	8.2	22.4
Education Status		
Dropout: 8th grade or less	28.1	53.1
Dropout: 9th - 12th grade	33.6	28.6
Student, high school	1.3	1.2
High school graduate	37.0	17.1
Race/Ethnicity		
White (non-Hispanic)	19.0	7.5
Black (non-Hispanic)	19.3	17.4
Hispanic	58.7	73.7
Other	3.0	1.4
Other Barriers		
Limited English	31.4	45.2
Single head of household	13.9	14.4
Welfare recipient	15.5	10.3

NOTE: Data are taken from PY 90 ASRs and computations include the program serving Puerto Rico.

high school graduates. They also are substantially more likely to be Hispanic and more often have limited English proficiency. These differences draw attention to the difficulty grantees encounter in convincing in-stream migrants to settle out of farm work and undertake basic skills and occupational training. By contrast, funds for services-only are used predominately for in-stream migrants in need of emergency assistance.

SUMMARY

Results presented in this chapter highlight the very hard-to-serve nature of the population eligible for the §402 program. Although data limitations make it difficult to describe with certainty the precise number or nature of farmworkers eligible for services, our best estimates, described by the NAWS, paint a picture of an extremely disadvantaged population, with very low levels of education, severe English language deficiencies, and drawn overwhelmingly from racial and ethnic minority groups. This evidence clearly speaks to the need for a specially targeted job training program.

We also have shown that, by any reasonable standard, MSFW grantees are providing employment and training services to a very disadvantaged population, and one with perhaps more severe educational and basic skills deficiencies than any other group in the JTPA system.

At the same time, the difference in the characteristics of participants receiving employment and training and services-only make it clear that a subset of the most disadvantaged, who are heavily dependent on farmwork, often migrants, with extremely low levels of education, and presumably very impoverished, are not availing themselves of the employment and training services they need to better their lives. This occurs partly as a result of the outreach and recruitment methods used by programs, as will be discussed in Chapter V. Prior to the changes discussed in Chapter I, performance standards may have discouraged §402 grantees from recruiting the hard-to-serve into training programs, yet active recruitment is needed to overcome the unwillingness of many of the most disadvantaged farmworkers to undertake long-term training.

Developing effective strategies for recruiting such persons into training and devising training regimens appropriate to their needs stand as formidable challenges.

IV. GRANTEE SERVICE STRATEGIES AND OPERATIONS

OVERVIEW OF SERVICES PROVIDED

A number of service activities are allowable within the §402 program: both services to stabilize farmworkers who want to remain in agriculture (usually known as "services-only") and employment and training services, which command the bulk of the resources of the program. Services to stabilize farmworkers generally consist of emergency services to assist with keeping or finding work in agriculture. These participants are often in-stream migrants who seek out the §402 grantees in the various states that they visit during the working season.

Within employment and training services, a number of activities are allowable. These include classroom training (CRT) in either basic skills or vocational skills, on-the-job training (OJT), work experience and tryout employment, training assistance to help with career exploration and placement, and supportive services. Employment and training services are intended to lead to non-agricultural or upgraded agricultural employment for the majority of terminees. Another outcome category that was always applied to youth, but is new for adults in PY 91 is employability enhancement. This outcome captures upgraded skills for the participants that improve their future chances of employment, without necessarily leading directly to placement in a job. Employability enhancements include: enrollment in non-§402 training, return to full-time school, completion of a major level of education, completion of workplace training objectives, or attainment of basic or occupational skills proficiency.

In this section we describe the range of services funded under §402 grants, and discuss the variations in service emphasis and mix that we observed in the sampled programs.

Supportive Services-Only

About 6% of total funds allocated to §402 grantees are expended on services-only, and until recently, the limitation on the amount that could be spent on this category was 15% of funds. However, the number of participants served in this category exceeds those who receive employment and training services: in PY 91, 57% of all terminees nationally received services-only and 43% received employment and training services. There is considerable variation in the emphasis that programs put on services-only as an activity, with upstream states being more likely to have a majority of terminees in this category. For the site visit sample, the percentage of terminees from services-only ranged from 0% to 92%.

Typically, services-only consists of vouchers or in-kind assistance for families in need of food, transportation assistance (e.g., gas, repairs, new tires), or housing assistance. Often the amounts are quite small (on the order of $50 per family), which accounts for the small percentage of overall funds expended. Migrant farmworkers and their families are the largest users of services-only, and usually assistance is individualized, so that some families may receive much more than average (e.g., for emergency medical care when there is no Migrant Health clinic available). Although referrals to other agencies in the community are common, the §402 program is likely to be the only social service organization whose main mission is to serve farmworkers, and §402 staff may be the only source of bilingual assistance. As described more fully in Chapter VIII, below, the §402 programs often use their services-only assistance as a recruiting ground for employment and training services. Even when this is not the case, however, the activity is viewed as an important part of the §402 program, in that it assists farmworkers in maintaining their livelihood.

Classroom Training

Two of the allowable training activities, classroom training and OJT, are the main forms of skills training available to participants. The other services (training assistance, and work experience or tryout employment) are usually used to provide a work history

or to give assistance finding a job, rather than to develop skills. Classroom training generally takes the form of basic skills training or vocational skills training, although there are a few programs that combine these two forms of training into an integrated set.

Basic Skills Training

Basic skills classroom training is an activity aimed at improving the language and mathematics skills of participants, and/or obtaining an educational credential, usually the General Educational Development (GED) diploma. Instruction in basic skills can take many forms in the §402 program. Language training is mostly addressed through classes in English as a Second Language (ESL). ESL classes address the needs of students at many levels, ranging from those with no English skills who are not literate in their own language, to those whose prior education is quite extensive, but whose English skills are poor. They cover both speaking and reading skills, including such basics as the alphabet, grammatical rules, and vocabulary.

Other kinds of basic skills training include Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes. These classes are offered by local educational agencies and are aimed at adults who wish to upgrade their basic skills for any reason. They may or may not have an emphasis on preparation for the GED exam, depending on the level of basic skills deficiency being addressed. In some communities, there are separate "GED prep" classes just for this purpose. The GED exam is offered across the country to allow those who have dropped out of school for any reason a chance to obtain a high school diploma. The exam tests five subject areas -- social studies, math, science, interpreting literature and the arts, and writing -- and takes about seven and a half hours to complete. The test is available in both English and Spanish.

In the §402 programs visited, basic skills classes were generally classified as either ESL, with an emphasis on spoken language and basic literacy, or ABE/GED, with an emphasis on upgrading a broader range of basic skills. The programs could either refer their participants to classes already available in the community, or offer their own classes geared toward the particular needs of MSFWs. In the latter cases, instructors

were either employees of the educational agency offering services at the §402 site, or hired directly by the §402 program. Some ESL classes were offered using State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant (SLIAG) funds, which were aimed at SAWs legalized under IRCA.

The types of basic skills classes available in the sampled sites are described in more detail in Chapter VI, below. There was considerable variation in the kinds of basic skills training available to participants, ranging from referrals to existing classes in the community, to intensive on-site classes designed for farmworkers. ESL training was not available in all areas, but ABE/GED classes were generally available, if only by referral. Both kinds of basic skills training could be short- or long-term, varying from a few days to many months, and could be engaged in either on a stand-alone basis, or in preparation for or in combination with vocational classroom training. Basic skills training was viewed as valuable in and of itself by many farmworkers, who saw their lack of language skills as the biggest barrier to mainstream employment; others sought to improve their basic skills in order to take advantage of vocational classroom training. However, to participate in a sequence of basic skills upgrading and vocational training often took more time than many farmworkers could afford to dedicate to training.

While seasonal workers could more easily participate in basic skills training, several programs had recently begun ESL classes aimed specifically at in-stream migrants, who had not been offered employment and training services prior to the adoption of the employability enhancement as an acceptable outcome. The assumption was that the acquisition of language skills over time would eventually allow these farmworkers to settle out of agriculture, as well as enhance their ability to negotiate for themselves as long as they remained in farmwork.

Improving basic skills generally takes considerable time. Whether combined with vocational skills or offered by itself, the effectiveness of basic skills training offered to either migrant or seasonal farmworkers largely stems from the intensity and duration of training provided. The extensive basic skills needs of many farmworkers cannot be totally met by the §402 program, which typically offers short-term training in the

interests of rapid job placement. However, the §402 program can start farmworkers on the road to mastery of basic skills.

Vocational Skills Training

Vocational classroom training is aimed at preparation for a particular job or type of job. It generally provides a broad range of knowledge and skills that can be used in a variety of job situations, and the best training shows students how to apply those skills, usually in "laboratory" or other hands-on experiences. Vocational training usually assumes a certain level of basic skills preparation on the part of students, and only addresses math or reading skills in the context of a particular vocational skill (e.g., a nurses' aide or auto mechanics course may review metric measurements). Requirements that applicants to a particular training program have basic skills at a given level prior to entry (e.g., eighth grade math or tenth grade reading level) are usually based on an assessment of the skills needed to understand the instructional materials (e.g., textbooks, computer software documentation, job instructions) or perform certain skills (e.g., needing to know fractions in order to measure wood in a carpentry course). Therefore, the need for basic skills preparation and vocational skills training are often closely linked.

Vocational classroom training offered by the sample programs is described in more detail in Chapter VI, below. Meeting the needs of farmworkers for quality vocational classroom training was not an easy task. The kinds of vocational skills training available in the §402 program varied both from state to state and within grantee service areas. Across the country, all grantees could refer §402 participants to existing public and private training institutions, such as vocational-technical schools, community colleges, and proprietary schools. However, these institutions are not evenly distributed throughout the country. They tend to be concentrated in and near urbanized areas. While rural areas are not unserved, the range of choices is often more constrained. We observed that farmworkers who lived in rural areas often needed to relocate or commute long distances to take advantage of training opportunities.

We also noted variation in the intensity, cost, and quality of the existing training in communities served by the sample §402 grantees. Many public institutions operate on a school year system, with classes meeting a few times a week in programs that take one to two years to complete. Farmworkers with families to support were often reluctant to devote long periods of time to training. Proprietary institutions might offer more intensive training, but many grantees were skeptical of its quality. The extent to which basic skills training was coordinated with vocational training also varied, with some institutions offering a good array of concurrent instruction, and others largely ignoring it. Few programs made any provision for bilingual instruction. Therefore, farmworkers with low levels of basic skills or English proficiency either had to spend a considerable amount of time upgrading their skills prior to entry, or forego the chance at vocational classroom training.

A few of the sample grantees with larger funding allocations were able to develop their own vocational and basic skills training programs that met the particular needs of MSFWs. One strategy used by these grantees was to integrate intensive training in both vocational and basic skills using competency based instruction in grantee operated skills centers. However, this option was feasible in only a small number of places; farmworkers are generally too spread out for programs to reach the economy of scale necessary to offer dedicated training. Therefore, the challenge for most programs was to work with existing providers and to assist their participants in accessing existing training resources.

On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training (OJT) is the second major form of vocational training available in the §402 program. OJT is provided by an employer to persons who are hired first as trainees, with the expectation that they will be hired as full-fledged employees at the end of a training period. During the training period, which can last weeks or months, the wages of the trainee are split between the employer and the §402 program, usually on a 50-50 basis. There are several advantages to OJT as a form of training for farmworkers. First, OJT provides participants with immediate income,

which many farmworkers who are heads of household need. Second, the skills learned have clear job relevance, at least to the particular employer. Third, the training is hands-on, rather than in a classroom with application of skills learned in another setting.

OJT is an especially attractive form of vocational training for §402 grantees for another reason: it is well suited to spread-out rural areas. When there are few classroom training venues, it is logical to look to employers themselves to provide training to participants who may live nearby. The sampled §402 grantees often had more flexibility in matching participants to OJT positions than in connecting them to appropriate classroom training. Training could begin whenever there was a job opening, rather than waiting for the beginning of a semester or school year. In addition, OJT employers could be asked to allow for or accommodate the poor basic skills preparation of some farmworkers more readily than classroom training providers, who often operated under state-mandated rules. For instance, an employer could more easily waive the requirement that a participant have a high school diploma or GED than a community college could.

However, OJT has several potential disadvantages relative to classroom vocational training. The skills learned may be relevant only to a particular employer, rather than ones that can be applied more broadly in future jobs, and there is usually no provision for basic skills training. Employers may have little knowledge of how to train employees, especially those who have little mainstream work experience, so the training may be of low quality. In addition, since all employers provide some training to new employees, the §402 program may be expending resources for training that would have occurred anyway, rather than creating the additional training that a particular participant may need. As discussed in more detail in Chapter VIII below, OJT has come under close scrutiny by various critics of training in the JTPA system.

Sampled programs in rare cases combined OJT with classroom training, either concurrently or sequentially. For instance, participants could work toward their GEDs while working in an OJT position, or could obtain an OJT position after completing a

vocational classroom training course. These combinations were among the best at meeting the multiple needs of farmworkers.

Relative Emphasis on Classroom Training and On-the-Job Training

Given that classroom and on-the-job training meet different needs, it is not surprising that most of the sampled programs offered both kinds of training (in addition to other employment and training services, discussed below), although most emphasized one or the other. The relative emphasis is changing over time. In PY 90, half of the programs in our sample placed a greater emphasis on classroom training in their service designs, and half placed a greater emphasis on on-the-job training. "Greater emphasis" in this case is defined as whether the percentage of terminees from OJT exceeded those from classroom training, and vice versa.[1] This distribution is shown in Figure IV-1. In PY 91, however, the number of grantees in the "OJT emphasis" category had dropped from nine to seven, with a corresponding increase in the "CRT emphasis" grantees.

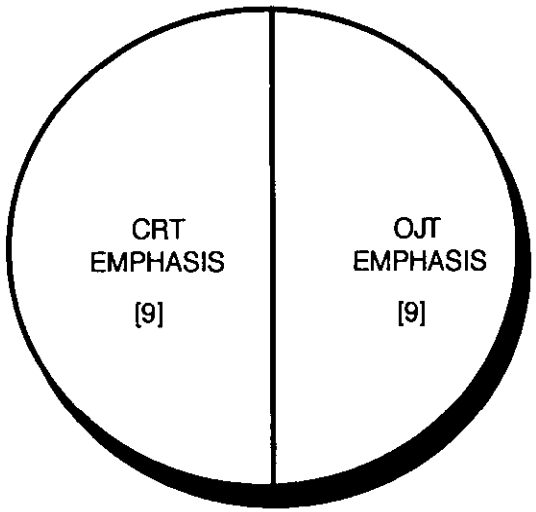
Another way to look at whether the programs had a greater emphasis on classroom training or OJT is to ask what activity the majority of their terminees completed. By this definition, in PY 90 five grantees had more than half of their terminees in classroom training, five had more than half in OJT, and the remaining eight had more mixed programs. In PY 91, however, eight programs had more than half their terminees in classroom training, and only four had more than half in OJT. This is also shown graphically in Figure IV-1.

The shift in emphasis from OJT to classroom training by some sampled programs stems from a number of factors. One is DOL's increasing emphasis on reaching harder-to-serve individuals and providing long-term training services to obtain high wage jobs, as evidenced by the recent shifts in performance standards (i.e., the elimination of the

[1]In all cases, the grantees in the "OJT emphasis" category were above the national median of terminees from OJT. Three of these grantees also had the percentage of classroom training terminees above the national median for that category. However, in all three cases, the percentage of terminees from OJT exceeded the percentage of terminees from classroom training. Therefore, we have chosen to leave them in the "OJT emphasis" category.

Figure IV-1

RELATIVE EMPHASIS ON CLASSROOM TRAINING AND OJT



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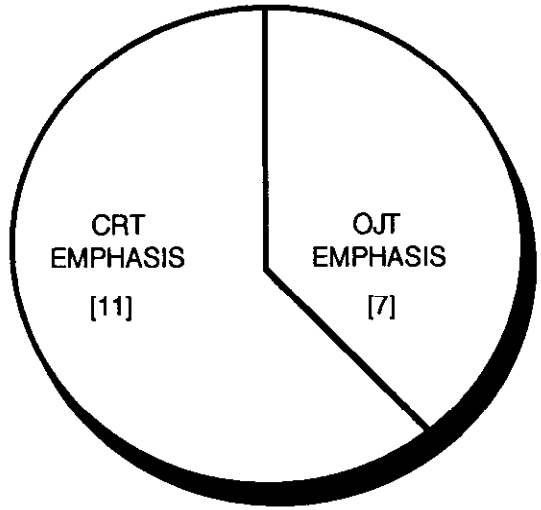

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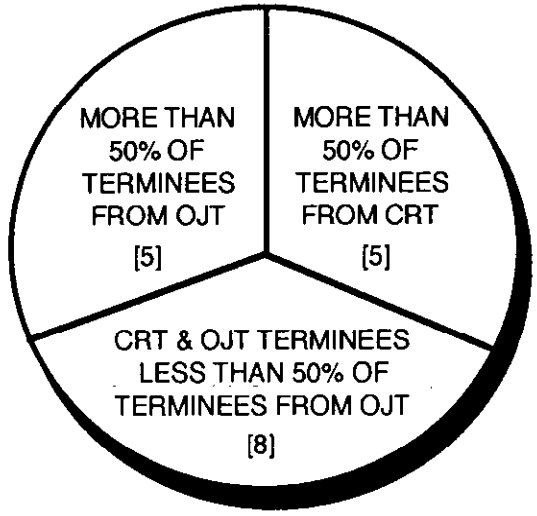
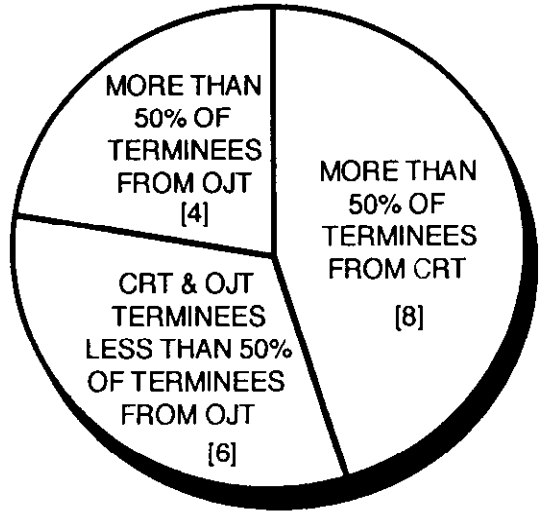


PY90



PY91

N = 18 in all cases

cost per entered employment standard and the introduction of the wage standard and employability enhancements). Another is the fact that eligible farmworkers tend to be lower skilled and thus more in need of classroom training since the IRCA cohort arrived; while SAWs have been served in JTPA since PY 88, there is a continuing influx of recently legalized farmworkers who are interested in training. Finally, the recent long-lasting recession has affected programs' abilities to develop OJT positions for their participants. They must compete with much better-prepared unemployed workers for even entry-level slots. Therefore, grantees have shifted their program designs to offer classroom training to participants, in the hopes of giving them a broader array of skills to offer to employers.

Sampled programs had different service designs, depending on their position in the migrant stream. Homebase states in the sample were more likely to emphasize classroom training, with four of the five homebase programs in that category. Upstream states, however, were almost evenly divided between those that emphasized OJT (six states), and those that emphasized classroom training (eight states). In homebase states, farmworkers are more able to take advantage of classroom training because they already have living situations established; in upstream states, classroom training is more easily accessed by seasonal workers, although several programs tried to convince migrants to settle out and enroll in classroom training.

Programs that emphasized classroom training were philosophically committed to the value of training to improve the long-term employability of their participants. They pointed to the many barriers faced by farmworkers: lack of language skills, lack of mainstream workplace experience, and lack of non-agricultural work skills. These programs felt that employers would not hire farmworkers without some training to address these barriers, and that farmworkers would be unable to advance in the workplace without training. In addition to providing basic and vocational skills training, some programs that provided their own vocational training also addressed the lack of mainstream workplace experience by addressing world of work skills directly, through both the structure of their programs (in which participants had to clock in and out, report absences in advance, etc.) and through classes on various world of work topics. Because

CRT-emphasis programs addressed a wide range of deficits, they could plausibly serve even the least well prepared among the farmworker population.

Those programs with an emphasis on OJT, on the other hand, tended to believe that classroom training was a good idea in theory, but that the cost per entered employment performance standard and the desires of the participants for immediate placement made it a luxury available to a limited number of participants. All of these programs had to depend on expensive, one or two year vocational training programs in the community, which are less attractive to farmworkers with families to support. Programs that served a high proportion of dropouts pointed to the amount of time that it would take to prepare these participants to enter mainstream training programs with high entry requirements. Since the cost standard has been eliminated, the five programs with the highest proportion of terminees in OJT in PY 90 all indicated that they would place more of an emphasis on classroom training, and in fact two of them were found in the "CRT emphasis" category in PY 91.

Work Experience and Try-Out Employment

Work experience is an activity that can be used for youth or adults whose lack of work experience is their primary barrier to employment. Although skills may be learned on the job, skills training is not the primary emphasis. Work experience jobs are arranged by the grantee in nonprofit or governmental organizations for a limited time (less than six months), and all wages are paid by the program. There is usually no expectation that the organization will hire the participant at the end of the work experience slot, but rather that this job will serve as a reference for other employers. Try-out employment, a similar service, is limited to youth. Try-out employment slots are developed by the grantee in for-profit firms for a limited time, and although all the wages are paid by the grantee, the employer is expected to hire the trainee at the end of the try-out slot. It is similar to an OJT in that regard, but the higher level of reimbursement for the training period is meant to acknowledge the youths' lack of experience.

Work experience and tryout employment[2] were used less often by the sample programs than classroom training and OJT. However, for a small proportion of our sample, work experience formed a significant part of their service design. Four programs served 10% or more of their terminees in work experience or try-out employment, well above the national median of 6%, with one program having a third of its terminees from these categories. At the other extreme, seven of the programs had no terminees from these activities. The remaining seven served from 3% to 8% of their terminees in work experience.

Those programs with the highest proportion of work experience terminees all had a philosophical commitment to providing participants with a work history if that was their greatest need. One of these programs required that work experience participants concurrently pursue basic skills training, in an effort to upgrade their skills on two fronts, thus making them more likely to be placed after completion of the work experience slot. Two programs often hired work experience participants in-house, to conduct outreach or to staff construction crews renovating farmworker housing.

The remaining programs tended to keep work experience available as an option, but did not emphasize it or viewed it as a last resort when an OJT slot could not be developed. It was seen as appropriate for fairly limited groups, such as youth or those with substantial barriers to employment (e.g., ex-offenders). Only one program had developed work experience slots beyond the entry level, for bilingual participants with a high school diploma, in the local employment agency. Several programs in this group used work experience participants on farmworker housing construction crews.

The relative lack of emphasis on work experience in the service designs of the sampled programs seems to stem from a number of factors. Development of work experience slots often takes as much effort as OJT slots, but without the guarantee of a placement. Nonprofit organizations may welcome the assistance that a work experience participant provides, but be unwilling to provide much training or supervision. Paying

[2]For the purposes of analysis, we have grouped these two activities together.

100% of wages is expensive for grantees, and the staff time involved in developing slots and subsequent placement activities is considerable as well. For grantees operating their own training centers, the kinds of skills typically provided through work experience slots, such as clerical or construction skills, could be provided in the classroom. In-house positions on farmworker housing renovation crews may offer the easiest way to include work experience activities in a service design, since slots require no development, oversight is guaranteed, and skills learned are transferable. However, not all grantees have access to such funds. In the absence of such opportunities, work experience is likely to remain a training activity that is used only for a few participants who cannot be assisted in any other way.

Training Assistance

A wide range of activities can be offered under the training assistance category, including orientation to the world of work, job related counseling and testing, vocational exploration, and job development and placement. Therefore, nearly everyone in any training category in the sampled programs also received training assistance, both during training and when assisted with job placement at the completion of training. However, in classifying terminees this category was reserved for those participants receiving a direct placement (i.e., one without any training services provided beforehand). Terminations from training assistance were a high proportion of terminees (more than 25%, which meant they were above the 75th percentile in the nation) for five programs in our sample. Half of the sampled programs had fewer terminees in this category than the national median of 18%, with two programs having no direct placements.

All of the five sample programs with a high proportion of training assistance terminees were upstream states. One program placed considerable emphasis on providing a particular kind of supportive service to the seasonal farmworkers in the area, with direct placement after the participant had received the service. Three had very little basic skills training available, and limited support for vocational classroom training. Therefore, the options most available to participants were either an OJT position or a

direct placement. Two of these three programs tended to serve high school graduates who were acceptable to employers without prior skills training.

Clients receiving a direct placement may receive considerable preparation for entry into employment, in the form of job search assistance, world of work counseling, and assistance with applications and interviews. While the farmworkers served in this category may be better prepared than other §402 participants in terms of their education and language skills, they still carry the barrier of either limited non-agricultural work experience or an unstable work history. In some cases they may have additional barriers, such as ex-offender status, and may face discrimination if a member of a minority group. Therefore, the personalized assistance in job development and placement that they receive from the §402 grantee is often crucial to their ability to get a job.

Combinations of Services

While the discussion above has focused on individual services, in some cases clients in the sample programs participated in more than one service type, either concurrently or sequentially. Thus, the terminees from a particular service category (e.g., OJT) may have received more than one service, although they must be placed in only one category for reporting purposes (usually, per the reporting instructions, the one in which they spent the most time). While only a few programs had formal programs of concurrent services (e.g., concurrent basic skills and vocational training), in many cases there was the possibility if a particular participant was interested. For example, someone might pursue GED studies while employed in an OJT position, or obtain ESL instruction while in work experience.

Sequential services were also possible for participants who needed them. In some cases sampled programs offered basic skills training to participants prior to placing them on a work experience or OJT job. Another possible sequence was for persons who had completed vocational classroom training to receive an OJT in a training-related job. Concurrent and sequential services are usually more expensive than single services and

were observed less often. Where they were used they were very effective for addressing the multiple needs of the participants who received them.

USE OF SERVICE PROVIDERS

In addition to decisions about what services to offer, grantees must decide who will provide those services. Very few of the 18 sampled programs used service providers to provide administrative or upfront (e.g., recruitment, assessment, counseling) services, which makes them very different from SDAs in the JTPA Title II program. Instead, §402 grantees tended to use their own staff for these functions. Only four of the programs had subcontracts with other organizations. In one state, all but a few administrative functions were subcontracted to a community-based organization that operated the §402 program throughout the state. Two programs used a subcontracting arrangement to operate the field office programs in their states; that is, rather than having their own staff do outreach, recruitment, service planning, and placement, they solicited bids from other organizations to provide these services. In one state, the subcontractors tended to be local school systems or community-based organizations that did not typically offer other employment and training services, and in the other state the subcontractors tended to be regional planning commissions, which also operated other JTPA programs and rural development programs. In the former case, the §402 program staff were usually separate from school district staff and located in a separate office, giving the program its own visibility. In the latter case, §402 funds tended to support the same staff with responsibilities for other JTPA grants, and since the other grants were typically larger, in most cases the §402 program was viewed as a funding stream for the occasional eligible worker rather than a separate, visible program.

The final instance of subcontracting was a program that contracted with a service provider to provide class-size training in one vocational area. This performance-based contract served only §402 participants on a year-round basis. It provided training in an urban area for an industry with a continuing need for entry-level workers. While the size of the contract had expanded and contracted over the years, the grantee was happy with

the training provided and the participants were placed in good jobs at the end of the training.

While only one program in the sample contracted for training services for a whole class, every program used existing service providers for training on an individual-referral basis. That is, program staff would often pay tuition for §402 participants to attend existing vocational training in the community. For the most part, the training took place at vocational-technical schools operated by the state or local school boards, at community colleges offering degree or certificate programs, or, less often, at proprietary schools. In the vast majority of cases, §402 participants had to meet the entry requirements of the existing providers (e.g., to have a high school diploma or GED, or to be working toward one concurrently) and follow typical schedules, which often meant attending classes two or three times a week for a year or two.

Several sampled grantees had worked with their local voc-tech schools to develop short-term training courses that met the needs of MSFWs for vocational training (one in construction and one in nursery work). Thus, the §402 grantees could take advantage of the existing vocational training infrastructure in their communities to meet the needs of their participants, rather than having to hire their own staff to provide the training. This represented a compromise between the individual referral model and subcontracting for class-size training.

The fact that farmworkers are a unique population with different needs may account for the sample programs' limited utilization of outside service providers, especially for upfront services. For the most part, grantees preferred to hire their own staff, many of whom were former farmworkers or who had some connection with and knowledge of the population, rather than subcontract with other organizations. They sought to establish programs where farmworkers could feel comfortable, rather than depending on outside providers who might not understand farmworkers' experiences. Practically speaking, they might be the only human services agency in the area with bilingual staff who could communicate with the increasingly Hispanic migrant population. In many cases, agencies offered services beyond employment and training, such as

housing assistance, referrals to agricultural work, Head Start programs, and advocacy, and thus were visible in the community as the only organization concerned with the many needs of farmworkers and their families.

NON-SECTION 402 FUNDING AND COORDINATION

Use of Non-Section 402 Funding

One of the questions to be addressed by this study was the extent to which §402 grantees supplemented their JTPA grants with other funds to serve MSFWs. Site visit staff therefore collected information about overall organizational budgets as well as information about how §402 funds were spent. While it was not always possible to discern the exact extent to which grantees expended various funding sources on the same clients, it is possible to group programs into rough categories.

Six of the 18 sample programs had limited in-kind or no resources other than the §402 grant to serve MSFWs. In-kind resources mostly took the form of teachers funded by the ABE system or commodity food. Therefore, these programs struggled to provide all services, including training and supportive services, out of their §402 grant. All but one of these programs were in upstream states with limited community resources available to MSFWs.

Eight of the 18 sample programs had a moderate amount of resources other than the §402 grant -- about 15% or less of their total budget. These resources mostly allowed them to provide supportive services, while the §402 funds paid for training and administration. Supportive services available through other funds included: housing and weatherization services, food, and child care. In a few cases, funding was available to provide ESL instruction, either in the form of teachers paid for by the school system or funds to hire teachers. This group of programs includes one homebase state with considerable alternative resources available in the community to MSFWs, but in the remaining seven, farmworkers had few alternatives.

Four of the programs had a substantial amount of resources (equal to 50% or more of their overall budgets) to supplement their §402 grants. This group includes three homebase programs and one upstream program with a very small §402 grant. In the latter case, the §402 funds were seen as insufficient to provide the kinds of services needed, so the agency pursued other funding sources, all of which include farmworkers as eligible recipients (however, other kinds of recipients are served as well). The homebase programs, similarly, had other funding streams for which §402 participants were among those eligible. Although it is usually impossible to estimate just what percentage of the supplementary resources were spent on §402 participants, the existence of a large number of alternative funding streams means that farmworkers' needs were more likely to be met within the organization, rather than having them depend on referrals to outside agencies whose missions were to serve broader groups of disadvantaged people. Services available through these alternative funding sources included supportive services such as housing and weatherization services, food, child care, and transportation, as well as substance abuse and child abuse prevention services. In one case, a program also received in-kind services in the form of teachers funded by the school board.

The sources of outside funds varied from state to state. The most common sources of outside funds were education agencies and human services agencies. Education funds provided teachers or funding for literacy programs. Human services funding was more varied. Sample programs in a number of states received Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) funds that were setasides for farmworkers; these funds could be used quite flexibly to provide a wide variety of supportive services. Migrant Head Start funds were a source of child care for a number of programs. Housing funds were usually targeted to provide weatherization services; and in some cases programs had tapped into money for the homeless as a source of emergency housing funding. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funds were used by some programs for food and housing. In a few cases, programs received local United Way or other private funds.

Pell Grants were another source of outside funds used by grantees in our sample; however, these grants attach to individual participants rather than to programs. When participants were enrolled in qualifying training programs, grantee or school staff would assist them to apply for Pell Grants to supplement the funds available from the §402 program. In most cases these grants partly could be used for living expenses, thus essentially serving as a source of supportive services for participants in long-term training.

As the above discussion indicates, almost all outside funds utilized by sampled §402 programs were used to provide supportive services to participants in training.[3] This sheds light on the generally low levels of §402 funds used for this purpose: almost none of the sampled programs budgeted close to the 15% of §402 funds theoretically available for training-related supportive services; the two grantees that did use 15% were in the group with no outside funding sources. Thus, outside sources of funds allow grantees to reserve more §402 dollars for training, while still addressing at least some of the participants' supportive services needs. Supportive services will be discussed in more detail in Chapter VIII below.

Coordination with Other Agencies

All the sample programs engaged in interagency coordination of some kind, primarily in order to enhance the resources they could offer their clients, and in some cases, in order to contribute to the improvement of policies and programs for farmworkers across the state or region. For a majority of grantees, coordination was closest and most effective with other agencies in their cultural network -- with agencies whose main mission was to serve Hispanics or farmworkers, as opposed to agencies (such as PICs) serving a more general population of which farmworkers might be a part.

[3]In most cases, these outside funds could be used to provide support to "services-only" clients as well. In fact, they were preferred to 402 funds for that purpose, especially during the migrant season, because the documentation requirements were usually less stringent.

Coordination with Other JTPA Agencies

Coordination between the sample programs and local Title IIA/IIB agencies was generally weak, and there was often active hostility between the two types of agencies. In most cases cross-referrals were made occasionally, but little attempt was made at more active coordination, even where Title IIA was ostensibly targeting farmworkers. One program discontinued a cooperative arrangement with a JTPA agency because of confusion over which agency would take credit when clients served under the arrangement were placed. At least four programs had contracts to serve clients of local PICs, but some of these were not successful.

MSFW programs' relationships with JTPA agencies tended to vary widely across localities. One program had highly successful service contracts with PICs in at least two counties, with PIC staff approving of the grantee's quality of training and placement rates. One of these PICs was planning to build a new skills center to be operated by the grantee, which would serve clients from both agencies. Another program with generally poor relations with most PICs in the state had a positive and highly cooperative relationship in one city. The PIC in this city operated a job training center in which §402 clients could enroll for basic skills training and sometimes vocational training. Clients could be dually enrolled in §402 and IIA, with the grantee paying only for the stipend. Unfortunately, this arrangement ended due to reorganization of the PIC and changes in entry requirements. A third program had a similar co-enrollment arrangement in one county, in which §402 funds covered stipends and IIA funds covered other supportive services and basic skills training for youth.

Only one program had a uniformly strong relationship with PICs throughout its area. This was an unusual situation in that the grantee was a subcontractor to the state Department of Employment and Training. This department was responsible for other JTPA programs and had adopted a policy of encouraging coordination between the §402 program and the state's PICs. The grantee had non-financial agreements to make cross-referrals with seven PICs, and service contracts with some additional PICs. The state

is now encouraging quarterly roundtable discussions including the grantee and JTPA Service Delivery Areas.

Clearly, cooperation between MSFW programs and other JTPA programs had the potential to be highly beneficial to both parties. It was, however, difficult to achieve on a regular basis. Among reasons commonly cited were differences in eligibility requirements, targeting, and performance standards of the two programs. Staff of the §402 programs believed the SDAs were overly concerned with making quick placements and were guilty of creaming. Farmworkers, especially those with limited English, found the business-like PIC environments uncomfortable. For their part, PIC staff often viewed migrants as too hard-to-serve. In some cases they disapproved of the management, facilities, and quality of training offered by §402 grantees. Finally, a major cause of tension in some cases was competition for OJT slots and, especially, for funds: some JTPA IIA agencies had applied for and been denied §402 grants.

While cooperative relations are to be encouraged, overly close linkages with Title IIA could undermine the effectiveness of the §402 program. In one of the sample programs, half the field offices operated both the IIA program and the §402 program, but staff found that the IIA program dominated outreach and intake at these offices, to the detriment of farmworkers. It appears that maintaining a focus on farmworkers requires some degree of separation -- at least at the point of actual service delivery -- from mainline JTPA programs.

Coordination with Non-JTPA Agencies

Coordination between grantees and non-JTPA agencies was much more active and successful. Informal referrals were the most common form of coordination, but most grantees were also involved in contracting or non-financial cooperative agreements, or both, with a variety of agencies. (Seeking grant funds from a wide variety of sources may be considered another form of coordination; we discussed this in more detail earlier in this chapter.)

Interagency coordination was closest with, although not restricted to, organizations focusing on farmworkers or Hispanics. Common partners in this category included Migrant Health, Legal Services, Education, and Head Start agencies, and rural housing programs. But most of the sample programs also had contracts or ongoing arrangements with mainstream state agencies such as divisions of employment and agriculture, and vocational and technical colleges. Most grantees also maintained ties with a wide variety of charitable organizations such as the Salvation Army, United Way, Catholic Charities, and literacy volunteers, as well as with local governments and school districts.

Long-standing relationships with state employment agencies were a key part of several programs' coordination activities. One grantee had several performance-based contracts with the state employment agency, to provide both OJT and CRT. The employment agency funds provided day care and other supportive services to §402 participants. Several other programs were engaged in joint projects with these agencies, funded by the Department of Labor, to improve the matching of farmworkers to appropriate farm jobs throughout the state. The executive director of another grantee sat on the State Job Training Coordinating Council in order to play a role in design of statewide job training activities.

Several of the sample programs developed ESL classes through arrangements with state agencies for Adult Basic Education. In one innovative arrangement a program worked with the ABE agency to find two instructors and materials for the classes; ABE paid the instructors $10 per hour, while the §402 program contributed an additional $5 per hour to cover the time needed to complete §402 paperwork and report client progress. The §402 program provided transportation and child care at the site, while a private charity provided meals at each class session.

Many of the sample programs participated in statewide or areawide planning on behalf of migrants. One program had worked with two other programs serving migrants to develop a universal pre-intake and referral form; this effort grew out of a conference sponsored by the federal Departments of Labor and Education. A second program

participated in a state Migrant Season Planning Conference and a Governor's Task Force on migrant issues. Another participated in a state coordinating council, with representatives from twelve different organizations, that met twice a month to address farmworker issues. In the same state, local migrant councils played an even more active role in coordinating services, and in one locality a Citizens' Forum was created to improve relations between the grantee and farmers.

Most programs found that opportunities for planning at the local level varied. Some met regularly with related organizations in at least some of the localities they served. Two programs participated in interagency meetings held in certain localities at the beginning or end (or both) of each growing season, to coordinate efforts for farmworkers. One such interagency group developed a structured approach to eligibility determination and referrals for farmworkers in the county, and as a result improved farmworkers' access to county Federal Emergency Management Act funds.

Coordination between §402 grantees was observed in the sample in only one instance. This recent initiative, involving two of the sample programs in neighboring states, might serve as a model for others. One of the programs had found that, while the need for services among migrants was great, the program could not afford to serve them because of its limited funding. This program initiated a discussion with the neighboring §402 program in a homebase state that led to the design of a joint project that started in 1993. The new project will disseminate information on migrant services and settling out in either state. A full-time Spanish-speaking coordinator has been hired, with salary jointly paid by the two §402 programs. The two programs are now seeking special DOL funds for this project.

Factors Hindering or Enhancing Coordination

Coordination with non-JTPA agencies was not without its problems, and these problems were very similar to those that plagued relations with PICs. Discomfort, discrimination, and language barriers often impeded active coordination with the more mainstream agencies. Turf issues and competition for clients and funds, including the

§402 grant, were common barriers; some organizations feared that their service populations would decrease as a result of coordination. Some sample programs found that state and local policies for awarding CSBG and FEMA funds seemed arbitrary, confusing or discriminatory. In a few cases turnover among grantee staff, lack of a clear mission, or image problems in the community weakened relations with other agencies.

But many factors also worked in favor of coordination, even occasionally with JTPA agencies. Many grantees were viewed as the leading experts on farmworkers in their areas, or as "the only game in town" for training this population. Therefore many agencies came to depend on them for service to the hard-to-serve, especially non-English speaking farmworkers, and in some cases to look to them for leadership.

Probably the key contributor to interagency coordination was dedication to improving the lives of farmworkers, particularly in situations where service resources were scarce. Agencies that cared about this population were interested in doing whatever seemed to work to stretch the dollars available. Close personal ties among those serving migrants, and within the Hispanic community, sometimes contributed further to the intensity and success of these efforts.

Contextual factors influenced the level and quality of interagency coordination. Seven programs stood out from the others as more actively and effectively engaged in interagency coordination. Four of the seven were located in states where services and activities on behalf of migrants were relatively abundant, making available to the programs a large like-minded network. The three others were located in states with many fewer resources for farmworkers, but the small size of the migrant community seemed to work in favor of strong bonds and easy communication.

Another contextual element that assisted some programs, but was missing for many others, was leadership at the state or local level that could have created a more favorable environment for coordination. Opportunities for joint funding, for example, did not seem to be available in most areas. State level planning processes, also, were

extremely valuable in those cases in which they occurred and could have made a difference to a larger number of states.

Conclusions Regarding Non-Section 402 Funding and Coordination

Engaging in interagency coordination and drawing on multiple funding sources are to some extent alternative strategies for accomplishing the same end. Either approach was effective in the right circumstances. All of the seven "active coordinators" identified above had little or no non-§402 funding, and therefore had a financial incentive to coordinate. Of the remaining eleven sample programs, four were among those identified in the previous section as drawing on non-§402 funds for over 50% of their total budgets. These four programs were equally or better able than the active coordinators to enhance resources for clients.

A key to success in either approach was to diversify funds and services while continuing to "specialize" in farmworkers as the target client group. Maintaining service delivery locations that focus uniquely on farmworkers may be necessary to avoid subordinating the needs of farmworkers to others.

V. PRE-TRAINING SERVICES

Before training can begin or other services can be provided, programs must first recruit and enroll eligible persons and assess their needs. These "up-front" services are described in this chapter, and their quality with respect to meeting the needs of the disadvantaged is assessed.

DETERMINING WHO IS SERVED

The farmworker population, even that subset eligible for the §402 program, is enormously diverse, as are their needs for services. The first decisions programs make determine who among the eligibles are served. These decisions in some cases are made explicitly, among grantees who identify target groups as a service priority, and in all cases partly implicitly, in that outreach and recruitment methods and service designs will be more effective in eliciting some potential clients to undergo training and not others.

Whatever else is uncertain about the eligible population, we know at the very least that the need for services among eligible farmworkers and their dependents by far exceeds the capacity of the §402 programs. In light of this, the quality of training model suggests that quality can be enhanced if programs develop clear target groups and devise and implement an effective strategy for reaching those groups. This process should begin with the program's reviewing the array of needs among the eligibles and objectively assessing their own program's and other service agencies' strengths and weaknesses in meeting those needs. In this way, MSFW programs can ensure a smooth mesh between their own service capabilities and participants' needs, while avoiding the duplication of services.

We begin this section by describing the variation in the client mix across the sampled programs. We next discuss both explicit and implicit targeting decisions

programs make that give rise to that variation. Finally, we assess the consistency between targeting, outreach and recruitment strategies, service capabilities, and client needs.

Variation in Client Mix Across MSFW Programs

The numbers we reported in Table III-3 describe the *average* characteristics of persons provided employment and training services by all §402 programs. But these averages obscure pronounced variation across grantees. Figure V-1 makes clear that programs differ greatly in the mix of clients they serve, even when one looks just across the 18 programs that were the target of this study's effort. Even the extent to which programs emphasize employment and training services rather than services-only varies greatly.

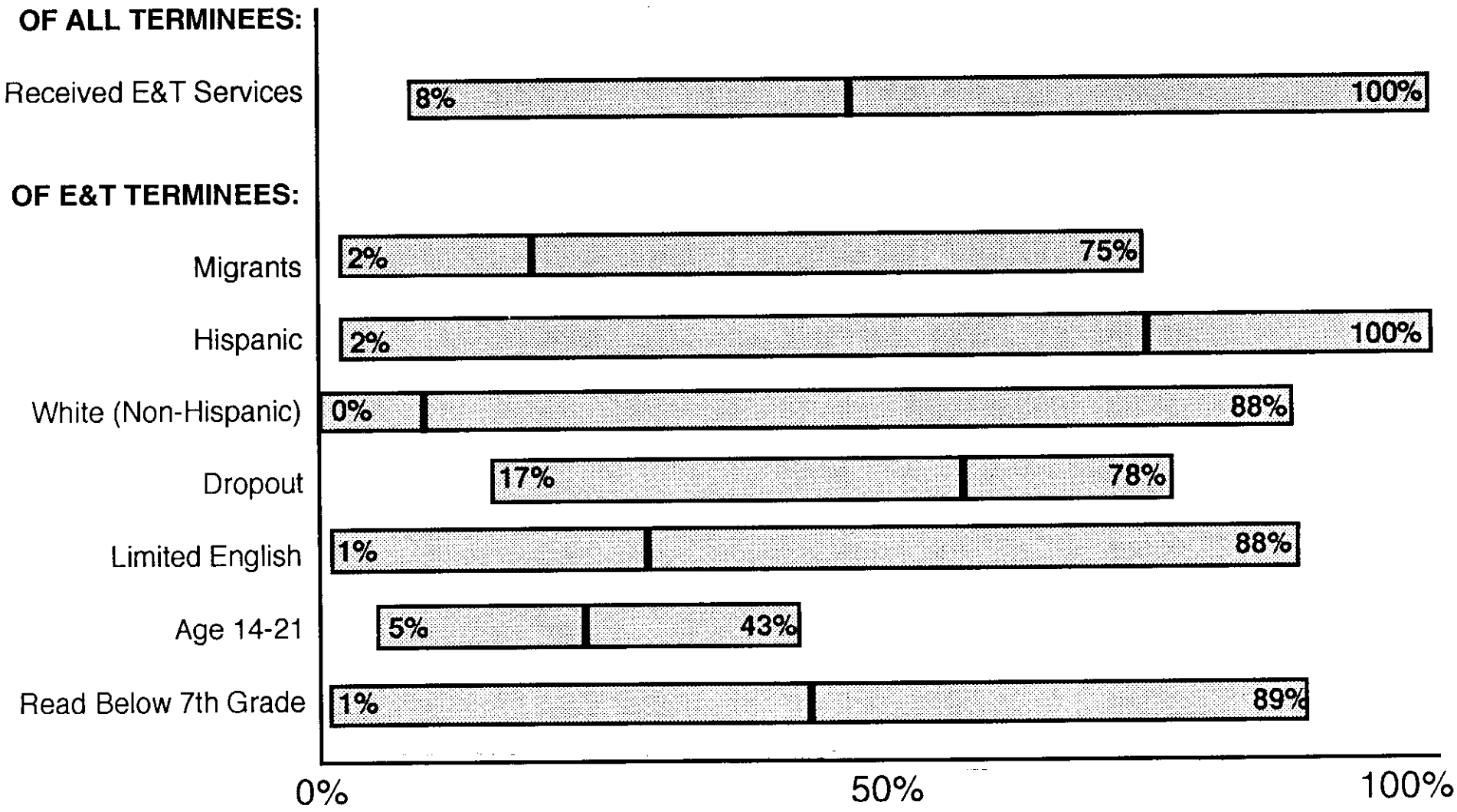
As Figure V-1 shows, in PY 91 the percentage of all terminees of sampled programs who received employment and training services ranged from a low of 8% to a high of 100%. Among E&T terminees, the percentage who were in-state or out-of-state migrants ranged from a low of 2% to a high of 75%, the percentage who were Hispanic ranged from 2% to 100%, white (non-Hispanic) from 0% to 88%, dropouts from 17% to 78%, limited English from 1% to 88%, youths from 5% to 43%, and with poor reading skills from 1% to 89%. In short, variation across programs in the mix of clients spans an enormously wide range.

As we might expect, this variation can be explained to some extent by differences in service area characteristics, including characteristics of the eligible population. For example, important differences in client mix emerged for grantees in homebase versus upstream states.[1] Table V-1, which examines characteristics of the universe of §402 programs, shows that relatively few services-only terminees were served by homebase states, presumably because fewer farmworkers are away from their homes and in need

[1]For this tabulation, homebase states were defined to be grantees providing services in Florida, Texas, or California. Upstream states were programs in all other states, excluding the programs in Puerto Rico and Hawaii.

Figure V-1

VARIATION IN CLIENT MIX ACROSS THE SAMPLED SECTION 402 PROGRAMS



NOTE: Data are for PY91 and show the range of variation across the 18 sampled programs. Vertical lines within each bar represent the median computed across all 53 programs.

Table V-1

TERMINEE CHARACTERISTICS FOR HOMEBASE AND UPSTREAM STATES

	Homebase States		Upstream States	
	E&T	Services Only	E&T	Services Only
Number of programs	7	6	44	43
Percent of terminees	63.1	36.9	47.2	52.8
In-state migrants	9.9	20.0	4.7	4.3
Out-of-state migrants	5.9	7.3	27.0	61.6
Seasonals	84.2	72.6	68.3	34.1
Aged 14-21	26.5	4.8	25.4	11.5
Aged 22-44	67.1	63.4	65.3	66.0
Aged 45 and over	6.5	31.7	9.3	22.5
Dropout: 8th grade or less	37.8	70.6	27.4	48.9
Dropout: 9th-12th	27.9	18.9	29.0	26.5
Student	3.0	1.0	2.2	2.1
High school graduate	31.2	9.5	41.5	22.6
White	3.4	1.9	25.5	12.1
Black	5.1	6.9	18.1	13.6
Hispanic	89.1	91.1	50.9	70.9
Other	2.4	0.1	5.5	3.4
Limited English	49.3	69.9	34.1	50.0
Public assistance recipient	20.9	31.4	24.2	25.7
Single head of household	13.8	14.5	10.5	10.6
Unemployed	91.1	87.2	78.2	70.1
Read below 7th grade	46.5	--	46.0	--
Long-term agricultural workers	37.1	61.5	47.8	66.1
Multiple barriers	59.9	--	61.7	--

Note: Data are taken from PY 91 ASRs for all programs (excluding Alabama, because its ASR contained arithmetic errors, and Puerto Rico). Figures are computed as averages of the values computed across the homebase and upstream states; one upstream and one homebase program served no one in services only. Homebase states are defined as Florida, Texas, and California. All others are classified as upstream.

of emergency assistance that cannot be provided by local social service agencies. On average, programs in homebase states served relatively few terminees who are migrants, although this varied quite a bit across the seven programs. Homebase states also served on average considerably more Hispanics and those with limited English proficiency.

The client mix also varied across USDA agricultural regions, as Table V-2 shows. Within each region, services-only terminees were more likely to be migrants, dropouts, Hispanic, and have limited English proficiency than those receiving employment and training assistance. The regional groups differed, however, in the percentage of terminees who were services-only. In the Northeast and Appalachia, Southeast and the Delta, and the North and South Plains, services-only terminees slightly outnumbered those receiving employment and training assistance. In the Cornbelt and Lake states, however, services-only terminees were a much higher proportion of all terminees, while in the Pacific and Mountain regions employment and training terminees predominate. These differences presumably relate to regional differences in the levels of need for emergency assistance and the availability of alternative service providers.

The regions differed also in the relative proportions of terminees (whether those receiving employment and training or services-only) in different race/ethnicity groups. Hispanics predominated in the Pacific and Mountain regions and the Cornbelt and Lake States. By contrast, they were a much smaller proportion of terminees in the Southeast and Delta States, where service to blacks was much more common. The more Hispanics that were served, the more likely terminees were to have very low levels of education and to have limited English proficiency.

Finally, the percent of employment and training terminees who read below the 7th grade, are long-term agricultural workers, or have multiple barriers was appreciably lower in the Plains than elsewhere, and generally somewhat higher in the Northeast and Appalachia.

The variation between homebase and upstream states and across agricultural regions, while noteworthy, is nonetheless swamped by the variation across grantees

Table V-2

TERMINEE CHARACTERISTICS BY REGION*

	Northeast and Appalachia		Southeast and Delta		Cornbelt and Lake		North and South Plains		Pacific and Mountain	
	E&T	Services Only	E&T	Services Only	E&T	Services Only	E&T	Services Only	E&T	Services Only
Number of programs	15	15	6	6	8	8	6	6	16	14
Percent of terminees	49.9	51.1	45.9	54.1	29.2	70.8	42.0	58.0	63.3	36.8
In-state migrants	4.4	3.2	3.1	4.2	3.6	2.9	12.4	14.4	5.6	8.7
Out-of-state migrants	21.3	55.9	8.5	49.5	50.0	77.2	26.9	62.4	18.7	40.2
Seasonal	74.4	40.9	88.4	46.3	46.4	19.9	60.7	23.2	75.7	51.0
Aged 14-21	22.6	12.2	31.3	10.6	28.9	13.6	29.4	10.5	23.3	7.6
Aged 22-44	67.7	68.9	61.7	69.3	62.1	66.2	63.6	66.0	67.2	60.2
Aged 45 and over	9.7	18.9	7.0	20.1	9.1	20.2	7.0	23.5	9.5	32.2
Dropout: 8th grade or less	23.4	36.9	15.0	43.8	30.2	57.7	22.9	51.3	40.6	67.1
Dropout: 9th-12th	35.6	30.0	28.5	33.1	28.6	26.7	24.9	24.6	24.2	17.4
Student	0.5	3.8	6.1	1.0	4.2	0.7	2.1	0.8	1.7	1.5
High school graduate	40.6	29.3	50.4	22.2	37.0	14.9	50.1	23.3	33.6	13.9
White	31.8	21.7	18.9	8.4	21.7	4.2	36.0	9.0	10.3	4.7
Black	28.3	24.1	64.2	42.0	1.3	1.2	1.3	0.4	0.3	0.2
Hispanic	34.1	50.8	16.8	49.1	70.0	94.3	54.3	82.2	85.3	92.1
Other	5.8	3.4	0.1	0.5	7.0	0.3	8.4	8.4	4.0	3.0
Limited English	33.9	45.3	11.4	30.4	42.7	64.0	22.3	37.9	49.5	69.0
Public assistance recipient	24.1	18.0	38.3	39.0	26.5	28.2	23.8	35.2	16.5	25.2
Single head of household	9.9	8.1	24.1	22.8	6.9	7.5	8.6	9.7	10.0	11.8
Unemployed	79.7	64.8	76.4	75.9	73.8	68.5	82.9	84.8	83.4	75.2
Read below 7th grade	57.4	--	43.5	--	44.8	--	28.6	--	43.5	--
Long-term agricultural worker	53.6	71.9	44.9	60.4	53.0	75.3	36.3	52.3	40.6	61.1
Multiple barriers	79.1	--	69.7	--	65.0	--	35.6	--	49.6	--

*Agricultural regions are illustrated in Figure II-2. See notes to Table V-1 for additional details.

within each of these groups. Using all grantees as the units of analysis, the percentage of employment and training terminees with various characteristics was regressed on dummy variables for agricultural region, homebase versus upstream states, and the size of the §402 allocation. These results show that generally no more than one-third of the total variation across programs could be explained by these three factors combined.[2] This analysis suggests, in short, that an explanation for the variation in client mix across programs must be sought in the targeting and outreach and recruitment decisions and service designs adopted by grantees.

Targeting

Regardless of the agricultural region or other contextual factors, nearly every program finds itself faced with a diverse eligible population with enormously diverse needs. Nearly every program, for example, operates in a service area whose eligible population consists of at least some migrants and seasonals, young and old, dropouts and high school graduates, and white non-Hispanics and minorities. Thus, it could choose to target services on any subset within this population.[3]

The quality of training model presented in Chapter I suggests that quality can be enhanced if a program identifies target groups that it particularly wants to reach with employment and training services. The logic behind characterizing this as an indicator

[2]Specifically, the percentage of E&T terminees who were migrants, white non-Hispanics, blacks, Hispanics, youths, or who had limited English were regressed in turn on an array of contextual factors, including a dummy variable for whether the grantee was a homebase or upstream state, dummy variables for the agricultural region (with regions defined as on Table V-2), and dummy variables for the size of the 402 allocation (using a threefold classification). Results showed that the race/ethnic composition of terminees could be explained best by these factors (an R-squared of about 65% for the percent black and 47% for the percent Hispanic), followed by the percent who were migrants, dropouts, or who had limited English (R-squared of from 27% to 34%), and finally by the percent who were youth (R-squared of 18%). Because of the small number of degrees of freedom for this analysis and the possibly confounded influence of programmatic decisions, these figures should be viewed as upper-bound estimates of the true impact of these contextual factors.

[3]The remaining discussion in this chapter generally focuses on participants targeted and recruited for *employment and training* services, as opposed to services-only. The only targeting that generally occurs with respect to services-only is that such assistance is intended for those in need of emergency food, medical, transportation, or other services, regardless of their other characteristics.

of quality is that most programs, given their finite resources and the specialized capabilities of their staff and service providers, can often use their resources most efficiently and effectively by focusing their attention on some types of clients rather than others. Conversely, programs will often find that they can be most effective by making clear targeting decisions and then bolstering program resources around meeting the needs of the designated target groups.

A further reason why some programs may chose to target certain segments of the eligible population is to adhere to various DOL directives, specifically those encouraging service to the hard-to-serve. Employment and training assistance typically will have the greatest impact on this segment of the eligible population, and they often will find services appropriate to their needs nowhere else but at a §402 grantee.

During the document review and site visit discussions, study staff collected information about target groups designated by the sampled programs. The first response of the administrator of nearly every program visited, when asked about targeting decisions, was to insist that all eligible farmworkers were by definition disadvantaged and in need of services. Thus, programs recruited widely and would do whatever they could to meet the needs of any eligible farmworker who came for services.

At the same time, when pressed further, every program also identified one or more segments of the eligible population that it was especially anxious to reach or for whom it felt its services were particularly appropriate. These decisions generally were made either because the programs believed that employment and training services in general would have the most pronounced effect when directed at certain types of clients rather than others, or because they felt that their specific resources (e.g., qualifications of service providers and staff) were better suited to meeting some needs rather than others. Below we discuss the target groups that were explicitly identified by at least several of the programs visited.

Youths/Dependents

One-third of the sampled programs made youths -- and often also explicitly youths who are not household heads -- a target group in some way. Some programs identified this as a target group because of an expressed commitment to doing what they could to end the intergenerational transmission of poverty and migrancy. Intervention among the young, they felt, was the best way to dramatically turn people's lives around and give them a new start.

Eligible youths were also seen as more likely to be willing and able to complete employment and training services, for a number of reasons. First, youths can often be convinced more readily to give up farmwork. Numerous respondents indicated how difficult it is to induce longtime farmworkers to give up farmwork and seek retraining, particularly if they are migrants. Most older farmworkers view giving up their accustomed work, no matter how undesirable and unstable, as risky or infeasible, particularly if they have a family to support. Young adults, on the other hand, were often seen as less tied to farmwork, both psychologically and financially. Younger people often are better able to see themselves as not being farmworkers in the future, and their tastes and aspirations are more likely to have been influenced by the mainstream culture. Similarly, if they have no or few dependents, they are more likely to be able to survive with a potentially lower income for the training period. Although farmworker families typically need the income of all family members, including dependent young adults, programs could often devise strategies (e.g., combining training and work experience jobs to provide income) that would enable young adults to participate in training.

Additionally, youths often have better English-language skills and numeracy/literacy skills than older farmworkers, and their health is often appreciably better. Thus, youths are often viewed as more likely to complete training successfully and likely to reap larger lifetime payoffs once training is completed.

Household Heads/Adults

Ironically, five of the 18 sampled programs indicated instead that household heads or adults were a designated target group or, conversely, that they did not emphasize service to dependent youths. The rationale for this decision most often was the belief that improving the job prospects of the household head would have an appreciable impact on the greatest number of people, by enhancing the quality of life for all family members. According to this logic, providing a way for the household head to leave farmwork improves the entire family's economic circumstances and, indirectly, provides dependent children with improved access to quality education, health care, and nutrition and housing, and makes it likely that they will view non-farm employment as a realistic aspiration for themselves when they grow up. In this way, a focus on serving household heads is also motivated by a desire to break the cycle of poverty.

A further reason for this targeting decision was the belief that other community agencies or institutions actively tried to meet the needs of farmworker youths to at least some degree, but that such alternatives were less readily available for those who were older. The regular school system, for example, obviously provides basic skills training, and in communities with large farmworker populations schools often have special programs or staff to meet the needs of farmworker youths. Apart from the §402 program, however, adults often have nowhere else to turn or need the advice and encouragement provided by the §402 staff to access and take advantage of the alternative services that do exist.

Finally, in deference to the close-knit family ties in many farmworker families, programs in several upstream states with a strong commitment to serving migrants recognized that their only reasonable prospect of encouraging someone to settle out rested with serving the family and providing the household head with the training needed to obtain non-farm income sufficient to support the family.

Hard-To-Serve

By definition all persons eligible for the §402 program are hard-to-serve and have special needs. Nonetheless, eight of the sampled programs recognized gradations within the eligible population and indicated that the especially hard-to-serve, including those with low education or who are basic-skills deficient, constitute their target population. These programs span the size classification, consisting of those with small and large §402 grants, and including those relying primarily on §402 funds for their operations as well as those leveraging appreciable funds from other sources. In general, programs designated the hard-to-serve as a priority group because they felt that this subset of the eligible population was most in need of their services and the group for whom they could have the largest impact.

The decision to target the hard-to-serve in some cases was made quite recently, with programs specifically mentioning that the changes to performance standards, which were implemented in PY 91, prompted them to refocus their program's efforts. With the elimination of the cost standard (i.e., the cost per entered employment) and clear signals given by DOL encouraging service to the most disadvantaged, programs became more willing to expend the greater resources required to serve this population. Moreover, the revised computation of the entered employment rate and the emphasis given to employability enhancements made them less fearful of serving persons whose prospects for job placements were uncertain.

Migrant or Seasonal Farmworker Status

The difference between "seasonal" and "migrant" is to some degree arbitrary, especially in homebase states, because persons may be receiving services in proximity to their usual or permanent domicile, even though they travel away from home to do farmwork during part of the year. Nonetheless, it is generally more difficult to provide employment and training services to migrant workers, especially those away from home, because families prefer to remain together in the stream (and often must do so as a matter of financial necessity) and because of the numerous barriers to employment faced

by this population.[4] Moreover, we have seen through an inspection of ASR data, described in Chapter III, that those receiving employment and training services are much more likely to be seasonals than migrants. Nonetheless, only two sampled programs -- one providing services in an upstream and one in a homebase state -- explicitly identified seasonal workers as a target group.

By contrast, six sample programs, all of which are in upstream states, designated migrant farmworkers as a target group for their employment and training services. Although acknowledging the difficulty and expense of serving migrants and expressing frustration at their inability to convince more migrants to settle out and participate in training, these programs also believed that migrants were desperately in need of and could benefit most from intervention -- quite similar to the reasons given by programs who were targeting the hard-to-serve. In fact, three of the six programs targeting migrants mentioned that they were doing so as part of a general effort to meet the needs of the hard-to-serve.

Outreach and Recruitment Practices

We have suggested that, apart from differences in service area characteristics, one reason for variation across programs in the mix of clients provided with employment and training services is the targeting decisions they make. Another important explanation can be found in differences in the outreach and recruitment practices used by programs, since these are the means by which farmworkers actually come to enroll in programs.

Two broad categories of outreach and recruitment activities were used by sampled grantees to make farmworkers aware of their services and bring them into the program. The first category, consisting of the most common methods, required little or no supplemental financial or staff effort and thus can be viewed as relatively passive recruitment devices. Prominent among such methods is word of mouth, whereby current

[4]This reality in fact led the study team to use the percentage of migrants served as a stratifying variable when choosing the site visit sample, as described in Chapter II.

or former participants encourage their friends or relatives to seek services. Three quarters of the sampled programs (specifically, 14 of the 18) reported that they used word of mouth as a recruitment mechanism, and many indicated that it was highly effective. Site visitors found confirmation of this, in that the vast majority of clients who were interviewed cited it as the primary means by which they learned of the §402 program.

Referrals from other social service organizations is another passive recruitment mechanism and was cited as important by 15 of the sample programs. Of course, the development of effective working relationships with community organizations clearly takes a program's concerted effort over a long period, along with considerable savvy and sometimes deft maneuvering. Nonetheless, referral is viewed as a passive recruitment method because, once firmly established, relationships with other agencies can lead to a steady client flow with little supplemental effort. Referrals from Job Service offices were especially common, although a broad range of service organizations were cited among those who refer to §402 programs, including: migrant service organizations (e.g., federal and local migrant education and health programs, Migrant Legal Services), churches, schools (including high schools and vocational training service providers), local Title II service delivery areas, Indian tribal government organizations, homeless service organizations (e.g., shelters, food pantries), and a wide range of specialized community agencies (e.g., groups serving persons with disabilities, veterans, substance abusers, ex-offenders). One program even maintained an 800 number for use by referring organizations.

The second category of outreach and recruitment methods used by the programs requires the commitment of extra resources. Seven of the sampled programs reported using their services-only component as a means to recruit eligible clients, especially migrant farmworkers, who might otherwise not hear about or be induced to visit the §402 program. A common method is for programs to develop a reputation as the place to go for emergency assistance, often of a special kind, such as health, food, or transportation assistance. In the course of enrolling the applicant or delivering the assistance, program staff then take advantage of the opportunity to explain the program's employment and

training components and suggest their benefits. Staff acknowledged that the pitch typically was not successful, at least during the first contact, but that after periodic help with basic needs, often over several years, the applicant finally might be induced to undergo training. Similarly, several sampled programs had used the SLIAG ESL and civics classes they offered (using non-§402 funds) as a means of recruitment.

Almost half the programs sent outreach workers, or case workers whose responsibilities include outreach, to make visits to the places where farmworkers live. Most of these made a special effort to visit migrant camps, believing that this was the most effective means of making contact with migrant farmworkers. They also made visits to the homes of both migrant and seasonal workers, visited work sites, or made presentations before community or other organizations or meetings likely to be attended by farmworkers.

Another important proactive method, used by most programs, entailed the use of flyers, radio and TV public service announcements (PSAs), and advertisements. In some cases these were targeted to a Spanish-language population.

Although word of mouth and referrals were most commonly cited as the way clients had found out about the §402 program, nearly every program used more active measures at least to some degree. Often, migrants and hard-to-serve clients were recruited by more resource-intensive methods, such as home or worksite visits, while seasonals were recruited through word of mouth or general media announcements. Programs often acknowledged that they would prefer to conduct more active outreach, but they felt that putting staff on the road was not always cost- or time-effective. Thus, they tried to limit this approach to reaching special target populations (e.g., migrants) or by hiring temporary outreach workers and/or setting up temporary outreach offices to deal with surges of migrant workers during summer months.

Unquestionably, though, the mix of these passive and active recruitment methods used by programs, and, just as importantly, the way they were implemented, had

important implications for the program's eventual client mix. In this sense, outreach and recruitment methods should be viewed as a form of implicit targeting.

For example, nearly every program used posters, flyers, and media ads, as noted above. But programs differed in where and how they placed the ads. Advertisements placed in the help-wanted section of the local newspaper, a method favored by one program, are unlikely to be seen by long-term agricultural workers lacking non-farm work experience. Similarly, some programs emphasized that their posters, flyers, and ads were prepared in several languages, at least English and Spanish. Others used English-only ads, even though in some cases the eligible farmworker population was polyglot. The several programs mentioning their use of Spanish-language ads not surprisingly had much higher proportions of limited-English speakers among their clients than others.

Similarly, many programs had at least one person whose job duties in part included outreach and recruitment. But how frequently these persons conducted out-of-the-office visits, and where they visited, turned out to be important. Frequent visits to migrant camps and worksites, for example, led to the recruitment of a much harder-to-serve clientele on average than otherwise.

The characteristics of the staff conducting outreach -- indeed, the characteristics of the program's counselors and case managers -- also had implications for whom the program served. Seven programs required that at least their outreach workers must have farmworker backgrounds, and in some of these cases the outreach workers were the program's former terminees. On average, programs that used ex-farmworkers for recruitment served a much harder-to-serve clientele (i.e., a higher proportion of dropouts and those who were long-term agricultural employees) than programs that did not make this requirement. Similarly, 12 of the sampled programs required that some or most of their staff be bilingual, and these programs served substantially higher proportions of limited-English speakers.

The race/ethnic makeup of the staff was important. Some programs consciously strived to build a staff that was diverse in race, ethnicity, and even gender, so that a broad spectrum of participants could feel comfortable in the program. Such programs were more likely to recruit and serve farmworkers drawn from a wider variety of backgrounds. Other programs lacked such diversity, a fact that was also reflected in their client mix. Of course, in some cases the lack of diversity may have been appropriate -- for example, where a largely Hispanic staff was serving an eligible population made up overwhelmingly of Hispanics. But in other cases the site visitors believed that greater diversity among staff would have been helpful in appealing to a broader spectrum of the eligibles. Moreover, some programs found that the composition of the eligible population was changing, with, as was found in quite a few cases, a migrant Hispanic farmworker population tending to supplant white or black seasonals. In some of these cases, program administrators acknowledged that greater staff diversity would help them attract the new clientele, and they were keeping this fact in mind when recruiting new staff.

Even the use of word of mouth, that most favored of outreach devices, has implications for recruitment, because heavy reliance on this method will generally cause the mix of clients served to perpetuate itself over time. Terminees recommend the §402 program to their friends and relatives, and, because people generally tend to be friends with others like themselves, the new wave of recruits will tend to look much like the old wave. Thus, programs relying heavily on word of mouth and serving many white, seasonal, high school graduates can expect that many white, seasonal, high school graduates will come to them for services in the future.

Interestingly, two of the three programs whose employment and training terminees in PY 90 were more than 50% migrants were among the handful of programs that did not mention word of mouth as an important recruitment device. Presumably, migrants who settle out in an upstream state are not in a good position to spread the word about their experiences, and programs wishing to recruit many migrants therefore must develop more active outreach mechanisms.

Consistency Between Targeting, Outreach, and Service Design

The quality of training model suggests that effective programs should strive for consistency between the groups they wish to target, the outreach and recruitment methods they use, and the mix of services they offer. It does no good, for example, for a program to aggressively recruit a hard-to-serve clientele, if the program is ill-equipped to meet their many service needs. Based on information collected by the site visitors, the study team assessed the degree to which the sampled program's targeting, outreach, and service design strategies indicated a good mesh.

Consistency Between Targeting and Outreach

In general the study team found a moderate correspondence between targeting and outreach. Most of the programs that targeted youth, for example, had developed referral networks with local schools or youth centers. In one program, the outreach worker met regularly with high school staff who serve as counselors to children of farmworkers. Another program hired a youth coordinator, explicitly to develop linkages for recruiting and serving youth.

Other programs, especially those with few target groups, demonstrated consistency between targeting and outreach more by omission than by commission. For example, the two programs that mentioned that they viewed themselves as especially geared towards serving seasonals generally did not find the need to develop specialized outreach mechanisms. Word of mouth and periodic media announcements appeared quite effective in bringing in the client mix they desired.

Similarly, many of the programs targeting migrants or the hard-to-serve were judged to have adopted appropriate outreach and recruitment methods. For example, upstream grantees targeting migrants tended to be more active and personal in their recruiting practices. In some instances, they also were very effective in using services-only for recruiting migrants into E&T program components. One program, for example, developed a reputation in migrant camps as offering access to quality health care through

a voucher system, and this reputation served it well in bringing migrants to its door. To be cost-effective, some programs hired ex-farmworkers as temporary outreach workers during the peak migrant season. Two programs targeting the hard-to-serve or migrants developed outreach methods that were judged to be especially effective. These included the use of bilingual and ex-farmworker staff who conducted active and aggressive outreach at migrant camps or worksites.

In other cases, however, consistency between targeting and outreach to the hard-to-serve was judged to be less than satisfactory. One program, for example, professed a desire to target the hard-to-serve, but had no ex-farmworker or bilingual staff, rarely conducted active outreach (such as visiting migrant camps or farm worksites), and relied primarily on word of mouth as its recruitment method. One reason we uncovered for weak consistency between targeting and outreach was that in several cases the target groups designated by a program were recently changed (most often in response to changes in performance standards), but the required changes in outreach methods that the new targeting requires appeared to be still developing. Thus, one program was targeting migrants, but its staff was primarily non-Hispanic and it had only one staff member who spoke Spanish. This was a clear case where targeting decisions had recently been revised, but appropriate recruitment methods were lagging badly behind. In another case, a program wishing to target the hard-to-serve needed to rely on staff from a nearby social service agency to act as translators.

Consistency Between Targeting and Actual Client Mix

Another way to judge whether a program's outreach methods are effective in recruiting clients in its designated target group is to see whether it in fact serves an above average proportion of clients in this group. Using this yardstick, consistency between targeting and recruitment again is judged to be moderate overall, and weakest for some programs targeting the hard-to-serve.

Six programs indicated that they targeted youth or made special efforts to meet the needs of youth. Table V-3 shows that on average youths made up 26% of the

employment and training terminees served by these six programs, or somewhat more than the 22% served on average by the remaining 12 sampled programs. Thus, programs that targeted youth were slightly more successful than average in actually recruiting youth. At the same time, the 26% average masks considerable diversity, with two programs in this group serving considerably fewer youths than the others.

Table V-3

CONSISTENCY BETWEEN TARGETING AND ACTUAL CLIENT MIX

Target Group	Percent of Client Group Served By:	
	Programs with This as a Designated Target Group	All Other Sampled Programs
Youth	26.1%	22.4%
Hard-to-Serve		
Dropouts	53.4%	54.0%
Limited English	32.6%	37.5%
Farmworker Status		
Seasonals	96.8%	69.6%
Migrants	37.3%	22.4%

Note: Figures represent the percentage of E&T terminees with the characteristic, averaged over the two groups of programs. Of the 18 programs visited, the number designating youth as a target group was six; the hard-to-serve, eight; seasonals, two; and migrants, six. Data are from PY 91 ASRs.

We noted above that the consistency between targeting and outreach methods to serve the hard-to-serve in some cases was not judged to be especially effective. In fact, the eight programs targeting the hard-to-serve actually served no more dropouts and fewer terminees with limited English proficiency than programs not designating the hard-to-serve as a target group. However, those targeting the hard-to-serve also exhibited considerable diversity, with two of the eight serving high proportions of the hard-to-serve, four serving about average proportions, and two serving well below average proportions. Not surprisingly, the two serving below average proportions were also judged to rely heavily on outreach and recruitment methods inconsistent with reaching

the hard-to-serve, such as word of mouth, and neither had ethnically diverse staff with adequate bilingual capability or used ex-farmworkers for outreach.

Consistency between whether migrants or seasonals were targeted and the actual client mix was considerably better. The two programs that acknowledged that their services were especially appropriate to serving seasonals in fact served almost exclusively seasonals, and the six programs that had targeted migrants on average served over 50% more migrants than programs not designating migrants as a target group (37% versus 22%). Of the six programs targeting migrants, three were judged to have developed particularly effective outreach and recruitment methods, and unsurprisingly these three served migrants in much higher percentages than nearly every other program. They used ex-farmworkers for outreach, had bilingual capabilities, and made frequent visits to camps or worksites. The remaining three programs served much lower percentages of migrants -- in fact, they served many more seasonals than migrants -- despite the fact that appreciable numbers of migrants could be found in each of their service areas. This evidence is a testament to the difficulty programs have in convincing migrants to undertake employment and training services, unless the program engages in particularly active outreach and offers an appropriate mix of services.

Consistency Between Targeting and Service Design

Finally, by way of judging the quality of outreach and recruitment, the study team examined the consistency between subgroups designated for targeting and the program's service design. Specifically, we were concerned with learning whether programs offered a mix of services that would be effective in meeting the needs of their target populations.

Again, our assessment was mixed, with some programs demonstrating innovative service designs deemed particularly appropriate to meeting the needs of their target population, and others seeming much less effective. Of the six programs targeting youth, for example, only two were judged to exhibit particularly effective strategies for serving youth. One of these programs boasted extensive linkages with local schools and the High

School Equivalency Program, and it had developed a special dropout-prevention program for in-school youth in conjunction with the schools. The remaining programs that targeted youth, while not judged ineffective in serving this population, largely served youth as they would older participants.

Programs targeting the hard-to-serve or migrants also varied in their effectiveness, as judged by site visitors. Of the ten programs targeting either of these groups, six were judged to provide very appropriate or moderately appropriate services. Specifically, their program designs emphasized all or most of the program components deemed especially important for serving the very disadvantaged, including: ESL and basic skills training; strong case management, in recognition of the intensive counseling that the hard-to-serve would need to address their multiple barriers and see them through training; adequate supportive services, often including relocation assistance; options for vocational skills training for those with limited English or who were basic skills deficient; and attention to the needs of the farmworker's family. The remaining programs targeting the hard-to-serve or migrants had weak program components in at least several of these areas.

Summary

We began this section by drawing attention to the substantial diversity that exists across programs in the characteristics of persons being served, with some programs much more likely than others to serve dropouts, those lacking basic skills or English proficiency, migrants, and youth. These differences can partially be accounted for by differences in program context, such as whether the program operates in an upstream or homebase state or the size of its §402 allocation. Nonetheless, substantial variation remains unexplained by characteristics of the service area.

A further explanation, we found, rested in the explicit targeting decisions made by programs. Also important was implicit targeting, caused by the mix and implementation of the outreach and recruitment methods that programs used. Some

outreach and recruitment methods clearly were much more effective than others in causing the most disadvantaged to seek services.

The study team also found that consistency between targeting, outreach and recruitment, and service design was highly variable, with some programs demonstrating weak consistency but with others exhibiting especially innovative recruitment and service design strategies.

These exemplary practices notwithstanding, the study team believes that a number of sampled programs will need to revamp substantially their outreach and recruitment practices and service designs to implement recent DOL directives calling on JTPA programs to focus services on the hardest-to-serve. In particular, to follow this mandate many programs will find that they need to be much more conscious about their outreach and recruitment practices, relying less on word of mouth and general advertisements and more on home and worksite visits and targeted ads, and they must ensure that their service design can meet the needs of clients with extremely weak basic skills and other barriers to employment.

ASSESSMENT AND MATCHING TO SERVICES

In this section, we review the various approaches to matching clients to services found among the programs. This review includes discussion of assessment practices, service planning and case management.

Assessment

Development of a service plan begins with assessment. According to the quality of training criteria, programs should assess applicants' strengths and weaknesses in order to develop an appropriate service plan and employment goals for each participant. Assessment instruments and procedures should be sufficient to measure the characteristics of the population being assessed and to match applicants to the available training options; thus, over-assessment is as much of a danger as under-assessment. Each applicant should

be assessed in these areas: basic skills, vocational skills, world of work skills and barriers to employment. A detailed discussion of assessment practices in each of these areas follows.

Basic Skills

The purpose of basic skills assessment is to determine a client's level of reading, writing, math, and English usage skills. These skills are generalizable academic skills that students are expected to have by the eighth grade. Since the MSFW population includes a high percentage of people with low levels of education and/or limited English, determination of a client's basic skills level is an important factor in considering service options, both for basic skills and vocational training. For example, an applicant with a low level of basic skills may not be eligible for certain vocational training programs, and a client with low math skills should not be placed on an OJT that requires a lot of numerical calculations.

Although all sample programs did some form of in-house basic skills testing for their employment and training clients, the level of the testing varied. Staff at some programs tested clients only to satisfy reporting requirements; some used only one test for all types of clients; and others administered different tests depending on the type of client. We did not find that one level of testing is better than the others, but that certain levels are appropriate for certain programs, depending on their clientele and service design.[5]

Five programs stated that they administered a reading skills test only to determine whether or not the client read above or below the seventh grade level, for reporting purposes. These programs tended to use "quick and dirty" reading tests, such as the Job Corps test, which takes only about 10 minutes and is suitable only for such crude divisions as above/below seventh grade level. Staff at these programs did not find test

[5]Some programs reported using different kinds of assessment in different field offices, either because the activities differed (e.g., some offices had no in-house training) or because staff had not been trained uniformly in administering various tests. This section discusses the levels of testing at the field offices we visited.

scores useful in determining how to best serve their clients; they felt that informal interviewing, which involves questions about a client's educational background and work history, was adequate. Two of these programs did not believe in assessment testing at all, since they believe that it screens clients and can lead to creaming; these programs were very dedicated to meeting the needs of whoever came to them for training, regardless of their level of preparation.

Three of the five programs that used tests only to satisfy reporting requirements served a high percentage of dropouts, Hispanics, and those with limited English. In these programs, extensive testing may be irrelevant because applicants are so obviously lacking in basic skills. Also, these three programs offered in-house basic skills training and promoted CRT as their primary service, so test scores were less of a factor in choosing a service. Nonetheless, these programs lacked even the minimal level of testing needed to pinpoint client deficiencies and enable precise measurement of client gains.

The remaining two programs that did not use test scores in developing service plans served a low percentage of dropouts and those with limited English, and promoted OJT as their primary service choice. In these programs, test scores were less crucial because most clients had an adequate level of basic skills and informal interviewing could provide a reasonable estimate of a client's ability to perform in OJT.

The next level of basic skills testing includes programs that used test scores in developing service plans but administered the same test to all clients. In the seven programs that used one test for all clients, the TABE, ABLE, CASAS, or a simple reading test was administered. In five of these programs, most clients were sent to outside providers for training. Since these service providers usually administered their own assessment tests, it made sense that the programs used one test to get a rough idea of a client's basic skill level, leaving the in-depth assessment for the service provider; in this way assessment efforts are not duplicated. Lack of staff and time to conduct assessment was a factor for another program in this group. Clients in this program would probably benefit from more testing but one case manager covered a large service area, leaving insufficient time for more detailed assessment.

At the highest level of assessment, six programs administered various basic skills tests to their clients, depending on their skill levels. One program used up to two tests to assess a client's basic skills grade level. Staff viewed the grade level as a starting point for vocational exploration. Three programs administered a succession of tests to narrow down the basic skills levels of their clients. For example, one program gave all employment and training clients the SRA reading test. If the client seemed to have a high level of basic skills based on that test, they were given the GED pre-test. Another program administered the ABLE and sometimes the Slosson Reading test. If the client did well on the first two tests, the TABE was administered. Staff at two programs administered different tests depending on the client's apparent English speaking ability (assessed through informal interview). For example, one of these programs administered the TABE for those clients with adequate English, the BEST (oral and written) for those with medium English, and the ESL pre-test for those with limited English. A few of these programs had added a test to obtain baseline scores against which progress of clients could be measured for the documentation of enhancements.

Five of the six programs that used multiple basic skills tests provided basic skills training in-house, so that a precise determination of skill level was important for knowing the level at which training should start, and for measuring progress from that level to determine whether an enhancement had been achieved. Two of the programs had a diverse clientele in terms of educational background, so a wider range of test options was necessary. Interestingly, one program had reduced the number of tests administered to each client, primarily because the previous set of tests took too long (an average of three hours) to complete. Also, staff reported that the results were not crucial in the development of the service plan.

Due to the high percentage of Hispanics in the MSFW population, we inquired about the availability of basic skills testing in Spanish. Only one program reported that they administered tests in Spanish. Most programs that served large numbers of native Spanish speakers used informal interviews in Spanish using bilingual staff or interpreters to assess their basic skills. Likewise, programs serving Native Americans conducted interviews with an interpreter to assess basic skills for those who spoke little English.

One program that served large numbers of monolingual Spanish speakers explained that they used no formal tests, due to limited availability of assessment tools in Spanish; they just conducted informal interviews. Programs have found it hard to adapt their basic skills assessment practices to the increasing number of non-English speakers in the MSFW population; usually, they have no way of determining the extent of literacy in another language except by interpolation from educational levels. Some argued that since the §402 programs are training clients for employment in this country, determination of the level of basic skills in another language is irrelevant. However, since basic skills assessment measures aptitude and literacy, results from assessment in a client's native language are valuable in assessing the type and amount of remediation needed.

Occupational and World of Work Skills

Occupational skills are procedures that one uses on the job; they are more or less job specific. World of work skills are a general understanding of the protocols and expectations of employees on a job. Assessment of occupational and world of work skills is conducted in order to determine the level of a client's practical work knowledge and experience, and to uncover transferable skills and interests.

The trend in the visited §402 programs for occupational and world of work assessment was away from testing and toward more detailed interviewing. All programs assessed occupational skills through informal interviews, which included discussion of a client's work history, attained skills, applicable hobbies or other experience, goals, and barriers. Only three states regularly supplemented the interview with vocational tests; two additional programs did so occasionally. The tests most often administered included the CAI, the Self-Directed Search, and the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory. Two programs used the APTICOM on occasion. Staff at one of these programs did not feel the test was very helpful, but claimed that some employers liked to see the scores. Three programs recently stopped occupational testing. Not only did testing take too much time, but staff found scores not very helpful in developing service plans. They felt that detailed interviews with the client were more informative.

As the above list of interview topics and vocational tests suggests, occupational and world of work assessment included discussion of the client's vocational interests, not just skills possessed. Clients are asked about their career interests and in some programs are given tests to help in choosing a direction. We discuss the role of vocational interest exploration in service plan development more fully in the next section.

Another topic discussed during the assessment of occupational and world of work skills is barriers to training or employment. Many MSFWs face multiple barriers, including lack of a non-agricultural work history, lack of transportation, health problems, and child-care needs. These barriers must be considered when determining a realistic service plan. For example, CRT may not be appropriate for a single head of household who must maintain a certain amount of income. All programs discuss barriers with clients in order to assess whether the available level of services will be sufficient to allow the client to overcome the barriers and obtain employment; this issue is also discussed in the following section.

As with basic skills assessment, formal assessment tools for occupational and world of work skills are typically not available in Spanish or other non-English languages. None of the programs reported using vocational assessment tests in a language other than English. Most programs that served a large number of Hispanics and those with limited English had bilingual speakers on staff or access to bilingual speakers. Since programs were depending on informal interviewing as the means of vocational skills assessment, it is important that bilingual staff be available. Even though numbers of non-English speakers were increasing in some states, programs with limited access to bilingual speakers claimed that communication has not been a problem so far, probably because they were serving the best prepared of the eligible population. Nonetheless, they were planning to hire bilingual staff members to address the needs of those with more limited skills.

The move away from formal vocational skills assessment seems to arise from two sources. First, clients often express little interest in vocational exploration and counseling. For many farmworkers, the decision to attempt employment in the

mainstream labor market is one that is difficult and risky to make. Therefore, the prospect of a "sure thing", such as an OJT position or a training regime that is familiar (e.g., auto mechanics for men, food service for women) may be most appealing. Having to take tests to discover other skills or some more theoretically appropriate vocational direction may seem to be pointless paperwork.

Additionally, to farmworkers moving away from poor working conditions and low pay, most alternatives in the mainstream labor market look attractive by comparison. For many farmworkers who come to the §402 program, the experience of entering the labor market is more like that of youth, who will often try out several kinds of jobs before settling on a career direction. The trying out period is both an opportunity to learn the world of work expectations of employers, as well as to discover the most suitable kinds of working conditions and types of work; for many farmworkers, the experience includes moving back and forth several times between farmwork and non-agricultural work. There is little evidence that extensive up-front vocational testing can shorten this process. At best, it can make broad distinctions for some clients -- for example, clients found to have poor fine motor coordination should not enter electronics assembly.

The second reason for the de-emphasis of formal vocational assessment is that staff, including case managers, were usually not trained in how to conduct formal assessment. Program staff usually saw themselves as providers of support and guidance through training and employment, rather than as formal career counselors. In several programs, many staff members were ex-farmworkers, who certainly have an understanding of the personal changes required to enter the mainstream labor market, but who lack the training to conduct a formal assessment. (Staff qualification issues are discussed in detail in the case management section, below.)

Informal assessment may be adequate for most clients, but for clients who are more experienced in the mainstream labor market, formal assessment can be an important adjunct to interviewing. With vocational assessment results supplementing the client's experiences in non-agricultural jobs, he or she would be able to determine more

accurately the kind of training necessary to make a permanent change. Also, as programs begin to emphasize long-term training, development of formal assessment procedures for more vocationally mature clients will be necessary to determine the appropriate training regime.

Service Planning

According to the quality of training model, programs should ensure that applicants are directed to the particular services that are most appropriate to their individual circumstances as determined by the assessment process, and programs should provide an opportunity for applicants to explore occupational interests and aptitudes before deciding on training and placement goals. As discussed in the preceding section, effective service planning begins with assessment of a client's basic skills, vocational skills, interests, and barriers. In this section, we present the various decision making strategies programs use to actually place clients in a training program, and we assess the extent to which the programs are meeting the quality of training criteria.

Most MSFW programs in the sample used an Employability Development Plan (EDP) to match clients to services. In theory, this plan documents information about an applicant's abilities, interests, work history, and barriers to training and employment. Using this information, the counselor can develop a comprehensive service package that will address any barriers to employment and enable the client to enter a desired job field. The plan is usually signed by the applicant as a sign of client agreement to enter the program and pursue the goals listed in the plan. As the client moves through the service system, the EDP should be updated to monitor and document client progress.

Although all programs in the study used an EDP, the amount of guidance clients received during service planning varied widely. As discussed in the previous section, all programs interviewed clients to determine their work history, career interests, and barriers. A few programs made a direct effort to help clients decide on a career direction through use of vocational interest tests. Some program staff encouraged clients to do research in libraries or provided visits to training or work sites. Career exploration

requires cooperation from the client, however, and it was not uncommon for clients to approach programs with a definite idea of a job placement or training program in mind. Programs that depended on word of mouth for outreach often found that participants came in wanting the same kind of training or the same kind of job as the friend or relative who sent them, whether or not that was appropriate for their needs. One program with a high level of client input reported that clients usually wanted and were assigned an OJT placement, although staff recognized that the clients' long-term needs suggested a different route.

Constrained in part by performance standards and in part by clients' immediate needs and stated interests, service plans sometimes failed to address major long-term barriers to employment, instead choosing relatively quick or low-risk routes to placements. For many programs, a rule of thumb for placing clients in the various types of training seemed to be: CRT for those who h ad reasonable skills and could afford the time and lack of income, and OJT or direct placement for the hard-to-serve who needed immediate income. The result was that more women, seasonal workers and youth were routed to CRT, while primary earners with limited English and low levels of education were routed to OJT. Unfortunately, the latter were those who had most to gain from CRT, especially in basic skills.

Ideally, once a client decides on a vocational interest or training plan, the program can provide the necessary services; obviously, staff will not encourage clients to develop a service plan that the program cannot deliver. Therefore, the availability of service and labor market options plays a role in service planning. Of the eleven sampled programs that emphasized CRT, most offered CRT in-house or had adequate access through service providers. In three of the seven programs with an OJT emphasis, access to schools was limited and no in-house training was provided. Similarly, although efforts were made to match clients to training that furthered their career interests, many times the availability of jobs or types of training had the most influence on the eventual training placement. For example, one client whose file we reviewed expressed an interest in becoming a wood craftsman, but was placed in an OJT as a kitchen helper. Another influence was the program's effort to meet its planned goals. Several programs were

trying to move away from a model that put clients into training slots in order to have their "planned versus actual" results look good.

Program staff often had to think about the needs of the whole family rather than the individual in order to make service planning meet the needs of the client. Sometimes this meant offering services-only assistance to the family prior to one member enrolling in employment and training services. Or, when the main concern was about maintaining income, the head of household might be placed in an OJT position; at the same time, however, the wife or children, or both, might be placed in basic skills or vocational classroom training. One program had developed a project for youth that combined basic skills training and work experience jobs, so that their needs for training could be met without losing the income that they contributed to the family.

With the changes in performance standards and the emphasis on serving the harder-to-serve, programs are beginning to think of ways to serve this sub-group better. More efforts are being made to offer training tailored to farmworkers, making it easier to match services to individual needs. A few programs have just established in-house basic skills training. Six states have developed a new EDP form geared towards more case notes in order to promote more comprehensive and individualized service. In addition, programs are developing improved case management practices, described below.

Case Management

In order for service plans to be useful, they must be not only well-planned, but also effectively carried out. Thus, the monitoring of client progress is crucial to the delivery of quality training. The programs used a variety of organizational patterns to manage client cases. In some programs staff teams monitored client progress; in others one staff member was assigned to each client. Programs also differed in the point at which case management began, whether at intake or after, and in the intensity of case management.

In four programs two or more staff members worked together to oversee each client's progress. In two of these programs, the team consisted of a job developer and an instructor. Since CRT was provided in-house, both the job developer and the instructor had daily contact with each client. In another program, each field office was staffed with two people, and both were expected to know all clients so that they could fill in for each other. In the fourth program, responsibility for each client was split between the intake secretary, outreach worker, and the employment training specialist. In all four of these programs, one member of the team did intake and developed the service plan with the client, after which team case management began.

In the remaining 14 programs, one staff member was assigned to each client. In four of the programs, intake was done by a separate person, so one-on-one case management began after intake. Five of the programs recently (PY 91 or PY 92) switched from a team approach to one-on-one case management, because they thought their clients would get more focused attention if a single person were responsible for overseeing all aspects of service delivery.

The intensity of case management varied among the programs. Three programs had a less intense, more reactive than proactive, approach to client oversight. Although the case manager or team aimed for once a month contact with the client, actual contact was determined mostly by client need; the greater the need, the more contact. In four programs, case management was of medium intensity. Staff tried to contact clients once a week. In ten programs the policy was to have intense client contact. Clients were contacted at least once a week, usually more. In one program some clients were required to contact their counselor three times per week. In three of these programs, staff went out of their way to visit clients at home, especially those clients with attendance or motivational problems.

Intensity of case management did not depend on whether a team or one-on-one approach was used. With a one-on-one approach, the case manager and client could build a more personal relationship; however, in some cases the case manager did not have enough time to spend with each client, since the case manager was responsible for

all aspects of client service. For example, in one program, case managers covered such a large service area that they only had time to check in periodically with clients, sometimes just by phone, once the client was in training. These concerns point to the importance of considering staff-to-client ratios when shifting to a one-on-one case management model. Staff at some of the programs that have recently switched to one-on-one case management voiced concern over not having enough time for outreach and intake. Some programs alleviated the workload for the case manager by having a separate staff member conduct outreach and intake, which are inherently time-consuming tasks, especially in geographically large service areas. With the team approach, it was more difficult to develop a close relationship between the client and each team member, but at least more people were available to check in with each client, increasing the chance that this happens on a regular basis.

Because the MSFW population includes a high percentage of hard-to-serve people, quality case management is necessary to retain clients in training. Frequent contact is crucial to trust building. Staff at one program said, "The biggest difficulty is getting clients to change their mindset. They need a lot of support that they do not get from their peer groups. Sometimes a client will have a success, but will relapse and lose motivation when times get hard." Migrants tended to be harder to retain in training because they were more likely to have limited English, a lower level of education and, due to the migrant lifestyle, less of a settled, long-range outlook. Not surprisingly, we found that all programs that served a high percentage of migrants used the one-on-one case management model and had a medium to high intensity of contact.

Qualifications of Case Managers

In an attempt to improve the quality of case management services, four of the sample programs now require staff to have completed 12 units of post-secondary counseling or psychology courses. Incumbent staff were given two years to complete these units. The idea behind increasing requirements is that as the programs change from a short-term, job placement focus to a long-term, change of lifestyle focus, the role of the staff changes. Staff must do more counseling and work with clients over a longer

period; they become career and life-change counselors in addition to job developers and training specialists.

Four additional programs were considering the requirement of counseling units for their staff. These programs were hesitant because they saw a trade-off between having trained counselors who would have technical knowledge, versus having untrained staff with a rapport and degree of identification with the client. They wondered whether ex-farmworkers and staff with similar backgrounds and cultures are more effective than degreed employees. Staff at one program that served an ethnically specific farmworker population claimed that an understanding of cultural nuances was key to opening clients up to counseling and subsequent job training. During a visit to a migrant camp at another program, the study team observed that farmworkers responded much better to the ex-migrant staff member with little formal training than to the Anglo staff member who had a college degree and spoke excellent Spanish.

Ideally, if programs decide to require that staff have post-secondary school credits, incumbent staff would be encouraged to and willing to work on getting counseling credits, as was done in the four programs that recently changed staff requirements. In this way programs would have the best of both worlds, trained counseling staff with backgrounds similar to the clients. Training for existing staff would very likely increase the quality of assessment practices and service planning, since existing staff usually have no training except what they learn on the job.

In addition to the four states that now require counseling units, four other states prefer case managers to have a bachelor's degree; in fact, most of the staff in three of these four states have a bachelor's degree or higher. Six programs prefer staff to be ex-farmworkers. Three programs require bilingualism among staff with a lot of client contact, and several others prefer staff to be bilingual. Most states that have a high percentage of Hispanic and/or limited English training terminees prefer staff with similar backgrounds (e.g., farmworker; bilingual; same ethnic background) as their clients, whereas most of the states that had a low percentage of terminees that were Hispanic and/or had limited English skills preferred staff with degrees or who had some post-

secondary schooling. We can conjecture that the relationship between staff and clients works two ways: the programs prefer their staff to resemble their clients, but it is also likely that the presence of a particular kind of staff influences the kind of client who feels comfortable coming to the program for help.

Another influence on staffing patterns is the local environment. It is more difficult to find qualified bilingual staff in some areas than others. Homebase states were more likely to report that they could find staff with some training whose backgrounds resembled their clients. Upstream states, however, often reported that bilingual persons were difficult to find, or that their backgrounds were very dissimilar to the farmworker population. One program, for instance, had hired Puerto Rican staff in an effort to be more accessible to their Mexican-American farmworker population. While this was better than having no bilingual capability, both the language and cultural differences between the two groups caused some difficulties. Other upstream programs reported that they did not know how they would ever recruit bilingual staff, since anyone who had studied Spanish was likely to be able to earn more in other industries, such as business.

Summary

Assessment practices varied among the sampled programs. In the case of basic skills assessment, the emphasis on formal assessment varied widely. This variation can be attributed to differences in clientele and service design among the programs. In designing effective assessment practices, programs must strive for the appropriate amount and type of assessment for their clientele; thus, more is not always better in this case. Programs that served a more homogeneous clientele and that offered limited training options tended to rely less on formal testing. Programs that used service providers for training tended to test some, but not extensively, preferring to leave most assessment to the better-trained provider personnel. Finally, programs that served a diverse clientele and/or offered a variety of training options used the greatest amount of formal testing. Overall, programs have reduced the number of basic skills tests they administer to clients to an average of one or two.

For vocational skills, emphasis on formal assessment has been reduced significantly. Now, all programs conduct informal interviews to assess vocational skills; only a few also administer formal tests. Because MSFWs have limited non-agricultural work histories and little idea of long-range career goals, the adequacy of informal assessment is uncertain. In any case, it should not be necessary for every participant to undergo the same amount of assessment, rather; the type of assessment could be tailored to each client's situation.

All programs used an EDP to develop, document, and monitor client services, but they varied in the degree of vocational exploration, service options, and alleviation of barriers provided to each client. Ideally, programs should actively involve clients in career exploration, offer a variety of service options, and aid clients in dealing with barriers. Programs tended to rely very heavily on client input in determining career goals. Since farmworkers have been forced by their occupation to think in the short-term and are often unaware of alternatives to the farmworker lifestyle, staff need to educate clients about other lifestyles and goals in order to broaden their scope of known options.

Provision of a variety of quality service options is dependent on what the community can offer, so programs must work within this limitation. Attention to performance standards was another reason for the variation in the amount of support that programs provided to clients to help overcome barriers to training. In many programs, clients with significant barriers tended to be placed in OJT or direct placement. Some program staff stated that this is because these clients lack the ability, time, or financial resources to stay in CRT. Efforts to address these barriers, such as provision of tailored training and counseling, stipends, and supportive services, are increasing, but more are needed, especially as the MSFW population becomes increasingly Hispanic and hard-to-serve.

In case management practices, the trend is from a team approach towards a one-on-one or hybrid (one-on-one and team) approach. Programs have found that intense, personal interaction with clients is necessary to keep them in training. Unfortunately, a few program designs make it difficult for case managers to spend quality time with

each client, due to large service areas and/or large caseloads. Programs have also found that clients respond better to staff that have backgrounds similar to their own. But, as the role of case manager grows to one involving more life and personal counseling, programs are realizing the need for formally trained staff. Several programs have recently changed or are contemplating changing staff qualifications. As with basic skills assessment and service designs, programs must find the qualifications that best serve their clients and program goals.

VI. CLASSROOM TRAINING

All of the sample programs offered basic skills classroom training, and all but one offered some vocational classroom training. The basic skills training offered consisted of English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), and General Educational Development (GED) preparation training. Participants might attend basic skills classes for a few days or for many months. The vocational classroom training offered ranged from a three-day course in asbestos removal to a two-year associate degree in business administration. The modes of providing basic skills training and vocational classroom training included in-house classes directly provided by the program, contracts with local service providers for provision of outside classes, and referrals of individual clients to established outside classes.

As described in Chapter IV, terminees from classroom training represented more than half of all employment and training terminees in 7 of the 18 sample programs in PY 91, and 11 of the programs had a high emphasis on CRT. All of the "OJT-emphasis" programs also offered some classroom training. There were, however, differences in emphasis among the sample programs, not only in the amount of emphasis that they placed on CRT over other services, but also on the kind of CRT they emphasized. Eight of the 18 programs placed an emphasis on basic skills training over vocational classroom training, five emphasized both basic skills and vocational classroom training, and five placed more of an emphasis on vocational classroom training. A number of the programs emphasizing basic skills had recently instituted classes or were otherwise shifting their service designs in response to changes in DOL policies and the increases in hard-to-serve farmworkers in their service areas. In fact, several of them had been in the OJT-emphasis group in the prior program year. Others in this group still had an emphasis on OJT, but had begun to offer basic skills instruction as well. Therefore, it is clear that basic skills training was considered a priority by a majority of the programs.

The five programs that emphasized vocational classroom training rather than basic skills training included three that put their main training emphasis on OJT, but had vocational classroom training available for the small number of participants that could meet the entry requirements of the local providers. One of these three also made frequent referrals to classes in the community for basic skills training. The remaining two programs emphasized vocational classroom training in their program design and had access to an excellent network of public vocational schools that were appropriate for their mostly seasonal farmworkers. They only occasionally made referrals to community programs for basic skills training.

In the sections below, we separately examine the two kinds of classroom training provided by §402 programs. For each, we describe the kinds of training available and assess its quality, based on our site visit observations. Finally, we offer a concluding section that examines some issues with regard to integrating and tailoring the two kinds of training.

BASIC SKILLS TRAINING

One of the most daunting employment barriers faced by farmworkers is severe basic skills deficiencies. Nationwide in PY 91, 30% of §402 clients in employment and training services were high school dropouts, and another 29% had less than an eighth grade education. In addition, 37% of employment and training clients had limited English proficiency. One California grantee indicated that their typical client was a monolingual Spanish speaker with a third to fourth grade education in Mexico. Clearly, §402 programs must endeavor to ameliorate the basic skills deficiencies of farmworkers if they are to significantly and permanently improve their ability to compete in the mainstream labor market. This is no small task, given the amount of time needed for remediation, and the need of farmworker families for income, which can result in a high percentage of drop-outs from adult basic skills training.

Virtually all sampled programs considered the upgrading of farmworkers' basic skills to be important -- in and of itself -- in improving their clients' employability.

Nevertheless, the programs' demonstrated level of commitment to remediation for its own sake varied considerably. Their client population's particular basic skills deficiencies and the array of available remediation providers in the service area often limited or even determined the degree to which programs could meet this need. For instance, several upstream programs with small allocations found that there was a heavy but seasonally-determined need for ESL classes. This need could be very difficult for the programs to meet because of the many difficulties in operating an ESL program, including: locating a central training site for a transient and often far-flung clientele; finding qualified ESL instructors, especially to fill short-term positions; and obtaining outside support (e.g., funding, classroom space) in areas of the country that for any number of reasons may not consider migrant farmworkers or ESL training to be high priorities.

Several programs used basic skills remediation only to prepare clients for vocational training, and many more placed a greater emphasis on providing pre-vocational training over providing remediation for its own sake. These programs were much more likely to be in upstream states, to receive smaller allocations, and to serve large numbers of migrant farmworkers. These programs believed that vocational skills training was the primary means of improving farmworkers' lives, and aimed their programs at those who were most interested in vocational training, either in the classroom or through OJTs.

However, other grantees had more of an emphasis on remediation of basic skills without vocational training, believing that improvement in this area alone could often improve clients' employability. Nearly half of the sampled grantees considered GEDs in particular to be crucial to the employability of their clients. Another, an operator of integrated in-house skills training centers, was planning to upgrade their basic skills remediation so that students could also pursue GED preparation in-house. For these programs, the importance of this area of basic skills remediation came from the tendency of employers to require that prospective employees have GEDs. Other programs had recently instituted ESL classes for in-stream migrants, in the belief that better language skills would eventually help them obtain mainstream employment.

In an effort to meet the needs of harder-to-serve individuals and provide quality training, sample programs were struggling with the right balance between basic skills remediation and vocational training. To arrive at a service design that makes sense for its area, each program must make an assessment of the needs of its eligible population, the ability of existing training resources in the community to meet those needs, and the opportunities in the local labor market. Several homebase states, for instance, pointed to the existence of firms where lack of English language skills was not an absolute barrier, due to the presence of Spanish-speaking coworkers and supervisors. However, these opportunities were seldom available in upstream states, where remediating clients' language skills was more important. Some areas already boasted a large number of ESL classes, whereas others had none, and even qualified teachers were in very short supply.

The needs of the eligible population also varied from place to place. Not all states had large numbers of applicants with very low skills, although the migrant stream is increasingly characterized by Hispanics with low levels of literacy. Basic skills instructors agreed that it is much easier to teach someone who has a high school diploma from another country than someone who is virtually illiterate even in his or her own language. Thus, clients with severe basic skills deficiencies may need considerable training before they can consider classroom vocational training. Higher-level participants, on the other hand, may need only limited language training. Often neglected are those who already have a high school diploma or GED, but whose basic skills are deficient. Program operators were understandably reluctant to place a graduate in a class when so many with greater needs were waiting.

For many programs, the population of eligible clients exhibited considerable diversity. For instance, in upstream states, migrant and seasonal populations showed significant variation in terms of English skills, educational attainment, and the like. We found that programs that offered a variety of basic skills training options could better serve these diverse populations. One strategy for responding to diversity was to offer a combination of specialized, short term basic skills training classes specifically designed to prepare clients to enter vocational training programs, as well as programs designed to upgrade language and literacy skills, such as ESL classes.

Description of Available Basic Skills Training

There was considerable variation in the content of basic skills classroom training offered, the nature of the providers, and the intensity and duration of training. These will be discussed in turn below.

Types of Training Available

The great majority of basic skills classroom training offered by the sampled grantees fell into several categories: English as a Second Language (ESL) or a variant, Vocational English as a Second Language (VESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), and General Educational Development (GED) preparation.[1]

ESL seeks to improve the communication skills of students whose first language is not English and whose English speaking, reading, and writing skills are not sufficient to work in an English-speaking environment. It is almost always offered in a classroom environment by specially trained (and often specially certified) instructors. Often, the instructors are native speakers of the same non-English language as the students, though this is by no means necessary. VESL is a variant of ESL that stresses the use of English in vocational, or work, environments. It is often taught as a component of vocational training rather than in a separate class. Fourteen of the 18 sample programs offered some sort of ESL instruction, 10 doing so in-house. Three who offered ESL in-house offered the variant VESL; all three integrated it with vocational skills training in a skills training center.

ABE is basic skills remediation in English language skills and mathematics, usually for individuals whose tested educational attainment lies below the ninth grade. GED preparation is also basic academic training, but in a broader range of areas, and it is intended for individuals who do not have a high school diploma and whose tested

[1]The discussion focuses on services for adults. However, a few programs had coordinated programs for youth with Migrant Education programs. These usually featured remediation and/or GED preparation.

educational attainment lies in the ninth to twelfth grade range. Successful completion of GED preparation often includes taking and passing the GED test and therefore attaining a high school equivalency diploma.[2] Both forms of remediation are almost always offered in a classroom environment by specially trained (and often specially certified) instructors. All eighteen visited programs made ABE and/or GED basic skills training available to their participants, with two-thirds offering some training in-house. All but three of these also referred clients to existing providers when necessary (e.g., participants who lived in remote areas and could not take advantage of in-house programs could attend existing programs near their homes).

Basic Skills Training Providers

As the above discussion indicates, not all of the §402 programs provided basic skills training in-house; five offered it by referral to outside providers only. These five programs did not consider basic skills a high priority and/or did not target basic skills training to particularly hard-to-serve groups. Two were among those programs who considered basic skills important only as a preparation for vocational skills training; a third gave very little emphasis to basic skills training, preferring to concentrate on vocational skills training. One program gave virtually no support for any kind of classroom training. The last was interested in providing their own training, but found that it was too difficult to become a certified provider under its state's rules.

In the remaining 13 programs, some training was offered in-house, and some was available by referral. Sometimes the division was by type (e.g., ESL offered in-house, and ABE/GED by referral) and sometimes by other factors, such as location (e.g., some field offices had in-house instructors and others did not). Even when programs placed a high emphasis on offering in-house training, they might refer a small number of non-typical or highly motivated clients to outside providers. For instance, one operator of

[2] It is important to note that both ABE and GED training can be remediation-orientated. That is, the training can encourage the student to improve their basic skills as a goal in itself, regardless of more long-term goals such as obtaining a high school equivalency or entering a more advanced training program.

an integrated skills training center would refer motivated clients out for additional ESL or ABE remediation, even though they offered this training in-house.

These programs sought to offer their clients in-house basic skills training whose content or structure could not be duplicated in the surrounding community.[3] Site visitors found that in-house programs were considerably more successful in tailoring their training to the special needs of farmworkers -- for instance, by offering classes at several sites or in the evenings. More importantly, as these programs were designed for farmworkers, they were much more likely to offer training in a manner and environment sensitive to farmworkers' unique culture, low educational attainment, and poor academic skills.

Most in-house training consisted of ABE and ESL instruction, although some also offered GED preparation. Programs were generally staffed by credentialed teachers, including those specially trained in adult education; in a few cases, these teachers were funded by the ABE system, and the §402 program was essentially a satellite site for classes. Training tended to be individualized, open entry/open exit, and to use practical examples, such as reading safety instructions or filling out applications.

The best examples of specially tailored basic skills training were ESL classes for in-stream migrant farmworkers. Strategies that programs used included: offering courses during the evenings when farmworkers are not in the fields; offering courses in rural field offices or other locations to make them more accessible; and hiring former farmworkers as instructors and outreach workers, increasing the level of staff sensitivity to the unique barriers faced by migrant farmworkers. Several programs even operated ESL courses directly in migrant farmworker camps, thereby bringing the instruction directly to where the potential students lived. However, given the transient nature of the students, these classes were often of very short duration.

[3] For instance, ESL instruction can be difficult to find or of a very limited scope in many parts of the country, generally because of limited need and scarcity of qualified instructors.

In-house basic skills programs were often able to offer some highly important but neglected skills areas, such as world of work and job search and retention skills, subjects seldom found outside of specialized job training programs. All but two of the in-house programs offered one or more of these unusual elements within their basic skills programs, thus addressing the multiple needs of farmworkers.

Four of these programs took the further step of offering in-house basic skills training that was integrated with vocational skills training. These programs operated their own skills centers where they sought to meet all the classroom training needs of their clients (three of the four very rarely or never referred clients to outside providers for basic skills training).[4] These programs appeared to be the most successful at tailoring their basic skills training to the needs of farmworkers. In addition to sharing the positive qualities identified above with stand-alone in-house basic skills training, integrated programs had the advantage of placing basic skills instruction into highly practical contexts. For instance, ESL was offered in the form of VESL, where vocabulary was oriented towards work environments (e.g., learning the names of tools) and was demonstrably practical (e.g., practice interviews).

The five programs offering no in-house basic skills training and the remaining programs that occasionally referred clients out, generally used two kinds of outside providers: adult education providers offering only basic skills instruction, and vocational schools that also offer basic skills remediation. The former were ABE (or ABE/GED) providers, to which seven programs made client referrals. They were generally operated by local school districts, although some community colleges, community-based organizations, church groups, etc. may also offer such instruction. Since these programs are remediation-oriented, training tends to be highly individualized and open entry/open exit (i.e., use of computerized instruction is common), offered during relatively flexible hours (i.e., night school is often available), and to be practical in nature (e.g., mathematics for personal financial planning).

[4] In cases where clients were referred, they were involved in an OJT or WE component and were seeking GED remediation or ESL during the evening hours.

However, our site visits indicated that while outside ABE/GED providers were generally structured to allow easy access and a high potential for success for low-skill adults, farmworkers who were referred to these providers often did not fare well. Several factors were at work here, including the less intensive nature of the instruction (i.e., often only a few hours a week), and its distant connection to improved employability. Most likely, however, the overall problem was that farmworkers' extreme barriers and their non-typical cultural backgrounds meant that non-tailored programs would not meet their immediate needs. Poor English skills, extremely low levels of literacy, and few or negative experiences with formal educational institutions all contribute to farmworkers' difficulties in pursuing basic skills training, even when it is designed for low skill adults. For example, to mainstream clients, computer-based instruction may well represent an excellent opportunity for self-directed and individualized training; to farmworkers, many of whom have little or no experience with computers, even the very act of interacting with a machine may be profoundly uncomfortable.

The other most common outside referrals for basic skills training were to local vocational technical schools, community colleges, and occasionally, proprietary schools, that offer basic skills remediation concurrently with the vocational training. One-half of the sampled grantees made referrals of this sort. In some states, these schools require a high school diploma or GED for admission. However, the majority will allow admission without one, but they then require a student to obtain a GED before graduation, either allowing concurrent basic skills and vocational training, or occasionally, requiring completion of the GED before embarking on vocational training.[5]

Vocational technical and similar schools see basic skills training as the necessary preparation for vocational training and as such do not concentrate their resources in this

[5] The majority of these schools seek out federal funding, generally in the form of Pell Grants and guaranteed student loans. In order to receive federal aid, the institution must demonstrate that their students have the "ability to benefit" from instruction offered. While interpretations vary, this generally translates to either a rigid entry requirement of a grade equivalent of eight or above or program-based requirements that will bring the student body's average grade equivalency to eighth or higher (e.g., a higher requirement in computer operations than auto mechanics).

area of instruction. Thus they are not primarily remediation-oriented: basic skills training is generally not open entry-open exit, but rather closely tied to the vocational training cycles (e.g., semesters); training is offered at relatively inflexible hours, with classroom time generally restricted to one to three hours per day; and they often approach training in a less then flexible manner, using traditional, academically-oriented curricula and pedagogic methods. Like outside ABE/GED providers, they do not tailor their basic skills training for the peculiar needs of farmworkers. However, these arrangements can work well for some subsets of the farmworker population that are more well prepared, such as dependents who have received considerable schooling in this country but dropped out of high school, adults whose native language literacy is good and who received language instruction elsewhere, or non-Hispanic individuals whose main basic skills need is to attain a high school diploma while receiving job skills training.

Intensity and Duration of Instruction

The intensity and duration of basic skills training offered to farmworker clients varied considerably across programs.[6] Intensive and long-term programs are necessary to remediate the often severe basic skills deficiencies of farmworkers, but their peripatetic lifestyle makes it hard to take advantage of such training. On the other hand, it can be argued that even relatively small amounts of remediation, especially when repeated over time, can make a significant impact on very low skill individuals. Language acquisition in particular can be a lengthy process, especially for those illiterate in their native language (i.e., estimates run up to two years at a rate of five to ten hours per week of instruction). Monolingual migrant farmworkers are unlikely, then, to attain fluency in English as long as they are in-stream. Another issue is that it is difficult for farmworkers, especially heads of household, to forego income while undertaking basic skills instruction; immediate placement or on-the-job training is much more attractive.

[6] What constitutes sufficient intensity and duration for remediation of severe basic skills deficiencies is far from clear. This, of course, is completely aside from client-orientated factors, such as severity of deficiency, difficulties of language acquisition, and problems of transiency. For purposes of comparison, we assume instruction offered at least four hours per day is *intensive*, and at last two months is of *long duration*.

At the programs that depended on outside providers, much of the basic skills training was offered at very limited levels of intensity: at ABE programs, typically two or three hours of instruction, two or three times per week; at voc-tech schools, typically one or two hours a day. For clients with relatively minor basic skills deficiencies, this intensity of classroom time may be sufficient to support gains; for clients pursuing vocational skills training, whether concurrently in the classroom or through an OJT or WE position, it may be all they can manage. However, for most clients, the limited intensity is likely to prevent significant gains in clients' basic skills. Even programs that offset limited intensity with longer duration (i.e., up to six months) engender another problem: clients unable to discern positive progress are likely to abandon programs.

In-house basic skills programs were much more likely to be remediation-oriented (i.e., only a few were designed to be pre-vocational) and by definition were tailored to farmworkers' needs. For these reasons they would seem to be the best approach to providing instruction at levels of intensity and duration sufficient to significantly impact farmworkers' typical basic skills deficiencies. Among the nine sample grantees that offered stand-alone in-house basic skills training, six provided intensive instruction of at least four hours a day. Generally, these programs lasted at least two months, some upwards of six months. Even programs of this intensity and duration remain unlikely to be able to completely remediate the severe deficiencies of many students, such as monolingual and illiterate clients. However, they can bring such students to a survival level for entry-level jobs.

The four grantees who operated in-house integrated skills training centers committed significant resources to basic skills training and typically provided for very fluid scheduling of instruction. One typical arrangement allowed for one to two hours of ABE/ESL instruction per day, depending on need, as well as ABE/VESL instruction integrated with vocational skills training. More advanced clients could also pursue several hours of GED studies after vocational skills training, and evening ESL classes of one to two hours, two to three times per week, were available by referral to outside providers. Basic skills remediation proceeded in pace with vocational skills training, which tended to last four to six months. In fact, the single most important determining

factor in the duration of integrated skills training was the clients' need for basic skills remediation, especially ESL. Thus, clients were presented with the option of pursuing intensive and relatively long-term basic skills training.

In-house basic skills training programs, and especially integrated skills training centers, were better able to provide instruction at a level of intensity and duration sufficient to remediate many farmworkers' basic skills deficiencies. Similarly, the few clients who require relatively little remediation are probably well served by either in-house or outside programs. However, overcoming the typically severe deficiencies of illiterate or monolingual clients remains a daunting task for the majority of programs.

Types of Clients Receiving Basic Skills Training

Programs are not required to report the type of classroom training that clients receive (i.e., basic skills or vocational skills). For this reason many of the sample programs found it difficult, if not impossible, to estimate the proportion of classroom training clients who receive only basic skills instruction, a mixture of basic and vocational skills training, or basic skills training paired with another program component (e.g., work experience, on-the-job training) when that other component is designated as the termination category for reporting purposes. Nevertheless, close examination of program policies and observation of practices in program field offices allowed site visitors to make some estimation of the types of clients who received basic skills training.

Seasonal workers were more likely to receive basic skills training than migrant workers. It is extremely difficult to deliver any kind of employment and training service to in-stream migrant farmworkers, and basic skills instruction was no exception. However, three programs now operate in-house ESL classes specifically designed for in-stream migrants. Two programs stated that they did not offer basic skills training to migrants, one claiming that there were virtually none in the service area, the other requiring clients to settle out before entering the classroom training component. Even settled-out migrants, however, often wanted the security of direct placement or OJT rather than undertaking classroom training, especially if they were heads of household.

Upstream states that worked with families might arrange for other family members such as wives or children to obtain basic skills training instead.

A more common restriction on entry into basic skills classroom training was the requirement that the client be receiving vocational training, either immediately after or concurrently with basic skills training. There was no stand-alone basic skills instruction available at four programs. Three others offered only ESL instruction to non-vocational classroom training students. Another five that did not offer in-house basic skills training made most or all of their referrals to voc-tech schools whose entry requirements prevented many §402 clients from attending. Another three referred at least some clients to institutions with restrictive entry requirements.

Another source of information about who receives basic skills training was data from client files. Site visitors reviewed a total of 107 client files. Of these, 45 individuals received some form of basic skills training. Only four had completed high school,[7] indicating that nearly all participants had at least some level of basic skills deficiency. Surprisingly, while 35 clients were designated as having limited proficiency with English, only 21 of those received ESL instruction,[8] clearly indicating that the ESL needs of limited English speakers are not being well met.

Quality of Training

Based on the quality of training model presented in Chapter I, we examined the clarity of programs' goals and objectives, instructor proficiency, level of individualized instruction, use of practically-oriented curricula, use of vocationally relevant materials and methods, and the overall quality of training.

Members of the study team conducted observations of basic skills classroom training at 13 of the 18 sampled sites. At one of these sites, the visitor was able to

[7] Interestingly, one of these finished high school in Mexico, but did not receive ESL instruction.

[8] Three others received some other form of basic skills training.

observe two different classes; thus, a total of 14 basic skills programs were observed. Site visitors used these observations, curriculum reviews, and interviews with instructors and participants to assess the quality of training offered to clients.

Basic skills training must have clear, measurable **objectives** to be effective. In most cases, this means planning individualized objectives, such as to raise a client's grade level by a certain amount, or to acquire everyday competence in specific language or math skills in which the client was deficient at entry. For instance, many ABE providers use the objective of a tested equivalent of ninth grade. The most commonly encountered example of unspecific objectives was programs that sought to simply ameliorate basic skills deficiencies. Without clear objectives for their basic skills training, clients may easily lose interest and drop out in pursuit of more immediate gains, such as a direct job placement. Site visitors observed that ten of the basic skills training programs had clear objectives. Seven of these programs were tailored in-house programs, and four of the seven were part of integrated in-house skills training centers. The three remaining programs were ABE providers in the community.

Training providers should only enroll participants whose skills and preparation are appropriate for the training activity. In the case of basic skills training, however, clients' deficiencies can vary significantly. As a result, effective adult basic skills training is **individualized** to meet the specific needs of the client. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including through computer-based instruction, individual pacing, small group exercises, one-on-one tutoring, etc. What works best has much to do with the barriers and deficiencies facing the clients. For instance, many Spanish-speaking participants have limited and/or negative experiences with individual pacing and computer instruction. For them, a mixture of small group exercises and one-on-one tutoring is often the best choice. Site visitors found that nine programs offered individualized instruction. Six of these were in-house programs, of which four were integrated skills training centers.

Another effective technique used in basic skills training is the use of **vocationally relevant** teaching materials and methods. As with the importance of clear objectives,

clients' learning experience is enriched and motivation is improved if the practical importance of basic skills instruction is illuminated with on-the-job examples. Of course, for vocationally relevant materials and methods to be used, it must be known what vocation the participants plan to pursue. For this reason, vocationally relevant approaches are most likely to be found in programs that integrate basic skills and vocational training. For instance, the mathematical manipulation of fractions is an important skill for would-be carpenters, welders, and the like. Site visitors encountered only four examples of vocationally-oriented instruction. Three of these were grantees operating in-house skills training centers. The fourth was from an in-house ESL program.

Instructors must be qualified and skilled to provide quality basic skills training. Site visitors collected information about instructors' qualifications and teaching skills. We looked at three distinct areas of qualification: appropriate education, including credentialing; the quantity and quality of previous work experience; and, training and experience related to the needs of adult farmworkers. Examples might include: university degrees and credentials in adult basic education; significant experience teaching the same, especially to hard to serve individuals; and direct exposure to farmworkers and their lifestyle. Classroom observation allowed site visitors to rate the teachers' effectiveness, including whether students were engaged, whether the teacher was sensitive to the special barriers and needs of farmworkers, etc. Programs were then rated on a four point qualitative scale (i.e., excellent, good, fair, poor). Two of the observed programs were judged to have excellent instructors, nine were considered good, one was considered fair, and two were considered poor. Six of the good instructors and one of the excellent instructors were teaching in in-house programs. Two of those rated good were working for outside ABE providers.

Site visitors also observed the overall **quality of training** of the basic skills training programs, based on preliminary conclusions on the above mentioned criteria as well as the observer's holistic evaluation of the programs. Using the same four point rating scale, site visitors found training to be excellent at two sites, good at six sites, and

fair at three sites, and poor at three sites. Both excellent sites and five of the good sites were in-house programs, and three of these were skills training centers.

Overall, in-house programs clearly fared better than referral programs, and skills training centers were clearly the most superior. Among programs to which clients were referred, local ABE providers were also clearly superior over vocational technical schools, community colleges and others.

Summary

While the discussion above indicates that a variety of basic skills training was available in many programs, there were significant gaps. Four programs had no ESL training available, and at the remaining programs, it was not uniformly available at all field offices or for participants who wanted it as a stand-alone service. In-stream migrant workers, whose needs were arguably the highest for this service, were particularly difficult to design services for, although a few programs have made steps in this direction. However, even seasonal workers or those who had settled out could not always obtain ESL instruction from the §402 program. In some areas of the country, §402 programs chose not to offer ESL because classes were available elsewhere in the community, either through SLIAG or the adult education system. In other areas, however, classes were generally unavailable. One barrier to the provision of ESL was the difficulty of finding qualified instructors in some upstream states.

Another gap was the availability of ABE or GED courses tailored to the farmworker population. Programs that offered instruction in-house tailored their instruction, but when participants were referred to programs in the community, they seldom found intensive instruction or bilingual teachers. Since so many farmworkers could benefit from both basic and vocational skills instruction, such tailoring could mean the difference between program completion and dropping out, by reducing the amount of time spent on basic skills. Some participants really needed two kinds of basic skills instruction concurrently -- for instance, a GED preparation class conducted in Spanish,

and ESL. Such packages were difficult to arrange where programs had decided to offer only one kind of instruction.

Offering in-house basic skills training has drawbacks, as well. Programs with small grants and few eligible farmworkers may find that their population is too diffuse to support centralized classes; in these cases, reliance on community classes may be the only alternative. When in-house classes are offered in a few locations, clients may have to travel longer distances in order to take advantage of tailored instruction. Also, some programs may find it difficult to compete with school systems and other existing providers in hiring, since those other systems typically offer higher wages and better benefits. Programs with small grants may face tradeoffs between offering basic skills training and providing tuition to vocational training.

The recent introduction of employability enhancements as a positive termination for adults may well encourage programs to rethink their approach towards basic skills training. Programs are already finding that they can shift their program designs to accommodate their desire to provide more basic skills training without increasing the risk of falling short on their performance goals. A number of programs had been offering stand-alone basic skills training even before the change in the performance standards, illustrating that improving clients' basic skills and obtaining job placements were not incompatible goals.

The best kind of training addresses clients' needs for both basic skills remediation and vocational skills training. Skills centers offering integrated training are one way to meet this goal; however, they are not appropriate for all areas. Other approaches are to offer sequential or concurrent instruction in basic skills; these classes can also be open to those who are not immediately interested in vocational skills training. One program required their OJT participants to attend four weeks of intensive remediation before starting their OJT positions. While this amount of preparation does not guarantee literacy, it provides some level of survival skills for poorly prepared farmworkers in the area of world of work vocabulary. Another state arranged for on-site ESL classes after hours at a motel/restaurant where several farmworkers had been placed in OJT positions,

and other programs arranged for literacy volunteers. These innovative examples show that there are many opportunities for improving clients' basic skills that do not depend on setting up large centralized classes.

VOCATIONAL CLASSROOM TRAINING

While it has the greatest potential to advance the well-being of farmworkers and their families and permit them to "break the cycle," vocational classroom training is also the most difficult and challenging service to provide. The barriers to providing vocational classroom training effectively are many and difficult to overcome, including: low levels of basic skills among the farmworker population; the lack of providers able to supply quality training tailored to farmworkers' needs; the relative high expense of this service compared to either basic skills training or OJT; the higher risk in terms of both cost and placement rate, when compared to OJT as a vocational training option; the difficulty that clients have supporting themselves during lengthy training programs; and the need to provide costly relocation assistance to migrant workers interested in vocational classroom training.

In spite of these barriers to effective provision, vocational classroom training provides the best opportunity for farmworkers to find permanent non-agricultural jobs that will significantly improve their socioeconomic position. It can provide clients with a set of skills that they can always use to find a job even if they are laid off from their initial one. In contrast, clients who are laid off after OJT may find it difficult to find a new job, since the skills that §402 clients learn in OJT positions are often not transferable to a different work setting (see Chapter VII). While basic skills training without vocational training results in enhanced employability, participants can then compete for only the lowest skilled jobs. Increasing only their basic skills gives farmworkers little competitive advantage; as a result, it may be tempting for them to return to farmwork, which is familiar and has established support networks. Effective vocational training in demand occupations, on the other hand, can have long-term benefits.

Description of Available Vocational Classroom Training

Types of Providers

The three ways that programs delivered vocational classroom training were by providing the service "in-house," by referring individuals to existing public and private providers, or by contracting out the training to another provider. Although combinations of these delivery mechanisms are possible, for the most part the sampled programs depended on a single approach. Only one program was contracting for group training during the study period (and this only in one field office), although other programs had previously done so from time to time. The programs usually relied on their own training or made individual referrals.

Only four of the 17[9] sample programs that offered vocational classroom training did so through in-house programs. These four programs operated their own skills centers where both basic and vocational classroom training were provided in an integrated way. The programs had complete control over the training: they designed and operated the facilities, hired the instructors, and determined the length, duration, and curriculum of the training. They chose the occupations in which farmworkers would be trained, and adapted the training to their needs (e.g., by providing bilingual aides and offering open entry/exit scheduling). The provision of in-house vocational classroom training was a viable option mainly for large programs with high concentrations of farmworkers.

The remaining 13 programs provided vocational classroom training by enrolling their clients on an individual basis at training service providers, paying for the tuition and supplies[10]. The programs that used this approach were dependent on the existing

[9]One program provided no vocational classroom training.

[10]In cases where the providers were accredited and clients were eligible, most programs required their clients to apply for Pell grants to help pay for tuition and living expenses. Programs also provided a training stipend.

providers in terms of the types of training available, the curricula, the entry requirements, and the scheduling of classes.

Existing training providers included both public and private schools. Most of the programs found that public providers, such as community colleges and state vocational-technical schools, provided the best quality training, and they used them as much as possible. However, programs were occasionally compelled to use less-reputable proprietary schools, for several reasons. First, entry requirements were often much lower at the private schools, allowing clients with limited basic skills to participate in vocational classroom training; second, in many rural areas where farmworkers were concentrated, proprietary schools were often the only providers available. In addition, since proprietary schools were businesses sensitive to market demands, they were often the only providers to have short-term training with flexible schedules, and provided training in occupations not covered by the public providers.

Among the 13 sample programs that provided vocational classroom training through individual referral, we saw varied use of both public and private providers. Five of the programs did not report using any proprietary schools at all. Seven used public institutions where possible, although they used proprietary schools if there were no public alternatives, or when the flexible and short-term training available at the private providers outweighed the advantages of the public institutions. Only one program used mainly proprietary schools to meet their clients' vocational classroom training needs; this program placed most of its emphasis in basic skills training, with only a few clients receiving vocational classroom training. Of the 12 programs that used public providers for vocational classroom training, five used primarily one system such as the community colleges or state vocational colleges; these systems had campuses throughout the entire state, and programs had established good working relationships with these providers.

Duration of Training

Due to the relatively high costs associated with vocational classroom training, all §402 programs are faced with the dilemma of either providing long-term training for

higher skilled occupations to few clients or enrolling many clients in short-term training for lower skilled occupations. There are advantages and disadvantages associated with each approach.

The key advantage of long-term training is that clients are more likely to learn marketable skills that will allow them to obtain quality jobs. In addition, most long-term training will give students the learning tools and confidence necessary to succeed in future educational and work environments. The disadvantages of long-term training include higher costs, which often causes programs to confine their long-term vocational classroom training to a select group of clients who are more likely to succeed and who have the financial stability to attend school for at least a year. Long-term training is mainly offered by public providers with higher entry requirements, limiting it to those clients with higher levels of basic skills. These providers tend not to tailor their training to meet the needs of the majority of the farmworker population.

Short-term training addresses many of the shortcomings of the long-term approach. First, many more clients can be served due to the lower cost of the training itself and the shorter time during which the §402 program has to provide supportive services. Second, more providers of short-term training enroll clients with significant basic skills deficiencies, and they tend to be more flexible in terms of scheduling. Finally, short-term training tends to be more intensive in nature, and clients need not necessarily be involved in other activities to support themselves as they may have to with longer training. However, the disadvantages are that the occupations for which short-term training is available are more limited, and tend to be of lower skill levels.

The duration of vocational classroom training in the sampled programs ranged from very short term (e.g., three-day asbestos removal training or 12-week cashier training) to very long term (e.g., two-year associate degrees). However, the programs sampled could be divided into three main groups.[11] These were: (1) programs that provided a significant number of clients with vocational classroom training lasting for

[11]There was often variation within programs about the length of training available. These divisions reflect the typical training provided by each.

more than an academic year, (2) programs in which the majority of the clients received vocational classroom training lasting six to nine months (i.e., two quarters or semesters), and (3) programs that provided primarily short-term training of less than 26 weeks.

Seven of the programs in the sample provided a large percentage of their vocational classroom training clients with long-term training of more than an academic year. Contrary to expectation, these programs were not more likely to serve a higher proportion of seasonal farmworkers, indicating that the training duration may be more of a decision about the value of longer term training, rather than being dependent on the type of population. These programs did, however, tend to serve fewer clients than the other two groups, confirming the assumption that there is a tradeoff between the length of training and the number of clients served. In fact, the two programs in this group with the smallest allocations could enroll only one client in vocational classroom training during the last program year. All of these programs were in upstream states.

Three programs fell into the second category, with the bulk of their clients receiving vocational classroom training that lasted between 26 weeks and one academic year. The remaining seven programs had an emphasis on shorter-term vocational classroom training which lasted no longer than 26 weeks, even when combined with basic skills training. All four of those programs that provided in-house vocational classroom training fell into this short-term category.

While these programs emphasized classes of shorter duration, they also tended to have the most intensive training. For example, the four programs that provided in-house vocational classroom training combined with basic skills training had schedules that ran full-time, 35 to 40 hours a week. In addition, most of the short-term training programs at proprietary schools also lasted between six and eight hours a day. In contrast, the longer-term classes, which were mainly at public institutional providers such as community and technical colleges, ranged from three to five hours a day, three to five days a week.

Range of Training Options

The programs as a whole had a full range of training options available. These included training for high skill jobs (e.g., industrial maintenance, machine tooling), occupations requiring medium skills (e.g., auto body and mechanics, clerical and general office skills, welding), and short-term training in semi-skilled occupations (e.g., building maintenance, nursing assistant). However, there was extreme variation among the sampled programs in both the types of training available and in the availability of the training throughout each program's service area.

While nearly all programs provided training in certain occupations, such as nursing assistant, welding, clerical and general office skills, auto mechanics and auto body, and carpentry, some programs focused more on semi-skilled occupation while others concentrated their efforts on medium-skilled training. Only four of the programs had enrolled clients in four-year B.A. programs. One program had placed clients into entrepreneurial training so that they could become self-employed. The vocational classroom training options varied both among the sampled programs and within programs, among their field offices. For example, some of the grantees provided training in a broad occupational range, but only at a few of their field offices.

Of the 17 sample programs providing vocational classroom training, six had a limited range of occupational options for all their clients. Four of these were the in-house programs, which typically provided training in anywhere from two to seven occupations. (One of the program's central office had 14 training options, the largest number available.) For these programs, adding occupational choices entailed considerable upfront investment, including buying equipment, developing curricula, and hiring new teachers; therefore, these programs limited their training to a small number of options that were most in demand in their communities. In the two other programs, options were limited because there were not many providers available in the service areas.

The remaining eleven sampled programs provided a full range of vocational classroom training options to their clients. However, in four of these eleven programs occupational options varied at each of their field offices. For example, in one program the full set of training options was available only at the central office located in the state's largest urban area, while in the more rural offices vocational classroom training options were rather limited. Thus, if clients from rural areas wanted vocational classroom training in a specific occupation, they usually had to relocate to the metropolitan area. Other programs that did not have the full range at all field offices used primarily state vocational institutions that were not evenly distributed geographically. The remaining seven programs could offer a broad range of vocational classroom training options at each of their field offices, because they were located in states with public school systems that were comprehensive in both training options and geographic distribution.

Table VI-1

TRAINING OCCUPATIONS OF CASE FILE CLIENTS

Occupation	No.
Semi-Skilled	
Shipping and Receiving	5
Nursing Assistant	4
Truck Driving	1
Building Maintenance	2
Cosmetology	1
Total	13
Medium Skilled	
Clerical and Office	9
Auto Mechanics	4
Welding	2
Carpentry	1
Auto Body	1
Printing	1
Electronics Assembly	2
Total	20
High Skilled	
Business Administration	2
Electrical Repair	1
B.A. Degree	1
Total	4

Often the range of training potentially available in each service area was much greater than the types of training actually being provided. This was especially true for those programs that networked with large vocational and community colleges. No comprehensive database currently allows us to examine the occupations for which training was actually being provided. However, while on site we conducted random case file reviews of 108 terminees. Of these cases, 41 had been enrolled in vocational classroom training, and training occupations were recorded for 39 of them. The occupations that were the subject of the training are illustrated in the table above. While this sample is not representative, it confirms that the majority of clients in vocational classroom training are being trained for medium and semi-skilled occupations. It is encouraging to note, however, that the largest group is in the medium skilled occupations, which have a higher potential payoff in terms of wages. Also, the presence of a number of clients in the high skilled areas indicates that programs are making individualized decisions about the appropriate training for each client.

Integration of Vocational Classroom Training with Other Training Services

The level of integration of vocational classroom training with other training services, and especially with basic skills training, is crucial for understanding the overall design of vocational classroom training services. This integration occurred primarily with basic skills training in both a concurrent and sequential manner, although some vocational classroom training was followed by an OJT position. Basic skills training is important because many farmworkers are not equipped to undertake vocational classroom training without remediation.

Three groups of programs can be identified with respect to integration with basic skills training. Four programs provided both basic skills training and vocational classroom training through in-house programs in which the two training components were highly integrated. Another group of three programs partially integrated basic skills training and vocational classroom training, either by offering a separate basic skills training program prior to starting vocational classroom training, or by having remedial

education be part of the vocational classroom training program. In these programs, participants with low levels of basic skills often had to spend considerable time, but it was possible to construct a training program that met both their needs.

The remaining ten programs were characterized by the lack of systematic integration between basic and vocational skills components. Participants were usually enrolled in one or the other, but not both. Those with low levels of basic skills usually had no opportunity to obtain vocational classroom training, because the entry requirements of the providers precluded it, and sequential training was rare.

Two programs in the sample had provided vocational classroom training as a preparation for subsequent OJT positions. One of the programs provided customized vocational classroom training for four weeks prior to placing a group of participants into OJT positions at a single employer. The employer paid for the instructor and the program provided clients with the stipend. In another program potential OJT clients were provided with a three-day asbestos removal certification course. The vocational classroom training provider was the employer that would hire some of the participants afterwards in OJT positions. These cases differed from most training programs in that the vocational skills learned in the classroom were not transferable to other jobs.

A handful of the programs followed vocational classroom training with an OJT on an individualized basis. This tended to occur only if participants were unable to be placed after completing their initial classroom training. This illustrates that some employers still find farmworkers' lack of mainstream work experience a barrier, even after they have acquired skills through classroom training.

Tailored and Customized Training

The most innovative vocational classroom training programs are those that are either tailored to the specific background and needs of the clients, or customized to the requirements and specifications of an employer who would be willing to hire the clients after the training is completed. We observed some examples of tailored or customized

training at some sample programs. Examples of tailored programs included one program that contracted with a local vocational college to provide basic carpentry training specifically for §402 clients. The curriculum was designed by the program, with input from a registered contractor, to address the specific backgrounds and needs of the farmworkers. The class had the added advantage that the trainees rehabilitated farmworker housing as part of the training. Another program contracted with a local vocational college to provide organic and horticulture training for their §402 clients to prepare them to work year round in plant nurseries.

In both these cases, programs took advantage of the available service infrastructure to develop training that was better suited to their clients. Other training available through these providers generally required higher level entry skills than farmworkers possessed. However, these classes served a very small percentage of each program's clients. Only the four programs that provided vocational classroom training in-house provided tailored training in a systematic way.

We discovered three instances in which there had been a customized training class. One of them, described above, provided customized training as a preparation for an OJT; this was done on a one-time basis only. The purpose of the training was to provide training specific to the job to lessen the employer's risks in hiring farmworkers. In another program, customized training was provided on a fixed unit cost basis by a company's own competency-based training program in electronics assembly. This company also provided the clients with job search assistance if it did not hire them. The final example was the program that contracted out training for asbestos removal which lasted for three days and led to certification. After the training the company hired the clients on an OJT basis.

Customized training has some of the advantages of tailored classroom training. It can be integrated with basic skills instruction and be offered intensively to reduce the amount of training time needed before participants can be placed on a job. However, as the asbestos removal example illustrates, customized training does not necessarily lead to substantial skill development or quality jobs. Therefore, this kind of training requires

as much scrutiny as that offered by mainstream providers to determine its utility for farmworkers.

Ideally, programs would provide at least some training that is both tailored and customized. In this scenario, clients with similar backgrounds could be effectively taught a set of specific occupational skills needed by an involved employer, who has invested some resources in the training and expects to hire the trainees. Thus, this type of arrangement works best when there is a partnership between the §402 program, the employer, and the service provider. For example, a program would identify a group of clients with similar backgrounds that can be effectively trained for a specific job at a specific employer. The program would then contract out the training to a service provider, possibly at a fixed unit cost. The provider would then design the curriculum with both the program staff and the employer to ensure that the clients will meet the specific job requirements of the employer. Unfortunately, examples of training of this kind were not common in the §402 programs we examined.

Types of Clients Receiving Vocational Training

In contrast to the other training components of the §402 programs, vocational classroom training is the most expensive (i.e., costs usually include tuition, supplies, stipends, and supportive services including relocation assistance and transportation to training sites), and the likelihood of placement into unsubsidized employment after completion is lower than for OJT positions. Given these high cost and risk factors, programs are often quite selective about the clients whom they enroll in vocational classroom training. Issues of basic skills preparation and financial security are often paramount.

The basic skills entry requirements of most vocational classroom training providers tend to be much higher than those that characterize the farmworker population, and especially migrant workers. As described earlier, most of the programs relied on public providers to provide most of their vocational classroom training. The majority of these public providers require a high school degree or a GED, while less than half

(39%) of the clients served by §402 programs were high school graduates. In addition, participants' reading and math skills must be at a high enough level that they can handle the material. The fact that over 30% of §402 clients served are limited English speakers means that a large proportion will be unable to obtain vocational classroom training, since very few of the providers have bilingual services, especially in the upstream states. As a result of these factors, many of the clients are not eligible to participate in vocational classroom training without first undergoing extensive basic skills training.

Vocational classroom training has the added barrier that it is difficult for clients to earn income while they are receiving the service. Even though most programs provide stipends and supportive services to their clients in CRT, these are generally not by themselves sufficient to support clients throughout training. As a result, clients who are more financially stable and have more developed resource networks are more likely to succeed in CRT, especially long-term vocational classroom training. In addition, the upstream states have the added expense of providing relocation assistance to those migrants who are willing to relocate and enroll in training.

Both of these factors suggest a strong motivation for programs to target vocational classroom training to their better educated seasonal clients and to the dependents of farmworkers. In the upstream programs, migrants are more likely to have basic skills barriers such as limited English and higher high school dropout rates than their seasonal counterparts. In addition, seasonal clients are more likely to be financially stable and/or have stronger networks and connections in the community, giving them greater access to resources. Finally, for the homebase states, the dependents of farmworkers tend to have much higher basic skills since they have often grown up bilingually and are more highly educated than their parents.

It was difficult to obtain systematic data on the types of clients who were involved in vocational classroom training, since such data are not a reporting requirement. However, through interviews, case file reviews, and on-site observations, we were able to discern a broad outline of the types of clients that programs enrolled into vocational classroom training, and our findings reinforced the set of presumptions outlined above.

Most programs favored seasonals for vocational classroom training even when a significant number of migrants could be found in their eligible population. For instance, the four programs that provided in-house services indicated that they served primarily seasonal clients, although they did have an eligible migrant population. They argued that their form of training was not suited to migrants since they would have to settle out to participate. A number of upstream programs also had a very large pool of eligible migrant workers, but targeted their vocational classroom training to their seasonal population. In all these cases the seasonal workers tended to be better educated Euro-Americans who either worked on dairy farms, had parents who owned farms, or did farmwork on a part-time and irregular basis, and had experience working in non-agricultural sectors. However, most of the programs were aware of this bias and were beginning to recruit more migrants for vocational classroom training.

Clients recruited into vocational classroom training also had higher levels of basic skills, especially in programs that relied primarily on public service providers that had high entry requirements. Only the four programs with high levels of integration regularly made an effort to recruit clients from all educational and language backgrounds; other programs sometimes had access to one or two training programs in low-skilled occupations (e.g., nurse's aide) that could be attended by those who did not have a high level of basic skills.

Some of the programs targeted their vocational classroom training to youth and the dependents of farmworkers. For example, two of the homebase programs, set in more established farmworker communities, concentrated on youth because staff believed youth were most likely to succeed with vocational classroom training. Youth were both fluent and literate in English, many had either completed or at least attended high school, and they were ready to "break the migrant cycle." Several additional programs stated that they targeted youth for vocational classroom training for similar reasons. One of the programs that was already targeting seasonals for vocational classroom training went further to target the young high school graduates of that eligible population group. Another program indicated that it preferred to have both youth and female seasonals in

vocational classroom training since they were more likely to complete the training, as compared to adult males, who by tradition had to work to support their families.

Quality of Instruction

The quality of training model was described in Chapter I. Here we apply it to the vocational classroom training classes we observed on site. Observations were made in 11 of the 18 programs, and in four sites analysts were able to observe two classes, for a total of 15 observations. Site visitors used these observations, curriculum reviews, and interviews with instructors and participants to assess the quality of training. The criteria that were especially relevant to vocational classroom training are discussed below, including: (1) clear, occupationally relevant objectives, (2) clients well matched to the level of the material being taught, (3) basic skills training well integrated into the class or program curriculum, (4) training responsive to the needs of employers, (5) training for transfer, (6) good balance between theory and practical exercises that are occupationally related, and finally, (7) qualified and responsive instructors.

For vocational classroom training to be effective it must have **clear objectives** that are occupationally relevant. A good example would be a competency-based program where both the curriculum and the instruction are geared to a set of skills necessary for a specific occupation. Of the fifteen observations, nine rated good or excellent in this category, meaning they had concrete objectives for their instruction and for the type of job for which they were training. All the classes in the program-operated skills centers were rated high, offering competency-based training with clear objectives. In three other cases, the classes were part of well structured associate's degree programs at vocational colleges. The best example was an auto mechanics class that was in a competency-based program. Each class had a clear list of competencies to be achieved and the typical number of hours associated with each; students had an unlimited time to master each task. Additionally, the class had realistic expectations for clients in that it was aiming for entry level jobs. Another example was an electronics assembly class in which the goal was "NASA standards," in which work was 97% error free.

Four of the observations rated only fair and two were inadequate. The inadequate classes were at proprietary schools. It appeared that the objective was simply to get the students through their program. In one of these programs, a welding class, students were exposed to various techniques, with no real mastery attained. In addition, we observed no link to any occupational goal, and the final project consisted of building objects of students' choosing which, we were told by the instructor, were mainly barbecues for personal use.

Another criterion, of special importance to farmworkers, is that there should be a good **match between the level of instruction in the class and the abilities of the students**. Without careful assessment and matching to services, farmworkers could be enrolled in programs for which they do not have the educational and basic skills background to keep up in the class. The best examples of good matches are when classes are tailored to a group of farmworkers with similar backgrounds, and it comes as no surprise that five of the six observations that were from the in-house programs rated high in this area. The best example was in an electronics assembly course in which all of the clients were tested by the instructor for both basic skills and vocational aptitude. The instructor then developed remediation in the first quarter of the course to address the specific needs of the students. However, one of the in-house classes was rated poor since the instructor was teaching material that was too advanced for the students. Only four of the programs rated low in this category, and three of those were classes in which §402 clients were mixed with more advanced students in courses that demanded strong academic backgrounds.

As has been discussed previously, vocational classroom training programs for farmworkers work best when there is a high level of **integration of basic skills training and vocational classroom training**. As would be expected, five classes from in-house programs rated highest in terms of integration. However, one of the classes at a vocational school also rated high, since the school had a very strong remediation program for those students who needed it, and the vocational instructor also integrated basic math skills as part of his regular curriculum. Only two of the observations did not have any formal way of dealing with the basic skills deficiencies of their students. The remaining

seven observations had some form of basic skills remediation available in either the class curriculum for basic skills relevant to the occupation, as part of a larger program, or in the school's remediation lab.

To ensure that clients are training for existing jobs in the labor market and that they are learning skills that will make them employable in those markets, the best type of vocational classroom training should **meet the needs of local employers**. The most extreme version of this would be customized training in which one employer or a consortium of employers from the same industry helps to design a course together with the program and/or the provider, to ensure that it will meet their specific needs. However, input from local employers can be obtained in many other ways. In seven of the 15 observations, we saw no evidence that there had been any significant contribution by local employers. Four of the programs had indirect involvement, such as updating the curriculum based on local firm activities, or the donation of equipment by local firms. Three of the classes had more direct input consisting mainly of consulting with local employers and professionals for the design of the class. Several of the in-house programs established employer boards to ensure that the course content met industry needs. Additional direct input from employers occurred when one instructor went to observe operations and entry tests at local employers, to understand changes in their procedures so that the class instruction could be adapted.

Training for transfer occurs when students are taught how and when to apply a set of skills to a variety of work contexts and environments. If they have been taught in this manner they are not only more employable in their specific occupation, but will have a better chance to find jobs in the industry as a whole or even related industries. Eleven of the observed classes did not train for transfer at all, or did so poorly. An example of poor transferability we encountered was a micro-computer class in which the students were taught how to use a specific program but not under what circumstances it might be useful. Only four of the classes emphasized training for transfer, in that problem-solving was stressed in a variety of environments. One of the classes was set up like a work environment which had equipment donated from a variety of firms, and

as a result, students were exposed to different settings. In another example, building trades students went out and did actual renovation work on different homes.

In an effective vocational training program, there must be a good **balance between theory and hands-on, practical experience**. Most of the classes rated high on this criterion, illustrating the general trend of providing both classroom instruction and "lab" work, often in simulated work environments. For instance, two of the classes, one in electronic repair and the other in electronic assembly, had equipment donated by local firms so that students could practice on the actual equipment that they would encounter in the work environments. In another class in building trades, apart from the solid theory and occupational skills learned in the classroom, students went out and worked on existing houses in the surrounding community. While internships are a good way to incorporate practical experience into a vocational class, only two of the observations, both nursing aide classes, had one week internships following the regular classroom instructional period. In four of the programs, students indicated that the emphasis on theory was too high. For example, in a drafting and blueprint class, students complained that only 10% of class time was available for them to work on individual exercises.

Finally, the caliber of the **instructor** has a profound influence on the quality of training offered to clients. The class can be expertly designed with input of local employers. It can have the best equipment and facilities, yet with instructors who either lack knowledge and experience, or who fail to communicate to their students, the class will fail. Most of the classes we observed had instructors who were experienced, both as teachers and in the industry, were sensitive to the needs of the class and the individual students, and communicated the material well. In only two cases were the instructors judged not responsive to the needs of their students. In three cases the teachers were judged to be excellent. In one case, the teacher had 24 years experience in the field, 12 of those in teaching, yet her greatest strength was that she interviewed and tested each of the clients personally to ascertain their levels of English, basic skills, and vocational aptitude, and she personally inspected and critiqued all of their work. Additionally, she had an excellent rapport with the students. In another case, the instructor was an ex-farmworker and §402 client, and apart from being respected in the

field, he was bilingual and very sensitive to the needs of the farmworkers in his class. In the last case, the instructor for automotive repairs was an internationally known consultant for curriculum design in the field.

Summary

The overall picture that emerged from the sampled programs is of the difficulty of providing vocational classroom training to the farmworker population. While the quality of the observed vocational classroom training appeared to be quite high, training was not available and accessible to many §402 participants. Only four programs that provided training in-house had vocational classroom training that was accessible to farmworkers with a broad range of basic skills preparation. Elsewhere, participants without a GED or high school diploma had a very low likelihood of receiving formal vocational training, due to the high entry requirements of existing providers. A few of these programs offered the opportunity for sequential or concurrent basic skills and vocational skills training, but this still left more than half of the sampled programs where vocational classroom training was largely inaccessible.

Even for those who could meet entry requirements, the availability of types of vocational classroom training also varied. For instance, within service areas, rural areas were less well served than urban areas, and in-house programs, while very accessible to those with poor basic skills, offered training in only a limited number of occupational areas.

In the face of farmworkers' low basic skills, tendency to reside in rural areas, and precarious financial situations, programs made understandable decisions to concentrate their efforts in a few geographical or occupational areas, and to target the best-prepared farmworkers for this type of training. While these decisions offered ways to efficiently use resources for those who could benefit most, programs sometimes went so far that they severely constrained choices for most farmworkers. For instance, programs that served many well-educated, literate seasonal workers with expensive vocational classroom training thereby limited the funds available for basic skills instruction for the

much larger group of migrant farmworkers with limited English. Programs that offered vocational classroom training only in urban areas left large numbers of rural participants with the difficult choice of relocating or forgoing training. When programs offered no assistance with settling-out, migrants were very unlikely to see vocational classroom training as an option.

A greater emphasis should be placed on increasing the availability of vocational classroom training when making planning decisions. Only a few programs had approached service providers to try to influence the kinds of training provided. While many public providers are not amenable to influence due to constraints from state-determined systems, others are locally-controlled or have some amount of flexibility. Also, proprietary schools have an interest in expanding to underserved markets, and with careful oversight could be a source of tailored training in some areas.

The need of farmworkers for both basic and vocational skills training is an issue that cuts across both major sections of this chapter. Therefore, we turn to a discussion of classroom training as a whole, in order to examine the ways that the sampled programs addressed both these needs.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VOCATIONAL AND BASIC SKILLS CLASSROOM TRAINING

The discussions above have identified two program design variables that are important when thinking about programs' overall service design for CRT. These variables include: (1) the **tailoring** of basic skills training and vocational classroom training classes to the specific needs of farmworkers; and (2) the **integration** of basic skills training and vocational classroom training in the training packages and curricula available to farmworkers. Table VI-2 depicts the distribution of the sample programs with respect to integration and tailoring.

Table VI-2

FORMAT OF CLASSROOM TRAINING IN THE SAMPLE PROGRAMS

	BST & VCRT Tailored	BST Tailored, VCRT not Tailored	Neither BST nor VCRT Tailored	Row Totals
Fully Integrated	4	–	–	4
Partially Integrated	–	2	1	3
Not Integrated	–	7	4	11
Column Totals	4	9	5	18

Tailoring classes to the farmworker population is a particularly important factor in the provision of quality classroom training. Key features of tailoring included: instructors who were bilingual and/or familiar with the cultural experiences of farmworkers, class schedules compressed into short time periods in response to farmworkers' urgent need to begin full-time jobs, and curricula matched to farmworkers' skill levels. Most tailored classes were provided in-house. However, at least two of the sample programs contracted with outside providers for classes tailored to their clients.

Table VI-2 shows how tailoring of classroom training varied among the sample programs. Four programs provided both basic skills training and vocational classroom training that were highly tailored; these classes were almost always provided in-house. Nine programs offered no tailored vocational classes but did offer tailored basic skills classes, usually in-house but occasionally by outside providers with special programs for farmworkers. Finally, five programs offered no tailored classes; their clients were enrolled in basic skills and vocational classes that were designed for more general populations.

Integration of basic skills and vocational skills training also is a factor in the provision of quality training. There are two dimensions of integration. One is the

integration of training packages: whether clients were given the opportunity to pursue both basic skills training and vocational classroom training, either concurrently or consecutively, rather than being tracked into one or the other. Another dimension of integration has to do with actual curriculum content. An integrated ESL class, for example might use exercises based on vocabulary and situations specific to occupations for which students were being trained. Classes integrated on this dimension usually involved concurrent basic skills and vocational training.

Table VI-2 presents three groupings of the sample programs with respect to integration. Four programs were highly integrated both with respect to service packaging and with respect to curriculum content. Two programs were partially integrated: clients were given the opportunity to pursue both basic skills and vocational training, usually consecutively, but with little or no curriculum integration. In seven programs, clients were almost always tracked into either basic skills training or vocational classroom training, with little or no opportunity to combine the two.

As the table shows, tailoring and integration were correlated. This may be because integration is in itself a kind of tailoring -- that is, a response to farmworkers' special needs. Four programs offered basic skills training and vocational classroom training that were highly integrated, with respect to both service packaging and curriculum content, and also tailored to farmworkers. These four programs all operated their own skills centers, based on a model developed by the Center for Employment and Training (CET). At the other extreme, four programs tailored neither basic skills training nor vocational classroom training, and did not integrate the two. These programs relied almost entirely on established classes of outside providers. The remaining ten programs offered classroom training that was partially integrated and/or partially tailored. The majority of these programs provided tailored, in-house basic skills training, but used outside providers for vocational classroom training and offered little or no opportunity to combine basic skills training and vocational classroom training.

These varying approaches to the design and delivery of classroom training are described in more detail below.

Tailored and Integrated Basic and Vocational Training

Four of the programs provided the majority of their services through their own skills training centers, under a model originally developed by the Center for Employment and Training (CET). Although these centers were developed to serve mainly §402 participants, other students attended as well.[12] They featured training in a limited set of vocational training areas that could be mastered within three to six months of intensive study and in which entry-level jobs were available in the surrounding communities. In addition, the centers offered basic skills instruction -- including both ESL and ABE (and often, GED preparation classes as well). Basic skills instruction was offered every day, in both separate classes and integrated into the vocational training. Students who needed more basic skills could attend more of those classes, and one program had responded to the increasing needs of clients by instituting a month of up-front ESL. Instruction was mainly open-entry/open exit and competency-based. Instructors and/or aides were bilingual.

In-house integrated skills training centers had several advantages. The most significant advantage is that they were able to provide both basic and vocational training to participants with very low levels of educational experience and literacy, including monolingual Spanish speakers. Compared to many other providers, which required high school diplomas or a GED, entry requirements at these skills centers were minor or non-existent, since basic skills deficiencies were addressed as part of the training. Another advantage was the intensity of the training. In contrast to typical vocational-technical schools or community colleges, where classes are held a few times a week and training programs typically last a year or two, the skills centers offered classes for seven or eight hours daily, so that training time could be compressed into a fairly short time period (usually around 26 weeks). A final advantage was that the training has been tailored for clients with similar backgrounds. World-of-work knowledge could be addressed through

[12] Clients are referred by local JTPA providers, vocational rehabilitation and refugee resettlement agencies, etc.; in addition, there are some private tuition-paying students.

the structure of the programs -- for instance, by having students clock in and out and take breaks only at prescribed times.

The main limitation of this approach to training was that there were only a limited number of vocational areas available, all but a few in semi-skilled occupations. Therefore, participants who preferred training in something other than auto mechanics, food service, warehousing, or similar areas were unable to obtain training. Also, since the training was available for §402 clients only in a limited number of skills centers, the program had to provide considerable transportation or relocation assistance in order to serve all of the eligible population. A further limitation was the brief time available for basic skills training. While basic auto mechanics can be learned in six months, it is difficult to reach facility with the English language in that time, especially if the participant had few skills at entry. As a result, some graduates of the programs had sufficient vocational skills -- but insufficient language skills -- to obtain jobs in firms without bilingual staff. However, the fact that six months of language training was insufficient was mostly a reflection of the extremely low language level of many participants at entry.

Operating in-house skills training centers is one way for programs to avoid the high entry requirements of outside providers. However, they are not appropriate for all programs. Because they require considerable up-front investment and are difficult to downsize, they are only suitable when a program can be assured of a continuing concentration of participants in a fairly small geographic area. Not surprisingly, these centers were developed in a homebase state. Even there, they are located in urban or semi-urban areas, and participants from outlying rural areas must relocate in order to take advantage of the training. In addition, for a program to be able to operate such centers, they have to have relatively large training budgets. This either means that they have a large §402 allocation, or that they can complement those funds with other training grants such as Title IIA funding.

Partially Integrated Programs

Three of the sample programs offered a limited degree of integration between basic skills training and vocational classroom training. These programs offered clients the opportunity to combine basic skills training and vocational classroom training, either consecutively or concurrently. Two of the programs offered in-house, tailored basic skills training, with vocational classroom training delivered by outside providers. The third referred participants to a single outside provider of non-tailored classes for both basic skills training and vocational classroom training, but since the one provider was responsible for all classes, this permitted some integration.

The consecutive approach allowed clients to prepare for vocational classroom training programs that had strict entry requirements, usually a high school diploma or GED, or certain reading and math levels. In one of the programs, clients who were interested in vocational classroom training were given a basic skills test regardless of whether they had a high school diploma or a GED. If they scored below a fifth grade level they were required to participate in a 12-month training program before enrolling in a vocational classroom program, where they could receive further remediation. In the second program, the majority of the clients who were in vocational classroom training usually had attended the in-house classes that allowed them to obtain both ESL and ABE training if needed.

The concurrent approach was used by the third program. Clients who enrolled in the state's vocational colleges were assessed by the provider and given remedial tutoring on the basis of that assessment. This vocational system had more flexibility in entry requirements and gave more attention to students' remediation needs than many other outside providers available to §402 programs.

From the participant's point of view, there were several important distinctions between the approach of these three programs and the CET model. Not all clients had the opportunity to receive both basic skills training and vocational classroom training; it was dependent on such factors as whether the program had a field office providing in-

house basic skills training, if local providers offered both training options, or if a vocational classroom training provider also had a basic skills program. In the case of the concurrent approach, the basic skills training was linked to the requirements of the provider and not necessarily aimed at the employability of the client, as was the case of the fully integrated model. Finally, the partially integrated services were not necessarily tailored to the particular needs of §402 clients.

Non-Integrated Programs with Tailored Basic Skills Training

Seven programs chose to focus their in-house efforts on basic skills training, believing that this was the type of training for which farmworkers had the greatest need and were least likely to find elsewhere in an appropriate form. Although they did not offer clients the opportunity for integrated basic skills training and vocational classroom training or for tailored vocational classroom training, they did provide clients having the most severe basic skills deficiencies with a significant leg up in the job market. Most of the recipients of basic skills training were not able to bring their skills up to the levels required by local vocational classroom training providers, or could not spend the time in a long sequential program of basic skills training and vocational classroom training. Participants with an interest only in vocational classroom training were simply referred to outside providers if they were capable of meeting the entry requirements.

No Integration, No Tailoring

Four programs used only outside providers that neither tailored their programs to farmworkers nor offered integrated training. In these programs, clients were generally either referred to GED preparation classes or to vocational classroom training. Two of the programs placed a high emphasis on CRT and were pleased with the quality of the existing providers, and two placed a very high emphasis on OJT, and only occasionally referred participants to CRT providers. In three of the four states, there were few or no opportunities for participants with low levels of basic skills to address these deficiencies. Therefore, these programs served a largely job-ready population.

Summary

When designing CRT offerings, programs should consider both the tailoring and integration dimensions. Most programs will be unable to achieve both at once, because the CET model is appropriate under a fairly limited range of circumstances. However, some degree of either tailoring or integration can be achieved in most programs. Setting up tailored basic skills training does not have high start-up costs, and since this kind of training works best with a low student-teacher ratio, it does not require large concentrations of farmworkers. Providing for consecutive basic skills training and vocational classroom training requires a willingness to provide intensive basic skills training and generous supportive services. Concurrent training is more difficult, because many vocational classroom training providers require a certain level of preparation prior to entry. Tailoring vocational classroom training can be achieved through working with existing systems to provide specially-designed classes, and/or by working with local employers to develop customized training. In order to develop a quality classroom training program, §402 grantees must consider the needs of their eligible populations, the capabilities and flexibility of the available service providers, and the local labor market.

VII. ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

OJT is an alternative to vocational classroom training that offers the advantage of providing immediate income to participants. Occupational training at the worksite is also clearly job relevant, using an active -- learning-by-doing -- approach. Further, participants immediately apply their newly learned skills to the job. Thus, OJT has the potential to be an effective tool for both learning and employment.

But OJT has potential pitfalls that programs serving farmworkers should attempt to avoid. The study "Improving the Quality of Training in JTPA," conducted by BPA and SRI (Kogan, Dickinson, Means, and Strong, 1991), pointed out several strategies to improve the quality of OJT. First, the match of participants to employers must be carefully conducted so that participants receive training in new skills. Second, quality instruction should be provided. Third, the skills that employers provide should be transferable to other occupational contexts. Finally, OJT should provide participants with access to jobs that they would not have gotten otherwise.

The recent JTPA amendments and DOL issuances underscore the caveats of relying on OJT and further suggest: (1) that OJT is intended for the highest skill occupations for which participants are eligible; (2) that reverse referrals are acceptable only if participants' assessments indicate OJT is appropriate and participants are enrolled in JTPA before receiving training; (3) that referrals to participants' former employers are not acceptable; (4) that programs should review OJTs to ensure that JTPA funds are supporting "extraordinary training costs;" (5) that programs should not contract with employers who fail to provide long-term employment or provide low wages and few benefits; and (6) that the duration of OJTs shall not exceed 6 months or 500 hours.

In this section, we describe how programs delivered OJT services, evaluate the quality of training provided through OJT, and identify factors that enhanced OJT quality.

Our analysis is based on information that was collected during this project in two rounds of site visits. During the first round, we discussed with program staff how they developed OJT contracts and administered their OJT programs. During the second round of visits, we held extensive discussions with OJT employers and participants, focusing our efforts on programs that provided substantial enrollments in OJT. We observed the training and working activities of ongoing OJT participants, and reviewed their OJT contracts, EDPs and other assessments to gauge the fit of the participant-employer match, and the quality of training provided. We also reviewed case files of OJT participants who recently terminated from the program. As a result, we obtained detailed information in 56 cases of past and on-going OJT positions across 16 programs.[1]

DELIVERY OF OJT SERVICES

The sample programs varied considerably in the extent to which they used OJT in PY 91. At the one extreme, fewer than 20% of employment and training terminees received OJT in six programs. Administrators in most of these §402 programs believed that OJT was appropriate for farmworkers only in a limited context, although their precise reasons for avoiding OJT differed somewhat. One program with its own in-house training did not provide OJT at all; it had a small §402 allocation and considered the cost of OJT to be too high. Another program limited its use of OJT because the cost of OJT was considered substantially higher than the cost of training through publicly-funded programs and community colleges. Two other programs felt that OJT should be used only for the very hardest to place participants; farmworkers in these programs received OJT only after they had successfully completed their occupational and basic skills courses. Finally, program staff in the other two programs also used OJT sparingly, because they believed that OJTs were ineffective and without considerable oversight would simply subsidize local employers.

[1]The two programs for which we did not obtain OJT case file information include one that did not provide OJT and another that provided very few OJTs.

At the other extreme, four programs were high users, providing OJT for 40% or more of program terminees. In between these extremes eight programs used a moderate amount of OJT (20% to less than 40% of PY 91 terminees). Among the high users, one program placed over 70% of participants in OJT during PY 91. Two programs provided much OJT through group contracts for training at several large manufacturing companies. Another program subcontracted its MSFW program to various regional agencies, some of which relied heavily on OJT for other employment and training programs that they administered.

In some instances, programs relied more on OJT than other types of training because classroom training in vocational or remedial skills was limited or too distant from program field offices for participants to reach. For example, one program's emphasis on short-term training led it to use OJT in field offices where there were few inexpensive providers of short-term classroom training, making OJT an economical alternative. Other program policies also influenced the extent to which programs relied on OJT. For example, some programs, especially in regions serving migrant farmworkers, felt that OJT was an appropriate way to entice farmworkers from the fields and into more stable year-round employment. Other programs or program field offices had built-up long-term relationships with employers and readily used them for OJT whenever they learned of an opening.

Shifting Trends in the Use of OJT

During our study, we observed a marked shift in the degree to which some programs relied on OJT. Two programs increased their use of OJT from PY 90 to PY 91. Both were generally enthusiastic about OJTs and felt they provided cost-effective training for farmworkers. Even so, staff at one program were considering whether or not to cut back on OJT in light of recent changes in performance standards.

More common, however, were programs that increased their enrollments in CRT, concomitantly reducing their reliance on OJT. Indeed, the role of OJT relative to classroom training reversed dramatically between PY 90 and PY 91 in three programs

that had traditionally relied on OJT for a substantial portion of training. During PY 90, these programs provided over half of their training enrollments in OJT; by PY 91, however, most training participants were planned to be in classroom training. Several other programs experienced more modest increases in the proportion of terminees from classroom training relative to OJT. For example, two programs providing high numbers of terminees in OJT began to gradually terminate more farmworkers from classroom training, although during PY 91 they still terminated nearly 50% or more of their participants from OJT.

Programs that altered the training design to include more classroom training explicitly mentioned that changes in the performance standards, especially the elimination of the cost standard, provided much of the impetus to increase enrollment in classroom training and in turn reduce OJT enrollments. However, several other factors also were mentioned. Staff at several programs said that the advent of employability enhancements influenced their decision to provide more long-term training. Prior to the change, staff at these programs expressed a concern about having to terminate a participant negatively after expending significant program resources. OJTs were one way of providing the hardest to serve with experience that would likely lead to a successful placement and a positive termination. Hence, OJTs in some instances were viewed as a safety net for the program as well as the participant. The enhancements now offer this safety net for those who are difficult to place even after they have received extensive training services. Thus, programs are more likely to consider alternatives to OJT that may better meet participants' needs.

An additional factor that influenced the shift away from OJT was a general perception that OJT was in disfavor in the JTPA system. Staff at some programs cited recent studies that were critical of OJT and called for more active roles of administrative entities when conducting OJT and better matches between participants and employers. In fact, several program administrators eyeing previous attempts to amend JTPA legislation were concerned that OJT would not be an allowable training activity. In response to these perceptions, some programs also revised their training designs to

include higher expectations or greater restrictions or both for their OJT arrangements to emphasize skill attainment and meet client needs.

Finally, programs attributed the decline in the number of OJT enrollments not so much to an explicit shift in program policy, but rather to poor local economic conditions. Because of the recession, program administrators surmised, farmworkers with marginal skills had to compete with skilled displaced workers for the quality jobs. Thus, farmworkers were put at a significant disadvantage in the resulting employer's market. In short, because they could find skilled labor willing to work cheaply, employers were less willing to develop OJT contracts.

Program Goals and Expectations for OJT

Programs typically expected their OJT participants to be retained in jobs that offered stable, year-round employment. Most programs also generally stated that they wanted OJT participants to receive the highest wages that they were capable of earning and some benefits. Only five programs, however, established any wage goals: two established $5/hour as a minimum requirement; another had a goal of $6/hour, but would write OJT agreements for as low a wage as $5.80/hour; and two others had goals of $5/hour, but OJT wages at the Federal minimum wage level were acceptable. The wage floor used by the remaining programs was at or slightly above minimum. Even here, however, programs -- under extenuating circumstances -- approved OJTs below the wage goal if, for instance, other benefits such as medical insurance seemed to compensate for the low wages. We discuss the relationship between the wages and benefits we observed and the quality of OJT in further detail below.

More elaborate OJT goals that went beyond wages and stability were established by only a few programs. Four included criteria that emphasized training requirements, including strong training designs appropriate for farmworkers as well as stipulations that training should lead to transferable skills, the employer should have the facilities to provide adequate training, and the employer should have a good reputation.

EMPLOYER SELECTION AND COMPENSATION FOR TRAINING

As part of our investigation of OJT practices, we examined how employers were selected to participate and how they were compensated. We found that in some instances, programs were very deliberate in their recruitment of an employer; they carefully assessed the employer's ability to provide training needed or desired by an individual participant. In some instances, programs also evaluated recent layoffs at the company to ensure that none were occurring that would jeopardize the §402 participant's job security.

In other cases, the selection of employers was less deliberate, often because the employer had worked with the §402 program repeatedly in the past and was already known to program staff. For example, one construction firm had provided over 250 OJT positions in the last 10 years; another company trained over 100 of its employees through OJT. Two programs also developed group OJT contracts with selected companies.

During our discussions with program staff and employers, we also asked about guidelines governing the reimbursement of employers and the extent to which reimbursements were used to cover the cost of training beyond what employers would normally provide. In most instances, employers and programs viewed OJT payments as a way of compensating employers for the "extraordinary cost of training," generally for §402 participants who lacked English proficiency, had few non-agricultural working skills, or lacked other basic skills needed for the job. For example, a learning disabled seasonal farmworker received an OJT at a foundry where he was paid $6.35 at follow-up and received medical benefits and vacation.

Consistent with the intent to pay for extraordinary training costs, two programs established a policy of variable reimbursement rates for OJT contracts, reimbursing wages at different rates depending on the training being provided and the job readiness of the participant. Higher rates (up to 50%) might go to employers providing training of greater detail or agreeing to train a participant who was viewed as especially hard to serve. Conversely, a lower reimbursement rate of 25% to 30% would be used if the

participant was more nearly job ready and already possessed some of the skills required by the employer, because the employer would not be taking as great a risk.

All remaining programs provided a flat 50% reimbursement of participants' wages during OJT, regardless of the training being provided or the participants' skills at intake. Nonetheless, they typically varied the duration of the OJT contract, ostensibly to reflect the amount of training being provided. The duration of OJT was limited by nearly all of the programs to less than 26 weeks, either through explicit policy or tacit practice. The median duration of training that we observed was 8 weeks. The shortest training was 3 weeks for a plastics assembly position. The longest duration was for 16 weeks, which included seven cases covering a wide range of positions, such as railroad track repair crew, a clerical worker, and machine operators. Of 55 OJTs, one was of short duration (less than 4 weeks), 44 were of medium duration (from 4 to 12 weeks), and 10 were of long duration (over 12 weeks).

In general, programs felt that restricting the duration of training to 26 weeks did not pose a problem for developing appropriate OJTs. One program that had been developing OJTs of medium duration during PY 90 and in PY 91 increased the duration of OJT to 20 weeks. Program staff wanted to write longer OJT contracts because they felt job requirements in their area were becoming "increasingly technical," as high tech companies moved into the region. Staff at this program said the changes in performance standards (the elimination of the cost standard) encouraged them to increase the duration of OJT.

In determining the duration of OJT, programs typically used publications based on the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT) as a starting point for negotiations with employers. One common complaint of program staff was that such publications often overestimated training times for the participants they served. Thus, additional information from employers about work requirements was sought by most program staff to substantiate the training needed. Some programs also used clients' background information, such as their working experience and skills, to fine tune the duration of

OJT. In general, these combined measures promoted training durations that were appropriate for the skills imparted and participants' needs.

Despite program efforts to tailor the length of the reimbursement period or modify the percent of training costs reimbursed, in our assessment about a third of the 56 cases reviewed could not be viewed as representing payment for extraordinary training costs. For example, in 12 cases, employers said they would have hired the participants without the OJT reimbursement. These participants had few or no barriers to employment and usually already possessed the skills they were supposed to be learning. Moreover, three OJT positions were reverse referrals, and two other OJT positions were developed with participants' former employers. Although EDPs and staff discussions highlighted the new skills these participants would be learning, we found that participants had previously acquired most of the skills listed.

In two instances we found that the money provided by OJTs played a crucial role for small companies. One rural agricultural supply store viewed OJT as a way of getting "two workers for the price of one." The employer would never have hired two clerks were it not for the OJT reimbursement. Another small agricultural start-up company acquired most of its employees through OJT as a cost effective way of hiring and training; his margin of profit was very narrow and the OJT positions were seen as a way of lowering outlays for the cost of labor.

In these cases it was clear that employers viewed OJTs as a subsidy and not as payment for the additional training they would need to provide. These practices undermined DOL's goal of reimbursing employers for the extraordinary costs of training.

Program Monitoring of OJT

Few programs established explicit procedures for evaluating OJTs at specific intervals. However, one program developed a thorough and systematic monitoring plan for OJTs. Program staff visited or telephoned the work site to discuss participants'

progress once each week during the first month of the contract. Afterwards, staff monitored participants' progress every other week for the duration of the OJT.

Four other programs attempted to conduct monitoring discussions with OJT participants or employers or both after 30 days and, in one program, also after 90 days. Typically they attempted to check on the progress of the OJT participant and employer through on-site visits or telephone discussions to see that the arrangement was working out, resolving any problems as they developed. Sometimes, however, the goal of monitoring each OJT contract once every 30 days was not achieved. In rural locations where program staff covered large areas, monitoring visits were frequently delayed and occurred less often, and much of the monitoring was through telephone discussions.

PARTICIPANTS TARGETED TO RECEIVE OJT

Program staff often felt that OJT was the only feasible training option in some circumstances, regardless of the participant's training needs. For example, many participants could not afford to attend classroom training and wanted or needed to earn money immediately. In other cases, programs felt that available classroom training was too far away to be feasible for the participant to attend.

In most programs, however, OJT was targeted specifically for participants at certain skill levels. For example, programs often emphasized OJT for participants with multiple barriers, including dropouts, those with weak basic skills, those who were not proficient in English, and long-term agricultural workers with few transferable skills. Program staff often reasoned that these hard-to-serve participants would have to undergo long-term classroom training to overcome their barriers -- much too long for many to endure in light of their family or other obligations.

In contrast to this approach of targeting, three programs determined that OJT should be used for those who were nearly job ready; that is, those who had some non-agricultural work experience, had appropriate world of work skills, and were proficient in English. Each of these programs had their own in-house programs to meet

participants' vocational or world of work training needs. Staff in these programs believed that without being prepared, the OJT offered little for either the participant or employer.

Our review of OJT found that, in practice, programs were generally serving participants with extensive needs, including programs that reserved OJT for the more job ready. Of the 53 OJT cases we reviewed, 40 included participants with multiple barriers. Many of these participants (26) were extremely hard to serve, having at least three barriers to employment, including basic skills deficiencies.

In 13 of the OJT cases we reviewed, however, participants had no substantial barriers to employment. Many of these participants had no barrier at all, or, when a barrier was indicated, it typically was "long-term agricultural worker." Other client information made it clear that these participants were among the easiest to serve. Participants with few barriers to employment were most likely to be youth and seasonal farmworkers. Some were younger farmworkers who qualified for the program as "seasonal farmworkers" by virtue of working summers on their parents' or neighbors' farms and who often were still living with their parents.

QUALITY OF ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

Criteria for Quality OJT

Based on our previous work on the quality of training in JTPA, we have modified criteria to address specific issues that arise when serving farmworkers. Generally the indicators of quality are the same. However, because of the multiple barriers to employment that farmworkers often face, careful attention must be paid to participants' barriers and the need to promote a good match between participants and employers. We assessed the quality of OJT using six criteria:

- The general quality of the match of OJT participants to employers. Since the OJT position is expected to continue, participants should be placed in jobs that

match their interests and abilities, and in a working environment that promotes long-term employment.

- Job stability. The seasonal nature of the agricultural work they perform often leaves them in a constant scramble to find work during the growing and harvest seasons. Many often experience cyclical unemployment during the months when fields lie fallow. The importance of job stability was addressed by nearly all programs in their goals for OJT.

- Match to participants' financial needs. Most seasonal farmworkers have worked for intermittent periods at low wage jobs providing few benefits. Some farmworkers also rely on public assistance during periods of unemployment. Therefore, OJTs should provide wages and benefits that promote self sufficiency and encourage long-term employment.

- Job skills. OJT should provide participants with needed skills that are transferable.

- The extent to which OJT alone or combined with other training addresses participants' barriers to employment. Because farmworkers frequently have serious multiple barriers to employment, including basic skills deficiencies and lack of proficiency in English, OJT should provide or link participants to additional training to remove these barriers. Without doing so, participants remain vulnerable to further layoffs and may not be able to take advantage of higher paying jobs with benefits.

- The duration of the OJT. The duration of OJT should be sufficient to enable participants to learn new skills.

Below we assess the sample of current and completed OJT contracts. We begin by assessing OJTs using the six criteria discussed above. We then summarize the overall

appropriateness of OJTs. Throughout, we examine the extent to which the quality of training is related to program practices, participant characteristics, or local conditions.

General Quality of the Match

The general match of participants to jobs was good throughout most of the OJTs. Participants were provided with jobs in occupations that appealed to them and in a working environment they felt was appropriate and expected. An example of a good match of participant to occupation was a seasonal farmworker with no shop experience who wanted a job repairing machinery; he was given an OJT in the service department of a farm implement dealer learning to repair small engines.

The problems that we did encounter with the general match of participants to employers were for the most part isolated. Three participants were provided with OJTs in occupations they did not want. For example, one had received training in clerical skills and was given an OJT in food service; she quit the job before completing her training. Another OJT involved a seasonal farmworker who wanted to leave the fields and instead received an agricultural upgrade as a general farmworker. Another seasonal farmworker, whose wife was expecting a child, needed a stable job; although staff knew that he had limited transportation, he was given an OJT with a firm that required extensive long-distance traveling. He quit his job before completing the OJT.

Job Stability

We found that most OJTs provided stable, year-round jobs for participants. Typically, §402 staff in area field offices were responsible for keeping abreast of the local economy and labor market. For the most part they avoided working with companies that were experiencing layoffs or placing participants in occupations that were not in demand.

In 12 cases, however, we found OJT jobs to be unstable. Participants were laid off during or shortly after the completion of OJT in seven cases. Participants in two

other §402 programs were placed with new start-up companies where the risk of layoff was high. One of these employers admitted using OJT to help defray the cost of his operations.

Most of the OJT participants who were laid off came from the construction industry. Indeed, of all the types of jobs available for OJT, construction jobs proved most problematic. Some programs were enticed to use employers in construction because of the above average wages that workers with experience may receive. Unfortunately, those just starting in entry-level positions, which included many of the OJT participants, often receive low wages and no benefits. Further, these jobs often share the same disadvantages as agricultural jobs: they tend to be cyclical, with workers scrambling for new work at the completion of projects; they often require workers to travel long distances to new jobs; and they usually provide few benefits.

Two other unstable positions were agricultural upgrades. One was particularly problematic because the owner could not guarantee employment for two to three months during the winter, although the position was considered permanent, full time. The other position was with a local entrepreneur using experimental farming techniques whose long-term viability was unproved.

Meeting Participants' Financial Needs

The ability of OJTs to meet the financial needs of participants is also an important indicator of the quality of the position. Many OJT participants indicated they needed a job to earn money more than they needed training. However, it was difficult to asses whether a given job was appropriate by comparing preprogram wages with participant wages at the completion of the OJT: because previous wages may have been peak pay for only part of the year, the post-program wage would seem meager by comparison, and the question of whether the wages would enable an individual to achieve self sufficiency would remain unanswered. Therefore, we assessed the extent to which OJT positions provided wages that fell below the average range and whether benefits were provided.

Wages among the 56 cases we reviewed averaged $5.44 per hour. We found 12 positions paying participants less than $5 per hour. Particularly striking in this wage range were five OJT positions provided by one program, whose goal was to place participants in OJTs at above the Federal minimum wage -- participants received $4.26 per hour.

The majority of positions we observed (35) paid between $5 and $6 per hour. Jobs in the average range covered a broad array of occupations, including machine operators, construction workers, sales clerks, and general farmworkers. Nine OJT positions paid above $6 per hour, with the highest wage going to a participant who worked as a truss assembler for $10.50 per hour.

Further, fringe benefits, such as health insurance or vacation pay, were found in 17 of the OJTs we reviewed. In many cases, participants did not become eligible for full benefits until working for the company for 90 days. Nevertheless, these cases provided medical coverage and often provided some vacation after the first year of work. In the remaining 39 OJTs, participants did not receive benefits, even after a waiting period.

We found that 20 OJTs paid $5 per hour or less without benefits. These tended to be in construction, unskilled manufacturing, and manual labor occupations. The combination of low wages and no benefits we found inappropriate for most participants and in four cases resulted in participants leaving their OJT positions for higher paying jobs. For example, two participants making $4.25 an hour, one a materials handler and the other in food service, left before completing their OJTs; one returned to a poultry factory where she earned $5.60 an hour to debone chickens.

To some extent, the low wages were a function of the low skills participants entering OJT possessed. As we discussed above, many program participants had severe, multiple barriers to employment. Staff at some program field offices remarked that it was simply difficult to find jobs that paid adequate wages with benefits for participants with extensive barriers to employment. We recognize that the severity of participant needs, the weakness of the local economy, and the lack of employers with which to

conduct OJT may have constrained some programs' options. Nevertheless, in nine of the 20 cases where participants were placed in low-paying OJTs without benefits, participants had no substantial barriers; all were high school graduates with good communications skills and some non-agricultural work experience.

The low wage rate was closely related to the location of the job site. Nine of the 12 OJTs with wages below $5/hour came from southern states. Conversely, of the nine jobs paying above $6 per hour, only one was from a southern state. Thus the prevailing economy may have influenced the wage scale to some degree.

The skills required by the job did not systematically relate to the wages. Seven of the nine jobs paying above $6 per hour were in entry-level manufacturing or low skill occupations that did not require experience or a broad range of skills. Nor did participants' previous skills or experiences significantly influence the wage rate; most participants with non-agricultural skills and experience received average wages.

Training Received

We rated the skills that participants received through OJT into high, medium, and low. Four of the OJTs we reviewed were in occupations that required high skills. These were jobs that (1) required prior skills and knowledge of the type of work to be performed, (2) required the participant to perform a variety of tasks, and (3) allowed employees to work independently after training without much supervision. Examples of high-skilled jobs included a seasonal farmworker with experience as a carpenter who was placed in an OJT with a construction firm. Another high-skill OJT for machinery repair was provided to a seasonal farmworker with no skills or shop experience; he was provided with extensive training to bring him to a level of independence by the completion of the OJT.

In the majority of cases we reviewed (29), OJTs provided a medium range of skills typical of semiskilled occupations. These jobs required some independence through a range of tasks that were regularly monitored. Typical of these types of jobs were

cooks, assistants to mechanics, machine operators, and other entry-level manufacturing jobs.

We found that 20 OJTs provided very limited skills training, and in some cases they provided scarcely any skills at all. OJT positions providing few skills fell into two categories: first, jobs that, by their nature (e.g., menial labor) provided few skills, and second, jobs for which participants already possessed the skills required.

Typical characteristics of 12 jobs providing few skills were those that (1) did not require prerequisite knowledge or experience, (2) limited the tasks participants must perform, (3) usually required participants to work in groups or in a group process, and (4) required substantial supervision. Examples of these jobs include a seasonal farmworker with limited English proficiency who stacked and sorted crates for $4.25 per hour; a migrant farmworker, also with limited English, who worked as a janitor for $4.25 an hour; non-skilled construction laborers with varying proficiency in English who worked for $6 per hour; and a seasonal farmworker with basic skills deficiencies who moved furniture around a furniture store for $4.25 an hour.

In eight cases, OJT participants already possessed substantial skills for which they were to receive training. Participants in these instances had previously received substantial training in their occupations and the OJT did not impart any new skills. For example, a woman who had successfully completed coursework for office administration received a 16 week OJT performing basic clerical duties for $4.81 per hour. Another OJT participant had completed a course in automobile mechanics, but was placed in a 16 week OJT as a gas station attendant performing only basic maintenance and making only $4.25 an hour.

Addressing Participants' Basic Skills Needs

Providing OJT without remediating basic skill deficiencies can be especially troubling for farmworkers, who tend to have serious, multiple barriers to employment. Without addressing basic skills deficiencies, participants may remain vulnerable to job

dislocation, forcing them, once more, to return to farmwork. In 33 cases, participants' barriers included lack of basic skills, including limited English proficiency. However, 19 of the OJTs did not address these deficiencies. Therefore, we found particularly promising the design of 14 training plans, which did address participants' basic skill deficiencies prior to or concurrent with OJT.

Among the strongest combined training designs we encountered were those in which programs provided in-house basic skill instruction before participants received OJT. Participants in two programs received integrated vocational and ESL/GED training before being placed in an OJT. For example, a Mexican-American woman lacking English proficiency received 6 months of instruction in printing as well as ESL and math before she received an OJT at a printing shop. Another programs's in-house training emphasized basic skills and provided 20 hours per week of combined ESL and GED instruction over 24 weeks, after which participants were placed in OJT.

Coordinating the delivery of remedial training with OJT employers offered another effective strategy for combining OJT with basic skills training. One program provided a week of basic skills and world of work training for participants involved in a group OJT contract for a manufacturing company that frequently hired Hispanic workers. Participants' wages during this week were paid by both the employer and the program. The company found that it was important to remediate basic skills, especially math, and orient former agricultural workers into the expectations of a manufacturing job.

Innovative practices were found at two programs with limited resources to address basic skills for OJT participants. The programs addressed basic skills deficiencies using local literacy programs. One participant who needed a job and also wanted to learn to read was provided with a volunteer literacy tutor from a local program. The other program worked with an employer to develop a workplace literacy program. OJT participants assigned to work for this restaurateur received literacy instruction at the worksite. Participants' schedules were adjusted so they could attend the training.

Programs also addressed basic skills deficiencies for OJT participants by referring them to existing programs, such as ABE programs offering GED preparation. The most effective approach was to require completion of remedial instruction before entering OJT. A participant at one program successfully completed his preparation coursework and received his GED. He attended a GED course eight hours a day for six weeks prior to receiving OJT. This practice contrasts with results in three other cases in which participants planned to complete GED preparation concurrent with OJT by attending at night, after work hours. All dropped out of their programs because they were getting behind -- too tired to concentrate on their studies. Thus, addressing participants' basic skills deficiencies by referring them to local programs concurrently with OJT was often ineffective.

Duration of On-the-Job Training

During our discussions with employers and OJT participants, we asked about the demands of particular jobs and about how long it takes to train the average employee to competently perform tasks without supervision. In many cases, we found the duration of training was appropriate given participants' experience, barriers, and the skills they needed to learn. In these cases, the time OJT participants reported that it took to learn skills matched closely the estimate given by the employer and the duration indicated on the OJT contract. An example of an OJT in which the duration of training was appropriate was a seasonal farmworker with multiple barriers who was placed in an 8 week OJT as an automobile mechanic for $5.50 per hour.

In 13 cases, however, it was clear that participants learned their job skills well before the completion of the OJT contract. Three OJTs were developed for eight weeks or less, but participants indicated it took only one week to learn the job. For instance, one participant with limited English proficiency received an 8 week OJT as a machine operator; he and his supervisor indicated it took about a week to learn how to do the job. The remaining OJTs were developed for 12 weeks or more. In seven of these cases, participants had already trained for the jobs they received through OJT. For example, a seasonal farmworker returning from the military received a 16-week OJT as a machine

operator but had completed high school and military machine shop courses prior to the placement. Further, seven of these OJT participants had no substantial barriers to employment.

CONCLUSION

We found that the responsiveness of OJT matches to participants' skills and needs varied considerably across the 56 current and former OJT positions we reviewed. Using the criteria discussed above, we rated OJT positions into highly responsive, responsive, marginally responsive, and unresponsive to participants' needs.

Ten OJTs were highly responsive to participants' needs. These OJT placements provided wages of above $5 per hour with benefits. Further, in most instances participants had multiple, often serious, barriers to employment and were provided with additional training prior to or concurrent with OJT to alleviate those barriers.

Another nine OJTs were responsive to participants' needs. These positions offered wages with benefits to participants with low skills and little non-agricultural work experience. OJTs were of appropriate duration to impart the skills participants needed, which were also transferable from one occupation to the next. Further, the jobs were stable, promoting long-term employment.

In 17 cases, OJTs were marginally responsive. These positions typically provided participants with immediate employment, but they were not responsive to all of the participants' needs. Wages tended to be low, and some were at or only pennies above minimum. Further, none of the marginally responsive OJTs provided benefits. The skills imparted in these OJTs were often low, and some participants with severe basic skills deficiencies received no remediation.

Finally, 20 OJTs were inappropriate. These positions were largely unresponsive to participants' needs. They included 8 OJTs in which participants were laid off during or shortly after permanent placement on the job. Five cases were reverse referrals or

placements with participants' previous employers. Other positions included participants with no barriers to employment who were provided with OJTs that imparted few skills, and those OJTs in which participants were already well prepared for the occupations in which they were placed.

In the beginning of this section, we pointed out strategies that programs can use to increase the quality of OJT as well as recent guidance on the conduct of OJT provided by DOL in the wake of the amendments to JTPA legislation. Responsive OJT cases tended to use several strategies to promote quality:

- Careful attention was paid to the match between participants and employers.

- In the most responsive cases, participants' needs for remedial training were addressed before or during the OJT.

- Skills provided by the OJT were transferable from one job to the next.

- The OJT provided participants with access to jobs that they could not have otherwise gotten. In these cases it was clear that §402 funds were used to support the extraordinary costs of training.

The quality of OJT varied both across and within programs. No program was without one or more marginal or unresponsive OJT position. Nevertheless, some programs provided generally more or generally less responsive OJTs. In four programs, the OJTs that we observed were mostly responsive. Three of these programs had their own in-house training to remediate skill deficiencies before participants were placed in an OJT, and the other program encouraged its OJT providers to implement workplace literacy. In contrast to these were six programs in which the OJTs were found to be mostly marginal or unresponsive.

While no program characteristics were exclusively identified with the responsiveness of OJT cases, some general trends were observed. For example, many

of the marginal and unresponsive OJTs occurred at programs that placed a high emphasis on OJT in their service designs. Further, most of the OJTs provided through group OJT contracts were also marginal or unresponsive. These two trends underscore the importance of providing appropriate matches between participants and employers and the need for greater monitoring and oversight of OJT conducted through group arrangements or with employers used repeatedly for OJT. These observations also suggest that many §402 programs could use additional technical assistance on practices that promote quality OJT positions.

VIII. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

MSFW programs offer two types of supportive services: support for training, which includes both training-related supportive services (TRSS) and stipends for training, and supportive services-only (SSO). These two components have similar service content but different target populations and purposes, which are discussed separately later in this chapter.

Support for training and SSO have slightly different funding guidelines and sources. Stipends are considered a training expense, and are not counted in the TRSS category for cost accounting purposes. There are no federal guidelines about the amount of funds that can be used for stipends. By regulation, programs may devote up to 15% of their §402 budgets for SSO, and TRSS has an effective limit of 15% if all other cost categories are fully spent. Most programs in the sample spent well below 15% for both; only two programs spent a full 15% on TRSS and four spent 15% on SSO. These numbers may be somewhat misleading, however, since most programs also relied on non-§402 funding sources and outside referrals for supportive services.[1] Among non-§402 sources used for funding of supportive services were Community Service Block Grants, Federal Emergency Management Act funds, Migrant Head Start, and the United Way. State and local governments in some areas supported transitional housing and housing rehabilitation services.

SUPPORT FOR TRAINING

A barrier to successful completion of training for many farmworkers is their inability to meet basic needs for food, shelter, medical care, and transportation while in training. In response to these needs, all the sample programs made an effort to provide a variety of stipends and training-related supportive services, or to refer clients elsewhere

[1]See Chapter IV for a more detailed discussion of programs' use of non-402 funding.

for these services. In the vast majority of cases, however, these services were considerably less than what was needed to fulfill their primary goal of making classroom training a feasible option for a majority of clients.

Eligibility for and Types of Support for Training

Most programs provided a diverse and flexible set of training-related supportive services, available to all training participants based on an informal assessment of need. Clients' income from other sources such as AFDC and Unemployment Insurance was considered in assessing level of need, but did not exclude clients from receiving additional support. Since the purpose of the services was to contribute to successful completion of training, priority was sometimes given to clients who appeared to be in immediate danger of dropping out of training. In a few cases, services were targeted to participants in long-term classroom training. Most programs devoted the greater part of TRSS and training stipends to participants in classroom training, but all made at least some services available to OJT participants as well.

Typically, programs provided some combination of stipends for hours in classroom training, and in-kind or financial assistance to meet a variety of basic needs during the training period. Almost all grantees provided assistance with transportation to and from training for participants in both classroom training and OJT. This assistance might take the form of bus tokens, money for gas and car repair, aid in obtaining a driver's license, or a van operated by the grantee. Many grantees also provided tools, supplies, or clothing needed for training. Other services, more likely to be addressed on an emergency or one-time only basis, were for medical care, food, transitional housing or emergency rent, and utility payments. Many programs also provided child care assistance and personal or financial counseling to a small number of clients.

Several upstream programs that targeted migrants made a particular commitment to providing relocation assistance, since enrollment in training usually depended on the client's ability to relocate from out-of-state. This assistance might take the form of

payment of application fees, initial rent and damage deposit, and utility fees. One program assisted relocating workers with either one month's rent or three nights in a motel.

Sixteen of the 18 sample programs offered stipends to clients participating in classroom training. Stipends ranged from $1.00 to $4.35 per hour of training, sometimes with a maximum of about 20 hours per week for classroom training participants. The lower stipends of $1 or $2 were generally reserved for trainees who received other benefits such as AFDC or UI. However, in the case of four programs, no clients received more than $1-$2. This amount was expected to do little more than cover the costs of transportation to and from training, and should really be considered a transportation allowance rather than a stipend.

Funding of Support for Training

Funding for training-related supportive services ranged from under 1% to 15% of sampled programs' PY 91 budgets, but represented 5% or less in half the programs. The proportions allocated depended on the availability of other funding and on programs' philosophical commitment to supportive services. A few programs were guided by the belief that clients should "share the burden" of their training by paying for some of the related costs.

Most programs relied at least in part on non-§402 funds, in-kind donations, and/or outside referrals for provision of TRSS. Several programs referred all clients elsewhere for TRSS and provided services directly only in rare instances. At least one program used §402 funds for stipends for participants in classroom training, but provided all TRSS with non-§402 funds or referrals. Programs that operated a variety of social services for farmworkers, drawing on multiple funding sources, were in a particularly good position to provide supportive services. Grantees that had little or no non-§402 funding generally had more difficulty in providing satisfactory services. But at least one

provided a high level of services by committing a full 15% of its §402 budget to TRSS and also using extensive referrals.

An important role of the MSFW programs was to assist clients in accessing services or benefits to which they were entitled, but were not receiving because they were unaware of their eligibility or unable to negotiate the application process. Many programs reviewed clients' eligibility for AFDC, UI, Food Stamps, and education grants, and assisted them with application. Several programs assisted clients in obtaining Pell grants for tuition, returning 25% to clients for living expenses. However, it was their practice to withhold the 25% until three-fourths of training was completed, thereby possibly depriving clients of a needed source of support.

Assessment of Training-Related Supportive Services

A common assessment of both staff and clients was that both stipends and TRSS were too limited. This inadequacy was a major barrier to participation in and completion of classroom training, especially for workers who were the primary wage earners in their households. The problem was especially acute at sites where part-time jobs were in short supply. At one site a majority of classroom training participants appeared to be dependents, or secondary wage earners. Primary earners could participate only when supported by Unemployment Insurance or other outside income. At other sites, retention in classroom training was a problem, as these workers left training when more farm jobs became available at the new harvest. One program estimated that attrition might be as high as 30%.

The inability to meet workers' basic needs during classroom training may have been responsible for over-reliance on OJT by some grantees. Even grantees with a strong preference for classroom training made extensive use of OJT for clients with large families to support and/or with no other source of public assistance.

Characteristics of the state or local area influenced the level and type of participants' needs. At one site, transportation assistance often fell short because many

clients were commuting long distances. At another site, the limited supply of emergency/transitional shelters made the need for housing assistance particularly great. At other sites, there were unmet needs for job-related clothing and toiletries.

While none of the programs had "solved" the problem of limited support for training, some were more active than others in pursuing a high level of services. There were two strategies for doing this. The first and most obvious strategy, used by a number of programs, was extensive coordination with other agencies and donors. In order to stretch very limited resources, several aggressively sought in-kind donations such as federal commodities. Others wrote numerous grant applications to both public and private funding sources or combined extensive referrals with vendor/voucher payments. Many programs made use of referrals to agencies providing services at no cost or very low cost and were careful to provide in-house only those services unavailable elsewhere.

A second strategy employed by one program was part of an overall emphasis on intensive services to a reduced number of clients. This program, in making a commitment to long-term classroom training, decided to spend more dollars per participant, including dollars for supportive services. Several other programs with commitments to long-term training for at least some clients, also attempted to give special attention to the training-related needs of these clients, with the result that attrition was minimized.

Sample programs seemed to have few hard-and-fast rules when it came to provision of these services. An individualized approach was a reasonable response to a situation of scarce resources and often dire needs. Most grantees made an effort to respond to clients' varying circumstances and needs, whether for eyeglasses, emergency rent, or the more comprehensive-than-average needs of a single parent with a large family to support.

Nevertheless, programs could have been more generous in their provision of stipends and training-related supportive services, albeit at the price of reducing the

number of participants in training. Faced with this tradeoff, programs chose to risk a significant level of attrition, and probably discouraged harder-to-serve farmworkers from applying. Perhaps the elimination of the cost per entered employment performance standard will ultimately encourage greater spending on these services.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES-ONLY

Although their primary mission is to provide employment and training services, MSFW programs may also provide short-term "supportive services-only" (SSO) to respond to the most severe needs of farmworkers not currently willing or able to participate in training. This is a logical role for the programs to play because of their unique accessibility to farmworkers, who have few if any other sources of support in times of emergency. But unlike support for training, the SSO component is not linked to employment and training, and has no clearly defined goals other than to temporarily alleviate hardship in order to allow farmworkers to continue in agricultural employment. The sample programs did not appear to be guided by specific objectives in the provision of SSO, and varied considerably in their approaches to it.

Eligibility for and Types of Supportive Services-Only

Most of the programs that provided SSO targeted it to migrants who were in dire need, and who were unlikely to leave the migrant stream in the near future. However, programs did not have strict eligibility guidelines for participation in SSO, aside from eligibility for §402 and demonstration of need. Most programs provided SSO to some seasonal workers as well as migrants, with seasonals usually representing less than one fourth of the total. For a few programs in states with small migrant populations, seasonal workers represented over 90% of SSO terminees in PY 91.

Typically, programs stationed staff members at migrant camps or centers at the beginning of the season to identify and assist workers arriving with little means of survival until they obtained work. In some cases the programs directed migrants to

available work. They also provided assistance needed by migrants to reach their next work destination or to return home, or to survive during a particularly poor season.

Types of support available as part of SSO were similar to training-related supportive services. Emergency assistance for food, transportation, housing, and health care was commonly offered. Food or housing for a week or two, even up to a month in a few programs, often enabled people to subsist until they found work. Some programs offered legal services and counseling. One provided cash payments only, ranging from $25 for a single person to $50 for a family.

We observed one program's counselor respond to two stranded migrant laborers at a migrant center. She conducted all of the eligibility determination at the site and provided transportation to a pharmacy to fill prescriptions for one who had diabetes and recently had his medical supplies stolen. She also provided them with enough food for a week, about the time it would take to find work early in the season. Meanwhile, the migrant center provided referrals to work.

Like support for training, SSO was administered in a flexible way based on individual circumstances. Case managers often received lump sums to spend at their discretion on supportive services. In some cases there was a cap on per client spending: one program for example had a limit of $125, with occasional exceptions, and another limited spending to $50-$75 per client.

Emphasis on and Integration of Supportive Services-Only

The programs in the sample varied considerably both in the extent to which they emphasized SSO for its own sake, and in their attempts to make it an integral part of their employment and training outreach. Two of the eighteen sample programs chose not to offer SSO. Among the 16 programs that offered it, SSO terminees represented between 15% and 92% of total terminees. The proportion of §402 funds spent on SSO ranged from 0.4% to 15%. As in the case of TRSS, the level of §402 funds devoted to this component was influenced to some degree by the availability of other sources of

funding and local service providers to whom clients could be referred. However, it was also greatly influenced by the philosophy and policy of the programs with respect to SSO.

Eleven of the sample programs spent 7% or less of §402 funds on supportive services-only in PY 91. These programs generally viewed SSO as of minor importance relative to their primary goal of providing employment and training. The two programs that did not offer SSO were operated by a single grantee that believed job training and placement were the only way to enhance the lives of farmworkers. The nine others offered limited services on an emergency basis, spending between approximately $40 and $200 of §402 monies on each SSO terminee.[2] SSO terminees represented between 15% and 74% of these nine programs' total terminees in PY 91.

The nine programs generally did not attempt to actively use SSO as an outreach technique for employment and training. Some served a different population for SSO (migrants, older workers) than they served for training (seasonals, younger workers with more English skills). But many of the programs believed that SSO indirectly enhanced recruitment by increasing the visibility of their organizations, building a relationship of trust with migrants and their families, and occasionally sparking an interest in training.

Three of the nine did occasionally use SSO as a "carrot" to interest migrants in training. One believed that as many as 50% of SSO terminees returned later for employment and training. The other had used extensive SSO when it first began operation in the 1980s, in order to establish its reputation with the migrant population and migrant organizations in the state. Having succeeded in encouraging many migrants to settle out in the state, it now turned its attention away from SSO and towards more employment and training. It now viewed SSO primarily as a mechanism for recruitment.

The remaining seven of the sixteen programs that provided SSO viewed it as a significant and integral part of their overall program and devoted between 8% and 15% of §402 funds to this component, with four of the seven spending the full 15%. SSO

[2]These figures are based on costs reported to DOL. They thus represent averages and do not include non-402 funds.

terminees represented between 30% and 92% of total terminees in these programs, and §402 spending per SSO terminee ranged from $250 to $850.[3]

These seven programs seemed to share a view that SSO could play a key role in helping migrants settle out. The programs with the highest expenditures on SSO spent substantial amounts on temporary housing for migrants in an attempt to encourage relocation and hopefully, eventual participation in training. One program, located in a state lacking migrant camps, paid for up to a month's rent for newly arriving migrant families. Another program used SSO to "plant the seed" of relocation during the summer season, then to stabilize workers' families after relocation, and finally to enroll some family members in SSO simultaneously with the primary earner's enrollment in training.

Another program that spent its full 15% on SSO placed particular emphasis on health care, believing lack of proper health care was the major barrier to employment in the non-agricultural sector. This program provided medical vouchers worth up to $300. The seasonal farmworkers who received this service generally returned to the program for basic skills training and job placement.

Role of Supportive Services-Only

Among the sample programs, SSO served two purposes. The first was to provide humanitarian assistance that, while admittedly very limited, averted homelessness, illness, or starvation for many migrant families in the interim between jobs. The second purpose of SSO was to serve as an outreach and recruitment tool for employment and training services. Unfortunately, little data are available to help us assess whether humanitarian aid was administered in the most effective way, or whether participants in SSO did, to any significant degree, later enroll in employment and training. Because SSO as currently designed is not directly related to the employment and training mission

[3]These figures are based on costs reported to DOL. They thus represent averages and do not include non-402 funds.

of the programs, and because it has no explicit performance goals of its own, its performance is difficult to monitor or assess.

It is not clear that SSO funds are targeted as effectively as they could be. The need for this service seems far less compelling in homebase states, or states with few migrants, than in states with large populations of migrants. The needs for SSO can also vary greatly depending on the weather, the farm jobs available, and the supply of other service providers. Upstream states were occasionally inundated with requests for SSO; one program was so overwhelmed in the summer of 1992 that it almost had to suspend employment and training services.

Seven of the sampled programs actively used SSO to recruit employment and training participants, and other programs should be encouraged to follow this practice, since employment and training offers the best chance for improving the long-term circumstances of farmworkers. The only possible risk of this approach is that programs might become overzealous about "integrating" SSO to the extent that they give priority to the best candidates for training and exclude others in severe need of SSO. The programs in the sample that did not integrate SSO into training outreach were more likely to differentiate the populations for SSO and training, perhaps attempting to ensure that all were served. However, it should be possible to combine the provision of emergency assistance to individuals most in need with efforts to inform them about other longer-term options available.

CONCLUSION

MSFW programs inevitably face tradeoffs between providing funds for supportive services and for training. In regard to supportive services alone, there are trade offs between funding levels of SSO versus training-related supportive services. Additionally, programs vary in their use of non-§402 funds. In some programs, non-§402 funds are a significant source of funding for both kinds of supportive services, but are used in large part as a substitute rather than a supplement to §402 supportive service funds, thus freeing §402 funds for training.

Although SSO is not immediately related to the programs' employment and training mission, and provides humanitarian aid that is valuable in its own right, both SSO and support for training can contribute to employment and training goals in different ways. SSO can enhance outreach to hard-to-serve migrants who might benefit from training, and training-related supportive services and stipends can make it possible for these and other workers to actually enroll in and complete intensive classroom training. Given the limited resources available, it is important that all types of supportive services and stipends be carefully targeted and efficiently delivered to ensure that they serve those most in need and are also integrated with larger program goals and priorities.

IX. PLACEMENT SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

The preceding chapters have described the training services received by MSFW participants in the sample programs in some detail. This chapter first presents information about the placement services provided to participants to assist them in obtaining jobs. It then discusses outcomes experienced by §402 participants, drawing on both the qualitative site visit data as well as several quantitative data sources developed for this study: a client-level database from nine of the programs visited for this study, and information obtained through case file reviews at all 18 programs visited for this study. We first discuss placement outcomes, including agricultural upgrades, followed by a discussion of employability enhancements.

PLACEMENT SERVICES

In this section, we discuss the various job placement strategies and practices found among the programs. Job placement services can be divided into two groups: indirect placement, which provides services for clients who have completed a training program, and direct placement, which provides services to clients who are "job ready," and thus not in need of additional services. We also discuss follow-up strategies and practices.

Indirect Placement Services

The purpose of indirect placement services is to help clients who have completed a training program find a job. Ideally, placement services should teach clients skills that they can use in future job searches. Especially with a population that includes many individuals with limited experience in non-agricultural work environments, a general knowledge of job search strategies and work protocols is important.

We found two approaches to indirect placement among the programs. In one approach, the goal was simply to match the client with an employer; in the other, the client developed job search skills as part of the process of finding a job placement.

All programs provided one-on-one job placement counseling for those who completed a training program. Towards the completion of training, the case manager or job developer began to discuss job prospects with the client. In half of the programs, counseling consisted mainly of the counselor providing job leads to the client and when needed, advice on personal grooming, job protocols, and resume writing. In these programs, the counseling was oriented towards getting a specific job. In two of these programs, clients in CRT were placed by the service provider.

In the remaining half of the programs, in addition to one-on-one counseling, clients received job search skills training. The training provided clients with general job search skills that could be applied to any job search. Topics covered included: the typical application process, interviewing, resume writing, personal grooming and work protocol. Four programs had special sessions or workshops focused on job search skills. Other programs incorporated job related skills into their in-house CRT curricula, especially towards the end of the sessions. In two programs where CRT was contracted out, the service providers had their own placement services that clients could use.

Even in those programs that taught clients job seeking skills in addition to concentrating on the particular placement, job development was done by a specialized job developer or the case manager. In only a few instances were farmworkers encouraged to look for jobs on their own. In general, job developers relied on an established set of employers with whom they had worked over the years. Additional openings were discovered by looking in newspaper ads, word-of-mouth, referrals and visits to local companies.

The quality of training model says that programs should assist participants in obtaining the highest quality job appropriate to their level of employability. It also stipulates that job placements be in stable, year-round jobs; have wages at or above

minimum wage; have good benefits; safe working conditions; and opportunities for advancement. Although program staff preferred jobs with these qualities for their clients, often they were constrained from finding them. Several programs reported that due to poor local and national economies, job development had been difficult. Fewer companies were hiring and in those that were, clients faced stiff competition for jobs. Even after training, farmworkers often had lower levels of qualifications than other workers. Therefore, job developers usually focused on obtaining entry-level jobs.

Direct Placements

Direct placement services provide job search assistance to clients who come to the program with sufficient job skills that they do not require a full program of job training. The sample programs varied in the emphasis they placed on direct placements. Six programs rarely, if ever, placed participants directly. In these states, most clients who were judged to be job ready were referred to local Job Service offices or to possible employers. One or two clients per year might be claimed as a direct placement, but only in special circumstances.

Five programs did not promote direct placements, but did claim 5-15% of their placements as direct. The rationale in some of these programs was that certain clients could benefit from supportive services that Job Service could not provide. Some of these programs also claimed clients as direct placements who enrolled and then found a job on their own.

Seven programs claimed a substantial proportion (15-33%) of their placements as direct. In these programs, training-assistance-only was perceived as an important service component. Two of these programs stated that many of their clients needed immediate income. They came to the §402 program only when they had no other alternatives. Some of these programs referred clients to Job Service, but felt that clients received better service from the MSFW program, since some Job Service offices gave low priority to farmworkers. Also, several of these MSFW programs provided one-on-one counseling

in general job search and world of work skills to their clients, which Job Service staff did not provide.

Follow-up Practices

The sample programs viewed follow up in two ways. One group treated follow-up as a purely administrative matter, to collect information for reporting purposes, whether for DOL requirements or state or program requirements. The other group used follow-up contact as an opportunity to continue services to participants. Four programs made follow-up contact only at 13 weeks after placement, as required by DOL. Two programs did follow-up at 30 days and 13 weeks. These six programs tended to see follow-up as an administrative requirement.

Twelve programs carried out follow-up at least 30, 60 and 90 days after placement. The intensity of follow-up activities among these programs varied. Four programs collected information mainly for administrative purposes. Interviews were conducted by phone and/or by a staff member unfamiliar with the client. In the remaining eight programs, staff used the 30/60/90 day follow-up contacts to provide ongoing and support for monitoring client progress. Most of these programs carried out additional monitoring as well. Interviews were conducted in person when possible and by the case manager or job developer who had worked with the client. These programs felt that follow-up played an important role in promoting job retention. Three programs emphasized follow-up in the first few weeks after placement, because during this period both client and employer had to make the most adjustments.

SERVICES RECEIVED AND OUTCOMES

We now turn to analyses of service outcomes. Placement outcomes from various service types are analyzed quantitatively, which will provide detail for the broader qualitative analyses presented so far. Qualitative analyses are then presented for agricultural upgrades and employability enhancement outcomes, supplemented by quantitative analyses where possible.

Results from the Client-Level Database

There is not yet a national client-level database for the §402 program, and there were insufficient resources allocated for this study for the study team to collect new client-level data. Therefore, study staff discussed the possibility of obtaining existing client-level databases with grantee staff during site visits. Not all programs had fully automated data systems that were easily transmittable to BPA. However, we were able to obtain data from 9 of the 18 sample programs in the study, for a total of 4426 individual cases of PY 91 terminees. While not a random sample from the universe of MSFW terminees, the resulting database appears to fairly represent the country as a whole. The nine programs and the summary statistics for the database are discussed in Appendix B.

Participant data obtained from the nine programs included: client characteristics reported on the ASR, type of service received (classroom training, OJT, work experience, tryout employment, and training assistance), service duration in hours or weeks, and outcomes at placement and follow up. A few variables were not obtained for a few programs, but all variables that were obtained were by and large uniform across all nine programs. Therefore, the nine separate databases could be combined into one large database for analysis.

The client-level database allows us to address a number of questions that cannot be answered through examination of aggregate data (e.g., the ASR). These include questions about the types of clients receiving various services, the kinds of outcomes achieved by various types of clients, and the effect on outcomes of various services, holding client characteristics constant. Often, the variations in the data can be illuminated by qualitative information obtained from program staff during site visits.

Client Characteristics by Type of Service

Table IX-1 shows the characteristics of clients terminating from different kinds of services[1]. The top line shows that CRT was the most commonly received service, with about half of the sample (49%) terminating from this category. OJT was the next most common, with nearly a third (31%) of the terminees, followed by work experience and training assistance with 10% each.

The table shows that there were variations in the characteristics of participants receiving different services. Women were more likely to receive CRT than OJT. Men, however, were more evenly divided between the two services, perhaps because male heads of household often preferred immediate job placement to meet their support obligations. These statistics show, however, that a substantial proportion of men (40%) did obtain CRT. Migrant farmworkers were more likely to receive CRT than seasonal farmworkers, probably due to their increased need for language training. The vast majority of students received CRT, and more high school graduates obtained work experience slots.

The table shows a few differences by ethnic group. Blacks and other non-white minorities had higher-than-average participation in work experience and training assistance, and were least likely to receive OJT[2]. Hispanic terminees were more likely to receive OJT than any other group. This is a somewhat counter-intuitive finding, since we would expect that this group's language limitations would result in greater receipt of classroom training. However, there was considerable variation in the kind of CRT available in the sampled programs. In some states, the CRT was accessible to and aimed

[1]Throughout this chapter, the "type of service" is the service the client terminated from, as reported on the ASR. Some clients may have received more than one service, although this cannot be shown from the data. For all tables, tryout employment has been combined with work experience, since there were too few cases (n = 10) to justify a separate category.

[2]This is most likely due to the fact that blacks and other minorities are not evenly distributed throughout the sample. Blacks are mostly located in two states. The "other" category is small (n = 121), and most of the participants in it are Native Americans in three states.

Table IX-1

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLIENTS TERMINATING FROM DIFFERENT KINDS OF SERVICES

	Classroom Training	On-the-Job Training	Work Experience	Training Assistance
TOTAL	49%	31%	10%	10%
Female	57%	21%	13%	8%
Male	40%	42%	10%	9%
Migrant	52%	33%	8%	6%
Seasonal	47%	30%	12%	12%
Dropouts	48%	34%	9%	10%
Students	91%	5%	1%	3%
Graduates	44%	31%	14%	11%
White	48%	30%	12%	10%
Black	51%	17%	18%	14%
Hispanic	48%	37%	7%	8%
Other	41%	18%	19%	22%
Under 16	97%	0%	0%	3%
16-21	59%	24%	12%	5%
22-44	42%	37%	11%	11%
45 and over	38%	42%	8%	12%
Limited English	50%	37%	3%	10%
Not Limited	49%	27%	13%	10%
Homebase	55%	32%	6%	7%
Upstream	29%	27%	25%	18%

Source: Client-level data from nine programs compiled by BPA for this study. (See Appendix B for details.)

at persons with limited basic skills (e.g., ESL classes, ABE classes, integrated BS and vocational training). In other states, the available CRT required a high school diploma and good English skills. Therefore, those with low levels of skills were limited to OJT for occupational training.

The differences by age group are readily understandable. The younger the participant group, the more likely they were to receive classroom training. Program staff explained that many older participants were reluctant to enter the classroom, saying that they were "too old" to learn new things or felt uncomfortable in a classroom setting. Older trainees were more likely to receive OJT or be placed directly through training assistance.

Surprisingly, participants with limited English were about as likely to receive CRT as those without limitations. As discussed above, this probably reflects the disparities in the kinds of CRT available in the sample states. Participants with limited English were also less likely to participate in work experience, perhaps because those positions were in organizations that required a high level of language skills.

Participants in homebase states were more likely to receive CRT and less likely to receive work experience or training assistance. As discussed in Chapter VI, homebase states found that their clients were more willing to participate in classroom training, compared to upstream states where clients were more likely to need immediate income after settling out of the migrant stream.

Client Characteristics by Type of Outcome

Table IX-2 examines client characteristics by the type of outcome achieved. Three kinds of outcomes were reported: being placed in a job, receiving an employability enhancement only, and other. Those who were placed in a job could have also received an employability enhancement (those who received employability enhancements, regardless of placement status, are discussed below). For the sample as

Table IX-2

CHARACTERISTICS OF CLIENTS BY TERMINATION CATEGORY

	Placed in a Job	Enhancement Only	Other
TOTAL	59%	17%	24%
Female	56%	20%	24%
Male	62%	14%	25%
Migrant	55%	22%	23%
Seasonal	60%	14%	26%
Dropouts	56%	16%	28%
Students	12%	70%	19%
Graduates	68%	11%	21%
White	68%	9%	24%
Black	53%	13%	34%
Hispanic	59%	20%	21%
Other	65%	10%	25%
Under 16	3%	74%	23%
16-21	53%	25%	22%
22-44	64%	11%	25%
45 and over	58%	17%	26%
Limited English	59%	18%	23%
Not Limited	58%	17%	25%
Homebase	60%	20%	20%
Upstream	54%	9%	38%

Source: Client-level data from nine programs compiled by BPA for this study. (See Appendix B for details.)

a whole, 59% were placed in a job, and 17% obtained an employability enhancement. The 24% who received another termination were most likely dropouts from training, since those who completed some service but could not be placed could often qualify for one of the enhancements. An analysis of average hours of service for the various termination types showed that negative terminees received significantly fewer hours (179 hours) than either those who were employed (356 hours) or those who received enhancements (387 hours).

Males were more likely to obtain a job than females, and females were more likely to obtain an enhancement only. Seasonal workers were more likely to obtain a job than migrants, and migrants were more likely to obtain an enhancement only. The higher enhancement rate for females and migrants is most likely connected to their higher participation in CRT.

Not surprisingly, students were more likely to obtain an enhancement than a job. High school graduates were far more likely to be employed than dropouts, who have a higher-than-average negative termination rate. This illustrates the often-reported finding that many employers require a high school diploma even for low-skill jobs.

Among ethnic groups, whites were the most likely to be employed, and blacks the least likely. Hispanic participants had the highest enhancement rate, most likely reflecting their higher participation in language training, and the lowest negative termination rate.

Those participants of prime working age (22-44) were the group most likely to be employed at termination. Younger and older participants were more likely to obtain employability enhancements only.

As above, those with limited English showed virtually no differences from those without language limitations. This is the only distribution of all those presented so far that is not statistically significant at the .001 level, and it remained insignificant even when homebase/upstream status was controlled for. This control variable was chosen

because it was hypothesized that homebase and upstream program personnel would have different implicit definitions of what level of language proficiency constituted a limitation. However, some other factor may be at work -- for instance, program clients with limited English skills may be more motivated, or program staff may provide more services to these clients.

Participants in homebase states were more likely to have positive terminations -- either employment or enhancement. Participants in upstream states were much less likely to obtain an enhancement and more likely to have a negative termination.

Wages by Client Characteristics

Table IX-3 shows how wages at termination differed by client characteristics. Males received a higher average wage than females ($5.30 versus $4.95). White males received the highest average wage among males ($5.87), and Hispanic males received the lowest ($5.15). Among females, Hispanics received the lowest wage ($4.78), and a few "other" minority females received the highest ($6.45, n = 18).

Seasonal workers averaged about $0.40 more per hour than migrants. Prime age workers (aged 22-44) averaged more than younger or older workers, although these differences were not statistically significant. High school graduates made significantly more than dropouts ($5.37 versus $5.09). Surprisingly, the few students in the sample who were placed in jobs (n = 31) received high average wages. Participants with limited English received almost exactly the same wage as those without limitations[3].

Participants in upstream states made $0.44 more, on average, than those in homebase states. It is likely that this difference reflects regional differences in overall wage rates, since homebase states are more likely to be in the south, an area with lower overall wages.

[3]T-test yielded a two-tailed probability of 0.517. See the section above on termination outcomes for a discussion of why this variable may show little difference.

Table IX-3

MEAN WAGES AT TERMINATION BY CHARACTERISTICS OF CLIENTS

Males		$5.30
White	$5.87	
Black	$5.34	
Hispanic	$5.15	
Other	$5.45	
Females		$4.95
White	$5.15	
Black	$5.12	
Hispanic	$4.78	
Other	$6.45	
Migrants	$4.97	
Seasonals	$5.36	
Less than 16	$5.00	
16-21	$5.07	
22-44	$5.20	
45 and over	$4.98	
Dropouts	$5.09	
Students	$5.56	
Graduates	$5.37	
Limited English	$5.25	
Not Limited	$5.22	
Homebase	$5.13	
Upstream	$5.57	

Source: Client-level data from nine programs compiled by BPA for this study. (See Appendix B for details.)

Outcomes by Service Type

Table IX-4 shows outcomes by the type of service received. This table shows that terminees from OJT were more likely to be employed at termination, but made a lower average wage. About half of the sample had termination wages below $5.00/hour, and OJT terminees were more likely to be in this category. Classroom training terminees were most likely to be in the $6.00 and over category. However, by follow-up the average wages for all service categories had increased and the differences had narrowed; none of the differences were non-significant.

Terminees from OJT were more likely to retain their jobs at follow up, and more likely to have benefits. The latter outcome is probably due to their longer job tenure at follow up (since they worked throughout the training period, while those attending CRT did not); terminees from training assistance were similarly more likely to have benefits. Eligibility for benefits often begins after three to six months on the job.[4]

Multivariate Results

All of the results above have been from bivariate statistics: characteristics were examined singly in relation to services or outcomes. This form of analysis does not compensate for confounding factors (for instance, the fact that more persons with limited English may also be Hispanic). To control for confounding variables while examining relationships, multivariate techniques must be used.

Multiple regression equations were used to examine the relationship between services and outcomes, while holding client characteristics constant. Another confounding factor is the local environment. The database contains no information about local areas; all data are identified by state. Therefore, we have little opportunity to control for truly local factors, such as the county level unemployment rate where a client

[4]These differences may have also been due to differential response rates, which have not been controlled for.

Table IX-4

OUTCOMES BY CATEGORY OF SERVICE

	CRT	OJT	WE/TOE	TA	TOTAL
Mean Wage					
At termination	$5.30	$5.12	$5.33	$5.35	$5.23
At followup	$5.45	$5.31	$5.41	$5.46	$5.38
Wage Group at Termination					
Less than $5.00	45%	56%	44%	41%	49%
$5.00 to $5.99	27%	23%	31%	32%	26%
$6.00 and over	28%	22%	25%	27%	25%
Outcome at Termination					
Placed in a Job	46%	81%	51%	61%	59%
Enhancement Only	31%	0%	20%	0%	17%
Other	24%	19%	29%	39%	25%
Employed at Follow-Up*	49%	60%	54%	56%	55%
Receiving Benefits at Follow-Up*	46%	58%	47%	54%	52%

*Of those placed at termination.

Source: Client-level data from nine programs compiled by BPA for this study. (See Appendix B for details.)

was searching for work. However, we have included the state unemployment rate for 1991 as one controlling variable. A second set of multivariate equations was run using dummy variables for states, to capture (but not disentangle) program and state factors, such as program design, types of jobs available, strength of the economy, etc.

We examined two outcomes: whether placed in a job, and wage at termination.[5] These two outcomes have been examined above in the bivariate tables, and our primary purpose was to see whether the factors that were associated with higher wages and a higher chance of employment remained the same after other factors were controlled for.

Placement at Termination. Table IX-5 shows the results for placement at termination. We can see that most of the results of the bivariate analysis remained the same: being a migrant, a dropout, or a minority are negatively related to being placed. Being female, however, has no significant relationship with placement once other factors are controlled for. As in the findings above, the results for the limited English variable are unexpected; here, it is positively related to being placed. The negative sign on the unemployment rate variable is in the expected direction (the higher the unemployment rate, the lower the probability of being placed), but this variable just missed being significant at the .05 level.

We can see that the effects of receiving different services are consistent with the bivariate analysis. Receiving any service other than OJT results in a lower probability of placement at termination, even after controlling for client characteristics. Since clients were not randomly assigned to type of service, these results should be viewed as suggestive only. Regression techniques cannot entirely control for self-selection bias. However, all of these variables explain only about 11% of the variance in placement rate.

[5]In both cases, ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions were used. Wage is a continuous variable and OLS is an appropriate technique. Job placement is a binary variable for which logit or probit would be more appropriate. However, these techniques yield results very similar to OLS unless the mean of the dependent variable is close to zero or one; in this case it is 0.59.

Table IX-5

PLACEMENT AT TERMINATION: COEFFICIENTS FROM MULTIVARIATE REGRESSION ANALYSES

	Equation Using Unemployment Rate		Equation Using State Dummy Variables	
	Coefficient	Significance Level	Coefficient	Significance Level
Terminee Characteristics				
Female	.0209	.1783	.0260	.0902
Migrant	-.0525	.0009	-.0683	.0000
Minority	-.0906	.0001	-.0654	.0072
Dropout	-.0593	.0002	-.0504	.0015
Limited English	.0529	.0080	.0409	.0381
Unemployment Rate	-.0149	.0681		
Services Received				
CRT	-.3508	.0000	-.3637	.0000
WE/TOE	-.3139	.0000	-.2616	.0000
TA	-.2601	.0000	-.2349	.0000
Adjusted R-squared	.1118		.1401	

Source: Client-level data from nine programs compiled by BPA for this study. (See Appendix B for details.) Because one program did not provide data on sex, only eight programs were used in the analysis (n = 3954).

The results using state dummy variables are very similar. The signs and significance of the variables parallel those for the previous analysis. Using state dummies increases the R-squared statistic to 14%.

Wage at Termination. Table IX-6 presents the results of the regression analyses for wage at termination. Once again, the coefficients are of the expected sign (negative) for the following variables: being a migrant, being female, being a minority, and being a dropout. Having limited English is unexpectedly positive, but is not significant at the .05 level. A higher unemployment rate is associated with lower wages, as expected.

Receiving classroom training or work experience leads to higher wages than OJT, as was seen in the bivariate analysis. There is no significant difference for those receiving training assistance. This may be because the kinds of jobs in which farmworkers can be placed directly (with or without a subsidy to the employer) may be very similar. The amount of variance explained by all variables was very low (9%).

Similar results hold when state dummy variables are used in the analysis. Limited English is no longer significant, but other client characteristics retain their expected signs and remain significant. In this equation, however, the only service to produce a significantly higher wage than OJT is classroom training. Both training assistance and work experience are not significant at the .05 level. As with the placement equations, using state dummies increases the amount of variance explained somewhat, to 12%.

These results show that those receiving OJT have a higher likelihood of placement at termination. However, those receiving CRT receive a higher wage. This seems to indicate that increasing clients' skills through classroom training has payoffs in terms of the wages they can earn, although they may find it hard to find employment initially.

Table IX-6

WAGE AT TERMINATION: COEFFICIENTS FROM MULTIVARIATE REGRESSION ANALYSES

	Equation Using Unemployment Rate		Equation Using State Dummy Variables	
	Coefficient	Significance Level	Coefficient	Significance Level
Terminee Characteristics				
Female	-.4111	.0000	-.3784	.0000
Migrant	-.2458	.0000	-.2212	.0000
Minority	-.3009	.0000	-.1557	.0295
Dropout	-.3231	.0000	-.3235	.0000
Limited English	.1114	.0666	.0813	.1780
Unemployment Rate	-.0958	.0000		
Services Received				
CRT	.2234	.0000	.1322	.0190
WE/TOE	.2479	.0023	.1449	.0803
TA	.0713	.4017	-.1101	.2208
Adjusted R-squared	.0931		.1190	

Source: Client-level data from nine programs compiled by BPA for this study. (See Appendix B for details.) Because one program did not provide data on sex, only eight programs were used in the analysis (n = 2340).

Results from the Case File Reviews

The above analyses have presented information about the likelihood of placement and wage levels. However, the client-level database had no information about the kinds of jobs that clients obtained, and whether they related to the type of training received. To address these issues, we turn to an analysis of the data extracted from client case files during the second round of site visits. At each program, the site visitor selected a random sample of six terminees from PY 91, with attention to obtaining a sample representative of the type of training offered in that program (e.g., if the program offered mostly OJT, four or five OJT terminees were selected). Both positive and negative terminees were sampled. Information was extracted on the clients' characteristics, the service plans, services received, and outcomes, including follow up outcomes if available. There were 108 clients in the sample; however, not all data items were available for all clients.

According to the quality of training model, programs should have a clear placement strategy and goal for each participant. Programs should also find job placements that build on the skills the participant acquired during training and are consistent with the employment goals established in the EDP. Therefore, we examined the services received and outcomes in the case file sample to see how well the outcomes matched the training received. This analysis is particularly applicable to persons receiving classroom training.

Table IX-7 summarizes the findings for those in classroom training. A total of 56 clients received some kind of CRT. Of these, 15 received basic skills training only, 17 received occupational training only, and the remaining 24 received some combination of basic and occupation skills training. Of the 41 clients receiving occupational training, 33, or 80%, were placed in jobs. Thus, this sample was much more successful than the larger sample in the client-level database, discussed above, where only 46% of the CRT terminees were placed in a job. Of the 31 placements for which data on the occupation were available, 22, or 71%, were placed in a training-related occupation.

Table IX-7

OUTCOMES EXPERIENCED BY PARTICIPANTS IN THE CASE FILE REVIEW SAMPLE

	Participants	Job Placements
TOTAL CRT	56	44
Basic Skills Only	15	11
Occupational Skills Only	17	13
Both Basic and Occupational	24	20
Total Occupational CRT	41	33
Occupation Data Available		31
Placed in Training-Related Occupation		22
TOTAL OJT	29	21
Employed at Follow-Up		18

The case files allowed us to examine the reasons why participants were not placed or if placed, were not placed in training-related occupations. For a large proportion of the sample, these reasons were personal and beyond the control of program staff: clients had family emergencies, medical problems, injuries, pregnancies, or jail terms that prevented their completing training or taking a job. When the personal situation interrupted training, some clients could not return to complete training, and ended up in unrelated assembly, food service, or housekeeping jobs. Others moved unexpectedly and their outcomes were unknown, although it was reported that one client had obtained a training-related job at his new home even though he had been unable to complete the program before he moved. A few participants appeared to have successfully completed training, but could not be placed in a training-related job, although the exact reasons were not discernable from the case files. For instance, two clients who completed training in office occupations and shipping and receiving returned to their previous jobs working as waiters; another completed training in auto mechanics, with good evaluations from the instructors, but was unable to find a job after two months of searching. Only one client in this sample returned to agriculture at termination; however, others who dropped out may have returned as well. In a few cases the client files indicated that the clients were still searching for work at termination.

It is difficult to determine through paper review whether program staff efforts could have prevented some of these outcomes. Sometimes there were extensive case notes documenting staff efforts to help participants complete training (e.g., in the case of a client with a number of suspensions for behavioral reasons) or obtain training-related jobs (e.g., a client who received a training-related OJT after extensive efforts to place her had failed). Since the non-training related jobs that participants obtained were entry-level jobs that did not require special aptitudes, it did not appear that the outcomes were the results of poor assessments or matches to type of training. Rather, clients' personal lives seemed to have overtaken them on the road to finishing training or during the job search, and they ended up taking whatever job was available. An exception to this general conclusion was a case of a woman who had previously received vocational training (through Title IIA) as a welder. She was receiving AFDC and had done

seasonal farmwork the previous year. She wanted the §402 program to support her through cosmetology training, but quit after a month to take a welding job.

Of the 15 clients receiving basic skills training only, 11 (73%) were placed in jobs at termination, indicating that basic skills training can have payoffs in terms of placements as well as employability enhancements. Mostly these were entry-level jobs as assemblers or other production jobs, with one participant who had had only a second grade education in Mexico getting a job as a restaurant dishwasher after completing about 200 hours of basic skills training. Wages ranged from minimum wage to about $5.00/hour, which were on the low end of the wages earned by classroom training participants as a whole.

There were a few cases where information was available about the results of the basic skills training itself. Several participants who were attending GED classes concurrently with other CRT or on a stand-alone basis dropped out and did not take the GED test, indicating that this outcome is particularly difficult to achieve. For instance, one client who tested at the eighth grade level at entry attended classes 25 hours a week for 8 weeks. He did not take the GED test, although the case file noted that he planned to do so in the future; he took a job in a poultry plant. On the other hand, the files also showed several success stories about GEDs. One woman completed her GED in a 13-week intensive program before entering a 16-week accounting training course. While she was still in job search at termination, it is likely that this combination of training will result in a job when the job market in her area improves.

For OJT, the question of training-related placement does not arise. However, the case files allowed us to examine completion and retention issues. A large proportion of the OJT recipients in the sample completed their training and were hired by the OJT employer (21 of 29, or 72%). Of the eight who did not complete, only two were terminated by the employer: one was laid off due to slow business and one was fired for poor performance. Four others quit: three to take higher-paying jobs they found on their own, and one to leave the area.

Only three OJT clients (14%) lost their jobs between termination and follow-up. One was laid off due to slow business, one moved out of the area, and no reason was given for the third. These examples seem to indicate that the issues for OJT participants are the same both during and after the training period: to be effective, programs need to carefully match participants to jobs that pay enough to meet their needs and to select companies where work is expected to be stable.

Agricultural Upgrades

Agricultural upgrades are a subset of placement outcomes that consist of jobs in agricultural areas that are nonetheless higher-skilled or higher-paying than the kinds of agricultural work previously performed by farmworkers. DOL has encouraged agricultural upgrades in order to "improve opportunities for farmworkers in a manner which will also strengthen the nation's agricultural economy" (Farmworker Bulletin No. 90-6). Agricultural upgrade placements are reported separately, but otherwise there are no different requirements associated with these placements. DOL envisioned that up to 10% of §402 participants might obtain upgraded agricultural employment.

Information about the place of agricultural upgrades in programs' overall service designs was obtained during site visits. Nine of the programs placed little or no emphasis on agricultural upgrades as an outcome. Most of these programs pointed on the one hand to the lack of upgraded agricultural employment in their areas, and on the other hand to the desire of farmworkers to leave agriculture. They felt that their missions as employment and training programs whose goals were to help farmworkers leave agriculture would be compromised by attempting to develop agricultural employment for farmworkers. For some of these programs, an occasional placement was counted as an agricultural upgrade, sometimes after basic skills training had been provided by the program.

Another seven programs had been influenced by the DOL directive to seek out upgraded agricultural positions, but most of these programs felt that the placements provided very little in improved conditions for farmworkers. The types of jobs

considered to be agricultural upgrades included: work in poultry plants, meat packing, canneries, and mushroom farms, and occasional mechanics or other year-round farm employees. The processing jobs had several advantages: they were often year-round, they sometimes offered substantial wages (up to $6-7/hour), and they could be done by clients with very low levels of basic skills. However, program staff also thought that these jobs did little to improve clients' employability in the long run. Jobs were usually obtained through direct placement but some were OJTs.

Two programs had developed training programs to prepare a small number of participants for upgraded agricultural employment, but otherwise felt there were limited opportunities in agriculture. One program supported participants to attend a 10-week farm technology course offered by a local community college in the off season. This program taught participants to operate and repair farm machines, many of which are now highly complicated and in some cases computerized, and also included a basic skills component so that workers would be able to read instructions and status panels on the machines. Technical skills taught included welding, engine repair, transmission and hydraulic repair, farm implement repair and reconditioning, and basic shop. All training was done on state-of-the-art equipment. The goal was to have clients return to higher-level jobs at their old employers. Participants could attend for a second year if they felt they had not yet mastered all the material.

Another program worked with a voc-tech school in a very rural county with few non-agricultural job opportunities to develop a training program in organic gardening and horticulture. In this program participants learned the skills to work in the many nurseries in the area, and also upgraded their basic skills. The program runs for eight weeks, with concurrent vocational and ABE/ESL instruction. It is open entry so that participants can start at any time; however, it is most popular during the off season. Program staff report that only a small number of participants are interested in such training, but they are glad to have developed an alternative in this particular area.

It is clear that some programs are willing to follow the DOL directive with regard to agricultural upgrades, but on the whole these placements were not viewed as a

particular focus. In some cases, staff were philosophically opposed to putting any efforts into developing jobs in a field that their participants wanted to leave. The types of jobs that were identified as agricultural upgrades were usually of low quality, in that they had few transferable skills and poor working conditions.

Employability Enhancements

Beginning in PY 91, §402 programs could use the employability enhancement as an outcome for terminees. DOL established five categories of enhancements:

- entered non-Section 402 training;
- returned to full-time school;
- completed major level of education;
- completion of worksite training objective; and
- attained basic/occupational skills proficiency.

Although not currently used as a performance standard per se, employability enhancement can be used to modify the base in calculating the entered employment rate, thus making EER standards easier to attain.

The introduction of the employability enhancement as a reporting item was designed to recognize programs' efforts to enhance the long-term employability and earnings of participants. This is important for programs serving farmworkers because participants are frequently very hard to serve; some need extensive remediation before their goal of placement in a job with adequate wages and benefits is attainable. Thus, the introduction of enhancements removes a disincentive to target the hardest-to-serve who may need substantial training before they are employable.

How Programs Implemented Employability Enhancements

The implementation of the employability enhancement was characterized by great variation across programs, many of which had considerable difficulty in operationalizing

some or all of the five outcomes. There also continues to be confusion among programs about how to document participants' progress and achievement to show that an employability enhancement has occurred. After our second round of site visits during PY 91, the operationalization of employability enhancements was still evolving and programs were continuing to modify their training designs to integrate the new outcomes.

Table IX-8 shows the national averages of employability enhancements provided by programs, as well as the averages for the client-level sample. The distribution of types of enhancements in the sample is similar to the universe, although participants in the sample were more likely to attain an enhancement. Few program terminees received the first two enhancements specified by DOL -- entered non-Section 402 training, and returned to full-time school. However, programs varied in what circumstances constituted a return to full-time school. Some programs terminated into this category youth who were dropouts and had not received their high school diplomas, but who returned to school after receiving program services. Some programs also served in-school youth who were "at risk" of dropping out. However, programs were still grappling with the issue of how long a participant should be enrolled in full-time school before claiming credit for the enhancement. Other issues pertaining to services for in-school youth also were unsettled in many cases, such as how to identify those participants who are "at risk," and what programs can do to demonstrate that their services were instrumental in keeping the youth in school.

As Table IX-8 indicates, the enhancement categories "completed a major level of education" and "completed worksite training objectives" were used, on average, more frequently. The former category was the easiest to define and operationalize; most often this means completion of the GED or high school. However, defining and operationalizing the completed worksite training objectives proved more difficult. Several programs claimed this enhancement for training provided through work experience and tryout employment. These enhancements covered a very wide range of jobs such as general maintenance, carpentry, clerical, child care, and construction.

Table IX-8

PERCENT OF TERMINEES RECEIVING VARIOUS TYPES OF EMPLOYABILITY ENHANCEMENTS (ALL GRANTEES AND CLIENT-LEVEL SAMPLE)

	All Programs (n = 52)	Client-Level Sample (n = 9)
Percent of E & T terminees who received any enhancement	37%	41%
Percent of E & T terminees who received enhancement only	14%	17%
Percent who entered non-402 training*	2%	3%
Percent who returned to full-time school*	6%	11%
Percent who completed a major level of education*	13%	13%
Percent who completed worksite training objectives*	20%	22%
Percent who obtained basic or occupational skills proficiency*	59%	52%

*Some of these terminees may have also entered employment at termination.

Source: Data in the "All Programs" column are from PY 91 ASRs. Data in the second column are from the client-level database compiled by BPA (see Appendix B for details), which are also from PY 91.

While we did not observe the quality of training in each of these cases, it was evident through file reviews and discussions with case managers that programs varied greatly in the goals developed for these participants, the level of instruction participants received, and how they were assessed while in these jobs. This variation makes exceedingly difficult the task of interpreting the degree to which completion of worksite training objectives actually enhanced a participant's long-term employability.

To add to this challenge, in some programs participants who successfully completed their OJT received this enhancement, although most programs excluded OJT participants from obtaining an enhancement without additional training (such as ESL). Nevertheless, staff from several programs questioned why participants in work experience and tryout employment, but not those in OJT, were eligible to receive an enhancement. They asserted that well-done OJTs clearly offered training that improved the long-term employability and earnings potential of participants, and hence, seemed to capture the intent of the enhancement concept at least as well as work experience.

The vast majority of enhancements were recorded in the category of "attained basic or occupational skills proficiency." This comes as no surprise, because most programs were targeting enhancements to the hardest-to-serve who needed substantial basic skills remediation. Here again, programs varied greatly in how they defined, documented, and operationalized this enhancement. Although most programs considered only classroom training as the appropriate service activity for this outcome, several programs stated that OJT could be used as long as training goals were documented in participants' service plans and the OJT resulted in a placement.

Interpreting the extent to which meaningful skill gains were imparted was also made difficult by the variety of ways in which programs documented attainment. Some programs developed broad criteria to measure skill attainment, which were relatively easy to document and attain, while others implemented more strict requirements for documenting skill gains. For example, in basic skills some programs simply required a minimum duration of participation, often at existing local courses that lacked clear goals and criteria by which to measure skill attainment. Other programs developed clear

training objectives and extensive curricula that were sometimes competency-based, and provided instruction that was tuned to the needs of local employers in demand occupations. For the latter programs, participants' needs and progress were very discernible, and the assessments clearly and convincingly recorded skill attainment.

Even when programs worked hard to establish clear goals and objectives, it was difficult to determine whether or not an enhancement occurred. This was particularly vexing for two promising programs that developed ESL instruction for in-stream migrant farmworkers. Attempting to address the problem of farmworkers leaving language courses before staff could document skill gains with a post-test, these programs designed continuous monitoring and documentation of participants' progress so that enough information would be available to demonstrate skill attainment if participants left suddenly. To document skill gains, participants were divided into groups according to their facility with English. Goals were developed for each group, and tasks indicating attainment of proficiency within the groups were constructed. While a decided improvement on the first attempt to document skill attainment, the goals against which participant progress were measured were frequently simple tasks within a narrow range of skills (e.g., learning the English alphabet). In other words, the skills that some participants acquired in these programs could scarcely be considered sufficient to improve their long-term employability.

It is important to note that these efforts are still undergoing considerable change and that the process of serving and documenting training outcomes for in-stream migrant farmworkers is still evolving. Nevertheless, these examples illustrate the definitional and documentation problems that confront programs implementing employability enhancements.

Impact of Employability Enhancements on Program Design

Program staff generally received the introduction of employability enhancements with enthusiasm. They appreciated the opportunity to get credit for training they had been providing all along, even when training did not result in employment. Thus, the

introduction of employability enhancements required many programs to make few design changes other than keeping more careful documentation. On the other hand, in some cases enhancements clearly encouraged a long-term training horizon and have given rise to some new training practices.

The advent of employability enhancements also led to a reduction in the use of OJT at some programs. Before the enhancements, some programs used OJT for those who could not obtain employment, even after substantial training. The OJTs were viewed as a type of "safety net" to avoid terminating someone without employment. To some extent employability enhancements have taken the place of these OJTs, because they encourage more extensive training to address, such as linking occupational skills with basic skill training.

Some programs, however, viewed the employability enhancements with skepticism. They were concerned that providing employability enhancements would dilute the emphasis of the §402 program on obtaining job placements. Moreover, as a practical matter, they felt that the variety of ways in which some of the enhancement categories are defined would make them difficult to interpret as a reporting item or to compare the outcomes of one program with the next based on ASR data alone. The administrator at one program noted "an employability enhancement is whatever you want it to be."

Who Receives Employability Enhancements

In most of the sample programs, participants targeted to receive employability enhancements were among the hardest to serve. Candidates for enhancements were typically participants with the lowest skills who were undergoing basic skills training, such as GED preparation and ESL instruction. These included both participants receiving basic skills instruction in-house and those who were referred to outside providers. Several programs targeted enhancements to those with the most barriers because these participants were least likely to obtain employment after training and staff

wanted to receive credit for the training they provided regardless of whether the participant subsequently obtained employment.

Youth were also commonly targeted to receive employability enhancements. Six programs specifically targeted enhancements for dropout youth, and other programs targeted dependents of farmworkers receiving ESL, and young farmworkers with multiple barriers who were attending GED preparation courses. In three programs, youth who were still in school but at risk of dropping out were also a focus of employability enhancements. Examples of programs for in-school youth included one program that helped at-risk youth prepare for their high school accreditation exam, which was required by the state before a diploma could be issued. Another program focused on dropout prevention for bilingual youth.

An emerging trend among programs was targeting enhancements to in-stream migrant farmworkers. Three upstream programs developed English language courses for migrant farmworkers and their families who intended to continue working in the migrant stream. These programs used employability enhancements to receive credit for providing training to participants for whom an immediate job placement was not intended. Program staff perceived the training as a long-term investment that provided a foundation for occupational skill training and eventual placement in non-agricultural jobs. Staff also felt that the language training facilitated an improvement in working conditions while in agriculture, because language modules addressed health and safety issues both in the field and at home.

Results from the Client-Level Database. Table IX-9 shows the characteristics of clients in the client-level database who received various employability enhancements. The table confirms that there were indeed variations in the kinds of clients receiving different enhancements.

There were few differences by gender, although females were more likely to obtain a basic or occupational skills proficiency. This is probably a reflection of their greater receipt of classroom training and lower likelihood of job placement. Migrants

Table IX-9

TYPE OF ENHANCEMENT BY CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

	Entered Non-402 Training	Returned to School	Completed Level of Education	Completed Worksite Objectives	BS/OS Proficiency
TOTAL	3%	11%	13%	22%	52%
Female	3%	11%	13%	21%	53%
Male	3%	13%	16%	28%	40%
Migrant	1%	20%	9%	19%	51%
Seasonal	4%	5%	15%	24%	52%
Dropouts	1%	3%	12%	20%	64%
Students	0%	83%	1%	1%	16%
Graduates	5%	1%	17%	30%	47%
White	5%	1%	27%	21%	47%
Black	4%	6%	20%	32%	38%
Hispanic	2%	15%	8%	17%	59%
Other	2%	0%	13%	42%	43%
Under 16	0%	93%	0%	4%	4%
16-21	4%	23%	19%	15%	39%
22-44	2%	2%	12%	31%	53%
45 and over	1%	0%	3%	30%	66%
Limited English	1%	3%	3%	17%	77%
Not Limited	3%	13%	17%	24%	43%
Homebase	3%	13%	9%	16%	60%
Upstream	2%	4%	25%	38%	31%

Source: Client-level database from nine programs (see Appendix B for details).

were more likely to return to full-time school than seasonal farmworkers; a few states in our sample had targeted at-risk migrant youth. This is also illustrated by the large percentage of students who returned to school. Dropouts, on the other hand, were most likely to obtain a basic or occupational skills proficiency. It is unclear why 17% of graduates received credit for completing a major level of education, since programs reported that this outcome was mostly used for GED recipients. However, it could also reflect completion of certificate or degree programs at community colleges or voc-tech schools.

Hispanic participants were most likely to obtain a basic or occupational skills proficiency, most likely reflecting their attendance at basic skills classes. Among the age groups, older participants were also in this category, whereas younger participants were more likely to return to school.

Those with limited English were far more likely to obtain a basic or occupational skills proficiency than those without limitations. Clients in homebase states were also more likely to be in this category than their counterparts in upstream states, where completing worksite objectives or a major level of education were more common outcomes.

Thus, the client-level database illustrates the trends that were reported on site visits: that younger clients were encouraged to return to school, and older participants with severe barriers such as limited English or the lack of a high school diploma were given basic and occupational skills training to increase their employability.

Summary

The implementation of employability enhancements was still evolving as we completed our site visits, and programs are likely to continue modifying their training designs to incorporate the enhancements. The enhancements are promoting training of longer duration that is targeted to the hardest-to-serve. Further, the enhancements have also led to innovative training designs for populations that are especially difficult to

serve. These include program for in-stream migrant farmworkers and their families for language training, programs targeting services to high school dropouts, and a new migrant health operation to train farmworkers in health-related occupations.

Implementing the enhancements, however, has not been without problems. As we have observed, the great variation in defining and operationalizing enhancements and documenting attainment poses serious challenges for those who wish to compare enhancement outcomes and strategies. For example, a participant in one program who received a few weeks of language remediation from an ABE program, and a participant in another who received six months of integrated competency-based language and occupational skill training both achieved the same outcome (attained basic or occupational skills proficiency). Yet the two programs expended vastly different resources on training these two participants, and, in the former case, it is unclear whether any appreciable skill gain took place.

Much of the variation in operationalizing the enhancements and lingering confusion about appropriate documentation is a result of the looseness of the definitions for the enhancements. To the extent that employability enhancements give programs flexibility to weave the outcomes into the fabric of their training designs, the broad definitions for the enhancements are warranted. But without further guidance about the role of enhancements for farmworkers and greater clarity about the purpose of employability enhancements, the power of this outcome to reflect meaningful skill gains is unclear.

X. FACTORS INFLUENCING PROGRAM DESIGN AND OUTCOMES

The conceptual model we presented in Chapter I draws attention to the multitude of external factors that influence programs' service design and operation. These include:

- Federal policies, such as the MSFW program's regulations and performance standards.

- State and local level factors, such as general economic conditions, types of agricultural production, and position in the migrant stream.

- Resource constraints and opportunities, such as the size of a program's grant allocation and the availability of service providers and other service agencies with which programs might coordinate.

Our discussion in each of the preceding chapters has drawn attention to the ways in which these factors have been important in shaping (for example) service design, the operation of classroom training or OJT, coordination and leveraging, the use of supportive services, and so on. In this chapter, we bring these observations together to describe in general terms our findings with respect to influences on programmatic design and operation.

FEDERAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Among the federal policies and practices whose effects we examined were performance standards, eligibility guidelines, cost category and funding limits, IRCA, and the provision of technical assistance. These are discussed in turn.

Effects of Performance Standards

Two required performance outcomes were used in the MSFW program from the inception of JTPA through PY 90. These two were:

- The entered employment rate, defined as the number of terminees who entered unsubsidized employment divided by all terminees, excluding youths who received an employability enhancement only (i.e., an employability enhancement but not a job placement) and youths or adults who received services-only.

- The cost per entered employment, defined as total costs, less the costs of administration and services-only, divided by the number of terminees who entered employment.

In September of 1990, DOL convened an Ad Hoc Technical Workgroup to help clarify the goals of the MSFW program and give advice on the performance-standards and reporting requirements. After extensive deliberations conducted over the next several months, a comprehensive set of changes was introduced, including the adoption of new performance requirements, which became effective with PY 91. Specifically:

- The entered employment rate (EER) was retained as an outcome, but was substantively redefined to exclude adult (as well as youth) enhancements-only from the base.

- The cost per entered employment (CEE) was eliminated as a performance outcome.

- The average wage at placement was added as a new outcome.

In support of the revised performance outcomes and program objectives, a number of changes also were made to the Annual Status Report. Among these changes, grantees were required to report: the number of their terminees (both youths and adults) who

obtained employability enhancements; postprogram outcomes, including the number of terminees placed in jobs at termination who also were employed at follow-up; and additional characteristics of terminees, including the number who have multiple barriers to employment, who have reading skills below the 7th grade level, or who are long-term agricultural employees. DOL intended that these changes encourage targeting on the hard-to-serve, improve the quality and intensity of training services, and foster a programmatic emphasis on improving the long-term employability of program participants.

Observations from the Site Visits

Apart from the MSFW program's regulations, perhaps no element of federal policy is as visible or as potentially far-reaching in its impact on program design and operations as the performance-standards system. With its designation of performance outcomes and numerical targets, DOL explicitly constrains programs to be certain of recording minimum achievements along specified dimensions, or risk being defunded. Moreover, by establishing performance standards DOL implicitly sends an unmistakable message to programs that certain outcomes rather than others are viewed as the primary indicators of judging a program's success.

Consequently, it was something of a surprise to learn that 12 of the 18 programs professed that performance standards had a minimal impact on their client targeting and service design. In many cases, these were programs that had leveraged substantial funds from non-§402 sources or had developed extensive linkages for referrals and coordination. Thus, they felt that by drawing on non-§402 resources they could largely run their programs as they saw fit without worrying about performance standards, including the presence of a cost standard. Other programs without access to outside funding sources indicated that they never felt that performance standards constituted an important constraint, and that they had little difficulty in meeting their standards. Although most of these 12 programs lauded the recent changes in performance standards, they envisioned making at best only minor modifications in their program operations in response. Instead, they viewed the changes as bringing DOL policy in line with what

they saw as their program's focus all along. The study team felt that in at least a few of these cases the program's cavalier attitude was unwarranted, because neither client targeting nor an emphasis on long-term training was much in evidence.

The remaining six programs acknowledged that the pre-PY 91 entered employment rate (EER) and the cost per entered employment (CEE) standards had had pronounced impacts on their service designs and targeting. Administrators in these programs relayed very much the same story: that fears about meeting their EER and especially the CEE standard made it difficult for them to provide the long-term training that they thought their participants needed, discouraged them from targeting or actively recruiting the hardest-to-serve, and caused them to focus more on obtaining quick job placements rather than quality jobs. For example, one Executive Director acknowledged that the CEE standard caused his program to concentrate on serving high school graduates. Several other programs pointed to the CEE standard as the primary reason for their heavy reliance on OJTs rather than classroom training. Several program administrators who had been providing employment and training services to farmworkers through CETA regretted the change from CETA to JTPA because of what they saw as JTPA's misguided focus on short-term training and low-cost job placements. Nonetheless, the fact that almost all these programs typically exceeded their minimum standards on EER and CEE by a wide margin every year suggests that they were motivated primarily to excel using DOL's measures of success, rather than out of a realistic fear of missing a standard.

Consistent with these sentiments, these programs told the evaluation staff during the first wave of site visits that the abandonment of the cost standard and the redefinition of EER were welcomed wholeheartedly. They each expressed as a consequence the intent to increase their targeting of the harder-to-serve and to revise their service designs to include training of longer duration, more basic skills remediation, and a shift away from OJTs and towards classroom training.

We were quite interested, therefore, to return to these programs for the second round of site visits to learn what changes had in fact been made. In five of the six

programs, the changes could be described as pronounced. In four programs, wholesale changes in operations were in evidence, which included: the adoption of a client-driven, case management approach; the requirement that case managers have formal training in counseling; the implementation of clear targeting guidelines; a reduction in caseloads; and a shift towards longer-term training. In the fifth program, changes were less far-reaching, but a shift towards longer-term training was clearly in evidence. In the sixth program, which did not evidence pronounced programmatic changes, the Executive Director continued to profess an interest in substantially altering the program's design, but was proceeding very cautiously.

Even among the 12 programs maintaining that they were little impacted by performance standards, the second round of visits showed that in seven programs some modest changes in program features could be attributed to the elimination of the cost standard or the revised calculation of the entered employment rate. For example, several programs had instituted ESL training for in-stream migrants. Others had increased their emphasis on basic skills training, GED preparation, or vocational classroom training to some degree. Thus, while leaving their overall programmatic focus largely intact, these seven programs found that the revised performance standards gave them, in the words of one program administrator, "a little breathing room" to try some new things.

One reason why the effects of the changes in performance standards might not have been more widespread was a degree of uncertainty among many programs regarding DOL's true intent. For example, four programs expressed the sentiment that the elimination of the cost standard was largely illusory, because with or without a formal cost standard, they felt that DOL would still look closely at costs per participant or per placement during its routine monitoring. Several other programs felt that DOL's habit of monitoring programs according to how closely their actual achievements matched planned achievements (e.g., the absolute number of job placements planned, as recorded on the Program Planning Summary) also worked against their making innovations or taking the risk of targeting a harder-to-serve clientele. According to their logic, the revised definition of the entered employment rate, which eliminates adult enhancements-only from the base, gives them some protection in serving the hard-to-serve, for whom

an employability enhancement may be likely but a job placement is uncertain. However, from the program's point of view, as long as their performance is monitored according to their planned achievements, the high degree of uncertainty regarding job placements for the hardest-to-serve makes increased targeting of that group somewhat risky. Put differently, some programs simply felt that the safest course was to continue planning to do what they had been doing all along, regardless of changes to performance standards.

Trends in Recent ASR Data

A clear intent of the recent changes to the performance-standards system was to encourage programs to provide longer-term training to a harder-to-serve clientele and to shift focus from the quantity to the quality of job placements. A comparison of aggregate ASR data over time provides at least inferential evidence of whether these changes had their intended effects. If such effects did occur, then data reported for PY 91 (when the revisions took effect) might show, relative to prior years:

- An increase in the percentage of terminees who are hard-to-serve, including those with low levels of education or who have other barriers to employment, such as welfare recipiency or limited English proficiency.

- An increase in the average length of program participation.

- A shift in the mix of training that is provided, as programs move to increase their use of classroom training.

- A decrease in the number of job placements, and especially placements from training assistance, as some programs refocus their efforts away from quick job placements and towards employability enhancements and quality job placements.

- An increase in the average wage at termination, as programs endeavor to obtain higher quality job placements.

- An increase in the average cost per entered employment, as a result of the increased emphasis on intensive training.

Although PY 91 might be too soon for changes in performance standards to have had pronounced effects on the client mix or outcomes, early developments might nonetheless be in evidence. Therefore, we examined trends using data on the characteristics of employment and training terminees, services provided, and program outcomes taken from the ASRs filed by all 53 MSFW programs for the period from 1989 (PY 89) to 1991 (PY 91). PY 89 and PY 90 represent two program years *preceding* the introduction of the recent performance standards and reporting changes; PY 91 represents the first year *after* these changes were introduced. Using data from these three years, we computed averages of the values reported by each of the programs (i.e., these are program averages rather than terminee averages), by program year.

Terminee Characteristics. Table X-1 reveals the changes in the average characteristics of employment and training terminees who were served. These results show that the characteristics of terminees have remained remarkably constant on most dimensions measured comparably for these three years. The gender, age, and race/ethnic distributions have changed very little, for example, and dropouts were no more likely to be served in PY 91 than in prior years. Similarly, the proportion of terminees with barriers to employment, including limited English proficiency, while suggesting formidable challenges to programs attempting to meet participants' needs, nonetheless have changed very little over these three years. Thus, if programs have modified their outreach and targeting in response to the revised performance standards, PY 91 is perhaps too soon to have changes on the characteristics of terminees appear.

Program Characteristics. Somewhat more pronounced changes in program and service characteristics have occurred, as Table X-2 makes clear. For example, the average number of E&T terminees per program has fallen appreciably in PY 91, consistent with the observations from the site visits that some programs were intending to use their fixed resources to provide more intensive services but reduce the number being served. Although the downward trend in the average weeks participated suggests

Table X-1

AVERAGE TERMINEE CHARACTERISTICS, BY PROGRAM YEAR

Terminee Characteristics	PY 89	PY 90	PY 91
Farmworker Group			
Migrant	27.0%	28.1%	--
Instate migrant	--	--	5.8%
Interstate migrant	--	--	23.1%
Seasonal	73.0%	71.9%	71.1%
Sex			
Male	66.8%	67.7%	65.4%
Female	33.2%	32.3%	34.6%
Age			
Under 16	0.4%	0.4%	0.5%
16 to 21	26.1%	23.8%	25.5%
22 to 44	66.1%	66.4%	65.2%
45 and over	7.3%	9.4%	8.8%
Education Status			
Dropout, 8th grade or less	28.0%	29.3%	28.1%
Dropout, 9th to 12th grade	29.7%	30.8%	29.8%
Student, high schoo or less	1.5%	1.7%	2.3%
High school graduate, equivalent, or above	40.8%	38.2%	39.8%
Race/Ethnicity			
White (not Hispanic)	23.9%	23.6%	22.5%
Black (not Hispanic)	16.0%	16.4%	16.3%
Hispanic	54.5%	54.8%	56.1%
Other	5.5%	5.2%	5.1%
Other Characteristics			
Single head of household with dependent children	14.3%	12.3%	10.9%
Limited English language proficiency	35.4%	33.4%	36.5%
Handicapped	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Reading skills below 7th grade level	--	--	44.1%
Long-term agricultural employment	--	--	46.0%
Multiple barriers to employment	--	--	59.9%
Unemployed	79.8%	80.0%	79.8%
Welfare recipient	15.4%	14.9%	--
Public assistance recipient	--	--	24.8%
Veteran (total)	--	--	3.3%
Average earnings (52 wks. pre-program for those who entered employment)	$3,885	$4,046	$4,214
Number of programs[1]	51	51	51

[1]One program did not file an ASR for PY 89. Another was omitted from the PY 91 averages because of extensive arithmetic errors on its ASR. These programs were omitted from the calculations in all years to ensure that comparisons over time would be based on a constant case base.

Table X-2

AVERAGE PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS, BY PROGRAM YEAR

Program Characteristics	PY 89	PY 90	PY 91
Average number of terminees	375.6	351.8	319.3
Training duration for terminees			
Average weeks participated[1]	22.3	24.4	21.2
Training activity for terminees			
Classroom training	33.6%	34.6%	42.6%
On-the-job training	36.1%	37.9%	29.7%
Work experience or tryout employment	9.1%	7.6%	9.3%
Training assistance	21.3%	19.9%	18.3%
Training activity for participants[2]			
Classroom training	46.4%	48.8%	55.5%
On-the-job training	43.0%	41.7%	33.2%
Work experience or tryout employment	10.6%	9.5%	11.3%

[1]This item was redefined in PY 91 to omit the up-to-90 day period in inactive status after the participant's last receipt of services before termination is required. Thus, figures are not strictly comparable over time.

[2]In all three of these program years, training activities are reported for participants, and each participant could be listed as having participated in more than one activity. The percentage distribution for each grantee was calculated as the number of participants in an activity divided by all instances of training (i.e., the summation across activities, effectively counting participants as many times as they appear). In this way, the percents sum to 100. In PY 91, training assistance was added to the ASR as an additional category in which participants could be reported (although training assistance had been an allowable activity all along). Percentages were calculated omitting this training type in PY 91, to make results for PY 91 comparable to those for the earlier years.

that intensity has decreased, the falloff on this item in PY 91 can most likely be attributed to its revised definition. More tellingly, the incidence of classroom training, among both participants and terminees, has risen substantially in PY 91, while the use of OJT has fallen correspondingly. This trend can be attributed at least partly to the nationwide economic downturn that began about this time and which, programs have reported, made it more difficult for them to arrange OJT positions. Nonetheless, the trend seems to reflect to some degree the shift in programmatic emphasis planned by some programs in response to the revised performance standards.

Program Performance. Table X-3 continues the examination of trends by showing average program performance by program year. Most noticeably, the number of job placements as a percentage of all E&T terminees has fallen appreciably from PY 90 to PY 91, with nearly a 10 percentage point drop in evidence. Poor economic conditions nationwide can partly explain the decrease in job placements. Nonetheless, some programs in this study reported their intention to focus less on job placements and more on employability enhancements, and this shift is in evidence here.

At least by PY 91, however, the focus on longer-term training has not been reflected in an increase in the hourly wage obtained by those placed in a job at termination. In inflation adjusted dollars, the average wage at termination has hovered within a narrow 7-cent range over these three years.

Finally, the shift towards greater use of classroom training in place of OJT is reflected in a modest increase in the costs per termination in PY 91, even after expenditures have been adjusted for inflation. Given the falloff in the number of job placements, the increase in the costs per entered employment have been even more dramatic, rising from $4,723 in PY 90 (in PY 91 dollars) to $6,031 in PY 91.

Eligibility Guidelines

As described in detail in Chapter III, regulations for the §402 program currently restrict eligibility for services to farmworkers (and their dependents) who: work in

Table X-3

AVERAGE PERFORMANCE MEASURES, BY PROGRAM YEAR

Performance Measures	PY 89	PY 90	PY 91
Entered-employments, as a percent of non-services only terminees[1]	75.5%	71.0%	61.9%
Average hourly wage at placement			
Actual	$5.16	$5.38	$5.67
Adjusted to PY 91 dollars	$5.67	$5.60	$5.67
Cost per entered employment[2]			
Actual	$3,966	$4,533	$6,031
Adjusted to PY 91 dollars	$4,357	$4,723	$6,031
Cost per termination			
Actual	$2,878	$3,153	$3,416
Adjusted to PY 91 dollars	$3,162	$3,286	$3,416

[1]It is not possible to subtract from the base youth employability enhancements only in PY 91, nor is it possible to subtract from the base all enhancements only (i.e., whether youth or adult) prior to PY 91. Thus, to show trends in the job placement rate measured consistently across all three years, *no* enhancements are subtracted from the base in any year. As a practical matter, the job placement rate calculated this way is quite close to the official EER as defined in PY 89 and PY 90, because grantees recorded very few youth enhancements only in these years. For example, the official EERs recorded in PY 89 and PY 90 were 74.3% and 72.2%, respectively, scarcely different from the figures recorded here.

[2]Costs have been computed as total costs minus the costs of administration and services-only.

selected agricultural industries for at least part of the year but not year around, are dependent on farmwork for their livelihood, and are economically disadvantaged. During our site visits, we investigated how these criteria were being implemented, whether eligibility rules seemed appropriate, and how the eligibility process might be streamlined.

We found that, uniformly, programs were quite careful in adhering to the eligibility rules and requiring proper documentation. Although this ensured that participation was restricted to eligible applicants only, the eligibility verification process itself can sometimes be very cumbersome and resource intensive. Farmworkers who are paid in cash, for example, often do not have receipts to document their employment history in farmwork, and employers are sometimes unwilling to search through their records to produce suitable verification. In these cases, the need to document eligibility--and to do so repeatedly, in the case of migrants who request service from a succession of §402 programs as they move through the migrant stream--can be wasteful of already meager program funds.

Similarly, the need for participants to meet the Selective Service registration requirements, although generally not a problem, sometimes caused delays in the eligibility determination of SAWs of as long as 6 months, while the §402 program waited for the Selective Service office to grant a waiver. Delays seemed to be related to the policies of local boards, some of which were willing to adapt a general procedure for all §402 applicants, and others of which acted only on a case-by-case basis.

Aside from instances of applicants lacking appropriate documentation, program staff were asked during the site visits whether there existed a segment of the farmworker population who could benefit from services, but who were excluded from participation by current eligibility rules. A number of categories were mentioned, although few were named by more than one or two programs. Two programs noted that they would prefer a longer look-back period than the current 24 months, because some applicants just barely missed eligibility because their farmwork experience was not recent enough. Two others noted that some applicants could not meet the seasonality restriction, because they worked in farmwork year-around (although, oddly, programs define seasonality

differently, with some requiring persons to work no more than 200 days and others no more than 49 weeks). In other cases, staff mentioned that they would like eligibility opened to workers in additional industries (e.g., cannery workers, workers on Christmas tree farms). Nonetheless, because the number of farmworkers who are eligible for services under current rules already far outstrip the number being served, it is not clear that expanding eligibility would serve any useful purpose. It does not appear, for example, that farmworkers who are ineligible are generally more disadvantaged than those already being served.

Of somewhat greater concern is that in some respects eligibility guidelines may already be *too* broad. Although the claim that farmworkers are all hard-to-serve was commonly voiced, it was nonetheless clear to the site visitors that some are clearly in greater need or have more extensive barriers to employment than others. Thus, we observed, at the one extreme, employment and training services being rendered to economically disadvantaged, long-term agricultural workers with severe basic skills or English language deficiencies. At the other extreme, we saw services to youths whose only apparent barrier was their lack of work experience, or adults who, by virtue of their high levels of basic skills and previous work experience, could have been served as easily by the local JTPA Title II program. In the most egregious cases we encountered, vocational training was being provided to recent high school graduates who were the sons of farmers and who were still living with their parents; they qualified for eligibility because they had worked during the summers on their family's or a neighbor's farm and they were not claimed as dependents when their parents filed income taxes. In light of these examples, DOL's recent directive that MSFW programs should redouble their efforts at targeting the hard-to-serve seems wholly appropriate in at least some cases.

Cost Category and Funding Limits

When asked, about two-thirds of the sampled programs mentioned that their funds were not nearly adequate.[1] The most frequently mentioned priority for additional funds was to increase expenditures for supportive services; indeed, without the funds available from other sources (e.g., block grant programs, weatherization programs, FEMA) several programs mentioned that their shortage of §402 dollars for supportive services would be particularly acute.

Another need for additional funds was to increase the duration of training. The need of farmworkers for training of long duration has always been apparent, and, given the recent abandonment of the cost standard, is one that many programs are increasingly trying to meet. Beyond that, several programs have pointed out that, perhaps because of IRCA, applicants in recent years seem especially hard to serve and are more likely to have multiple barriers to employment, including basic skills or English language deficiencies.

Finally, another need mentioned by programs is for additional funds to increase the number of clients who can be served. The §402 program has always been able to serve just a fraction of those eligible, but many programs are now finding that demand for their services is increasing, with the shortage of farmwork relative to the number of farmworkers making even in-stream migrants more willing to settle out than previously. Doubtless one reason many programs do not adopt clearer targeting and conduct more aggressive outreach is that passive recruitment methods, such as word of mouth, already succeed in bringing to them as many clients as they have funds to serve.

Importantly, the limitations that programs currently feel in their ability to provide adequate supportive services, long-term training, and services to more people appear to relate to the level of total funds available rather than to DOL-imposed restrictions on how

[1]Interestingly, many of these same programs spent considerably less than their total available 402 funds in PY 91, perhaps because they attempt to reserve some funds for contingencies.

funds can be spent. The only restriction on the use of funds that seemed at all important was the 20% limit on administration expenditures. A number of programs felt that this limit was barely workable and unfairly constrained opportunities for pay raises that they felt their administrative staff deserved.

The tradeoff between serving more clients or providing more intensive services was a more significant constraint than any cost category limitations. With the elimination of the cost-per-entered-employment performance standard, programs *could* spend more per client if they chose to, but with a fixed allocation they recognize that in doing so they would need to cut back on their enrollments. In other words, increasing the duration of training can come only at the expense of serving fewer people each year. Many programs are apparently reluctant to make this trade-off. Although a few programs told us that they intend to increase the duration of training very dramatically, most can be expected to proceed much more cautiously as long as the demand for their services remains high.

Similarly, most programs are not prohibited by regulation from increasing their expenditures on supportive services; i.e., they typically spent below the 15% limit on services only and spent substantially more than the required 50% of funds on training. Rather, the limitation they feel is one of being unwilling to cut back on enrollments or training costs to free up additional funds for supportive services. Thus, even if there were no constraints on services-only expenditures, programs would probably not make dramatic changes in their service strategy.

Given recent shifts in the farmworker population, increases in the number of persons requesting services and in their overall level of need are trends that can be expected to continue in the years ahead. Because §402 allocations are unlikely to increase dramatically any time soon, programs must deal with the increased demand for their services by leveraging and coordination, wherever possible, and by ensuring that their own funds are used as efficiently as possible. For example, clearer targeting and directed outreach on the part of some programs could ensure that funds would be spent on those who could most benefit. Similarly, improvements in the quality of training --

the matching of client needs to services provided, careful monitoring of the training delivered by service providers or in OJTs, etc. -- can promote greater effectiveness in the use of training dollars. In the absence of increased allocations, improved efficiency represents the only viable option for dealing with resource scarcity.

IRCA

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 provided for the legalization of, among others, undocumented individuals who qualified as special agricultural workers (SAWs), persons who had recently worked in American agriculture. Some 1 million persons were granted amnesty under this provision, substantially more than the number Congress anticipated.

The legalization of so many farmworkers was bound to affect the §402 program, and indeed it has. According to the recent report on the impact of SAWs, submitted to DOL by the Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs (AFOP, 1992), §402 grantees served over 15,000 SAWs in 1988 and 1989, and SAWs were generally more disadvantaged, with lower literacy skills and limited English proficiency, than other program participants.

The results of our qualitative analysis confirm many of the quantitative findings contained in AFOP's report. Of the 18 sampled programs, 13 reported that IRCA had a pronounced effect on the demand for their program's services, including an increase in the number of persons requesting services and a shift in the client mix towards migrants and Hispanics and those with limited English, basic skills deficiencies, and grade school educations.

Some programs were able to or attempted to accommodate these developments without making significant alterations in their program's design or operations. In a half-dozen programs, however, important programmatic changes ensued. These included the attempt to increase the program's effectiveness in serving persons who spoke primarily Spanish. In so doing, some programs hired bilingual staff members and others

encouraged or provided the opportunity for their existing staff to take Spanish-language instruction. One program, for example, translated its brochures and application form into Spanish, required staff to attend a brief seminar providing Spanish language instruction, and made language tapes available for staff to study at home.

Some programs also changed their service mix to at least some degree. For example, a number of programs reported that they increased their program's emphasis on ESL and basic skills training, given the increasing English language and basic skills deficiencies of participants. Others reported that they responded by increasing their provision of supportive services, including relocation assistance and services-only.

Unfortunately, the adequacy of these efforts sometimes seemed questionable. For example, some programs reported difficulty in recruiting qualified bilingual staff or had funds for only a part-time worker. Nonetheless, most programs that seemed to have limitations in meeting the needs of SAWs recognized their limitations and were taking steps to overcome them.

Technical Assistance

One way in which staff qualifications could be improved, to better meet the needs of SAWs or farmworkers in general, is through a regular process of technical assistance and training provided either by DOL, by an intermediate service provider (e.g., AFOP), or by the grantee itself. In particular, programs desiring to serve farmworkers effectively must develop the skills and capabilities of their organizations and staff on an ongoing basis.

Most programs we visited recognized this clearly, and some were actively concerned with upgrading staff qualifications, such as having them learn Spanish or take college-level coursework in counseling. Additionally, some programs periodically conducted workshops or training seminars for their own staff and developed manuals or other training tools.

Nonetheless, many programs were eager to have greater opportunities for receiving technical assistance and training. Monitoring visits by DOL staff, for example, typically were viewed as dealing with issues of compliance and documentation and were not seen as providing constructive advice in how to better meet the needs of clients or improve program quality. The periodic AFOP meetings were widely praised, but many program administrators felt the need for something more, including specialized training workshops of much longer duration. Other ideas included fostering strong regional associations or developing internship programs where program staff could visit their counterparts elsewhere in the country. Given that the bulk of the expertise in how to effectively serve farmworkers resides in the §402 organizations themselves, solutions that allow them to learn from each other make sense. This already happens on an informal basis, as program directors reported calling their counterparts in other programs or AFOP staff when faced with a difficult programmatic issue.

Although the dedication of §402 programs around the country was not in question, the qualifications and capabilities of staff appeared to vary widely. Often evaluation team members observed programs grappling with similar tasks -- for example, developing effective program strategies or training regimens such as effective ESL programs for migrants -- without access to knowledge about how others had succeeded in similar circumstances. This leads to wasted effort and mixed results across the country. Given funding limitations and the consequent constraints on salaries, programs simply are unable to hire staff who are expertly trained as counselors or employment and training program specialists. Thus, it is imperative that provisions be made for capacity building within the §402 system.

STATE AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

As the preceding chapters have indicated, myriad factors relating to the socioeconomic context affect program design and operations, from the characteristics of persons who are served to the types of services that are offered to the outcomes that are obtained. These factors, many of which are highly interrelated, include: the characteristics of the eligible population, position in the migrant stream, length of the

growing season, the extent and type of non-agricultural job opportunities, the degree of urbanicity, the presence and activism of other social service agencies, the presence and characteristics of service providers for classroom training, and the political climate. We review some of the key relationships that have emerged in the previous chapters by first describing effects of the agricultural and, next, non-agricultural contexts.

Effects of the Agricultural Context

The desperate circumstances within which many farmworkers live and work is constant across service areas. Much more variable are the number and characteristics of farmworkers and the duration and timing of periods of peak demand for farm labor. The effect of these factors is reflected in the characteristics of each §402 program's clients and, of course, in the number of persons requesting services. For example, as has been described in Chapter III, the race and ethnic composition of clients receiving employment and training services varies markedly across the agricultural regions, with blacks predominating in the Southeast and Delta states, and Hispanics predominating in the Pacific, Mountain, Cornbelt, and Lake states. Migrants are more common in the center of the country, especially in the Cornbelt and Lake states, and in the mid-Atlantic region. Education levels are generally lowest in the Pacific region and highest in the Plains and Delta regions. Limited English proficiency is more of a problem where Hispanic farmworkers predominate, and so on. Although there are no data that would allow us to determine the characteristics of the eligible population for individual grantees or programs, the variations we observed in the population served can be presumed to reflect underlying variations in the eligible population to some extent.

Clearly then, the agricultural context, via the characteristics of the client mix, has an impact on service strategies, as programs attempt to respond to varying client needs. Thus, where migrant farmworkers are common, services-only is found to be a more important program component. Where farmworkers with low levels of education and English proficiency predominate, most programs placed greater emphasis on basic skills remediation and ESL instruction.

The agricultural context also impacts service design directly, through effects on the duration and timing of training. For example, many programs tend to place more emphasis on services-only during the summer months, when farmworkers are more likely to be in need of emergency service, while they conduct peak training activity during the winter months, when the absence of agricultural activity enables farmworkers to devote their attention to training. Similarly, the short harvest season in some areas means that programs attempting to conduct ESL classes for in-stream migrants must compress their instruction sometimes to no more than a few weeks duration; this clearly has implications for the type of instruction that is provided, for the training goals that are established, and for the way clients' progress is monitored.

Unexpected fluctuations in the demand for agricultural labor also proved to be important and was an impediment to program planning. In several sites we visited, we learned that program staff had planned for client populations of a certain magnitude and type, but that disruptions to agricultural production, either in their local area or even elsewhere in the migrant stream, caused different types of applicants to arrive, at different times of the year, and sometimes with very different needs. Programs were best able to deal with these circumstances if they retained some measure of flexibility in design and operations, such as hiring part-time outreach workers later or earlier than expected, being able to shift dollars from one program component to another, and not being wedded to a single set of service providers.

Another facet of the agricultural context whose effects we examined was whether the program operated in a homebase or upstream state. This distinction proved to be important to a limited extent. Perhaps most importantly, programs in homebase states operated as one component in a network of social service agencies whose primary or sole focus was on serving the needs of farmworkers or Hispanics. Thus, opportunities for leveraging and coordination were plentiful, and the §402 programs in some cases accessed substantial amounts of non-§402 funds. By contrast, instances of leveraging and coordination occurred much less consistently in upstream states.

Beyond this, few consistent differences between homebase and upstream programs were in evidence, probably because the distinction itself is quite crude and does not begin to capture the complexity of the nation's migrant streams. For example, in some upstream states the eligible farmworker population consisted primarily of migrants, in other states primarily seasonals, and in still others a more even mixture of the two. As we have discussed, other characteristics of farmworkers also varied greatly across upstream states, with average levels of disadvantage far more pronounced in some regions than others. Similarly, the characteristics of farmworkers varied in important ways in homebase states as well. For example, in contrast to Florida and Texas, Hispanic farmworkers in California were more likely to be eighth grade dropouts and to have limited English proficiency, presumably because they had immigrated more recently. Thus, the simple distinction between upstream and homebase states proves not to be very powerful, with differences across programs within each group far more pronounced than the differences between groups.

Effects of the Non-Agricultural Context

Cyclical factors relating to the recent economic downturn of the non-agricultural economy clearly were important, as has been described in several preceding chapters. For example, because of weak economic conditions nationwide, many programs had difficulty meeting their planned number of placements, and they had difficulty arranging OJT slots for training.

Beyond cyclical factors, however, clearly important were a number of interrelated factors describing relatively static aspects of the socioeconomic context, such as the degree of urbanicity, population density, and the extent and type of training providers and non-agricultural employers in the §402 service areas. These features of the context have pronounced importance for the constraints and opportunities facing program operators as they attempt to meet the needs of their clients, including those involving supportive services, training, and outcomes.

To demonstrate this point, we can juxtapose the circumstances confronting, on the one extreme, a program or field office operating in a remote, rural area that is heavily dependent on agriculture and, at the other, a program or field office in or near a vibrant urban economy. In the first case, opportunities for coordination and leveraging are typically much more limited. Although the close-knit and personal nature of even business relationships common in small communities sometimes leads to a comraderie that fosters inter-agency cooperation, the *potential* for coordination is severely constrained because an extensive network of social service agencies is often simply absent. Thus, the §402 program may be the sole or one of only a few agencies that is able to provide services needed by farmworkers. In more concentrated population centers, by contrast, the §402 program may find itself working with a dozen or more other agencies.

Training options also are often limited in rural areas. Service providers for classroom training, for example, typically may be an hour's drive or more away. Unfortunately, options for OJT are often no better. In rural areas whose economies are dependent on agriculture, the pool of non-farm employers with whom OJTs can be developed is severely limited. This circumstance sometimes led the §402 program to be less careful than it should have been about ensuring that the OJTs' training requirements were being met.

By contrast, programs or field offices in more densely populated areas could be more selective in their choice of training and training providers. Even here, however, clients' needs for quality vocational classroom training often could not be met. In particular, entrance requirements imposed by many vocational CRT service providers in both rural and urban areas generally excluded high school dropouts and those with poor English-language proficiency and weak basic skills. The study team was struck by the limited opportunities for vocational training for hard-to-serve farmworkers across nearly all programs we visited. Nonetheless, options were generally richer near urban areas, especially for clients needing only limited basic skills remediation.

Finally, non-farm jobs appropriate for farmworkers were less numerous and varied in more rural areas. Thus, rural programs often relied on a smaller number of employers or at least a limited number of job types and obtained placements at generally lower wages than their counterparts operating near larger urban areas.

Programs serving farmworkers in more isolated areas developed a number of strategies for dealing with the constraints posed by their contexts. For example, many programs operated temporary field offices to serve as recruitment centers, directing enrollees who desired training and job placement to other field offices that were more centrally located. Relocation assistance was sometimes provided, both to in-stream migrants who were relocating in the area as well as to farmworkers who needed to relocate within a program's service area to pursue training. Help with transportation also was common. In a few programs, a shuttle bus service was established that transported participants daily to training centers; in many other cases, programs recognized the importance of providing stipends for transportation. These and other strategies have been described earlier in this report. Nonetheless, despite these adaptations, providing quality services and job placements to farmworkers in sparsely populated areas clearly posed special challenges.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

A final category of influences on design and operations that we considered is the program's resources. Chief among these are the size of its §402 allocation and whether it was part of a multi-state organization.

Size of the Allocation

The annual allocation of §402 dollars varies markedly across the programs we studied, from a low of under $200,000 to a high of over $5 million. A priori, we expected these enormous differences in scale to have pronounced implications for program design and operations. Larger programs, one would think, should realize advantages of economies of scale, because all programs regardless of size must bear

some fixed costs (e.g., costs of administration). Similarly, larger programs might be able to offer a broader array of services to clients.

Given these expectations, we were consequently surprised to learn how little size seemed to matter, beyond the trivial fact that larger programs serve more people. For example, most programs, large as well as small, use at or close to their full 20% allotment for administration. Although there is some evidence that administration costs are slightly lower on average in larger programs, the relationship is fairly weak. To be sure, larger programs are more likely to have specialized administration staff, such as for MIS or accounting, allowing for certain efficiencies. But it is not obvious that these translate into advantages to clients.

Similarly, and to our surprise, the range of training options available to clients seemed no greater in larger than smaller programs. Most programs, large and small, use outside service providers for vocational CRT, for example, so training options for specific occupations are constrained in all sizes of programs to the array offered by the training institutions. Similarly, larger programs seemed no more able (or willing) than smaller ones to work with training institutions to develop courses or curricula tailored to the needs of farmworkers; apparently, despite their appreciably larger number of trainees, the critical mass or some other factor was still lacking. Quality basic skills training, too, was as likely to be present in smaller programs as larger ones. To a small extent, size worked to the disadvantage of clients, because larger programs were more likely to develop group OJT contracts, which were less likely to be individualized to the needs of each participant.

One reason why size was not more important is probably because larger programs tend to have many more field offices, so in some sense the fixed costs are being borne repeatedly throughout its service area. In this way, the efficiencies and economies of scale that they might otherwise realize are largely negated.

Thus, our general conclusion is that small programs can be as effective as larger ones. However, it is clear that some minimal size threshold is necessary for a program

to be effective. In a number of the smaller programs we visited, the Directors told us that they felt it would be difficult to operate effectively if their §402 grant were any smaller. In this sense, DOL's decision to set a minimum funding floor (currently at $120,000) seems appropriate.

Multi-State Versus Single State Grantees

Of the 18 programs in our sample, all but six were part of multi-state CBOs that administered §402 grants in more than one state. The study team detected some effects of being a part of a multi-state organization on program design and operations, but, as with the size of the §402 allocation, these effects were not pronounced.

There is some evidence suggesting that multi-state grantees can realize some small efficiencies in the administration of their grants. For example, the cases in which the percent of funds used for administration was less than the 20% cap allowed by regulation were multi-state programs. In most cases, MIS and grant administration responsibilities were handled by a central office serving the programs operating in the multiple states, so each grant could realize some savings. However, the savings were usually small and there were many exceptions to the rule, with many cases of multi-state grantees charging a full 20% to administration.

Regardless of the cost savings, multi-state programs could usually rely on specialized staff at the central office to discharge grant administration responsibilities, including those relating to MIS and accounting. Thus, paperwork such as intake forms and invoices could be shipped in hard-copy form to the central office, freeing up time for local staff to concentrate on delivering services to clients.

It was also clear that multi-state grantees shared resources for staff training and development. Multi-state programs, for example, were more likely to conduct regular staff training seminars, prepare manuals containing information on counseling, training, or organizational procedures, or have regular meetings attended by key staff working on each of the separate grants at which personnel could share information and advice.

Information on alternative funding streams were also shared freely. Given that, as discussed above, the §402 programs in general have a need for capacity building, the fact that multi-state organizations can provide some of the needed training internally is an important advantage.

In principle, one might also think that programs operating as part of a multi-state grantee could also coordinate client services to some degree, such as by referring migrants to multiple stops through the migrant stream and transferring, electronically or otherwise, pertinent information from the client's file, such as the EDP and assessment results. Although the need for greater coordination among §402 programs is pressing and multi-state grantees ostensibly provide the best opportunity to facilitate it, in fact we saw little evidence that it occurred within multi-state programs with any regularity. To the contrary, the best example of coordination across programs that we observed, which involved cross-referrals and the sharing of client-level information, occurred between two programs that were *not* part of the same multi-state organization.

Thus, program effectiveness and efficiency does not appear to be markedly greater in multi-state as opposed to single-state grantees.

CONCLUSION

As described throughout this report and summarized in this chapter, the §402 programs operated in environments that had influences on their program design and operations. These included a federal environment that established a performance standards system that, while not perceived as having a large influence on day-to-day operations, has formed the backdrop of the program for nearly a decade, leading to an emphasis on certain outcomes that are measured by the performance standards. The recently eliminated cost standard in some cases still acts as a sort of "shadow" standard, influencing programs' service designs. The summary data from the ASR illustrate that any changes that might be emerging in the overall program have not yet been captured in changes in client characteristics or outcomes.

It was difficult to disentangle specific effects of federal policies in designating grantees and allocation levels. All programs admitted that funds met only a fraction of the need. The overall funding level was usually felt as more of a constraint than cost categories limitations. These constraints were felt equally by multi-state and single state grantees, although a few multi-state grantees were able to realize some administrative cost savings, thus freeing up more funds for client services.

State and local environments influenced program service designs and operations, often in ways that were difficult to predict. Client characteristics varied from region to region and within regions -- and sometimes within service areas. Client flows could be disrupted by unexpected events such as natural disasters or shifts in weather patterns. Programs in different areas also operated in different social and economic environments, which influenced the kinds of programs they designed (e.g., how much emphasis to place on supportive services, depending on whether alternative agencies existed in the community), the training available, and the eventual outcomes for their clients.

Because programs operate in different environments, no one program design is appropriate for the country as a whole. What is needed is thoughtful planning that considers and addresses the needs of the particular eligible population in light of the constraints of the social and economic environment. For the most part, site visitors observed sensitivity to these factors on the part of §402 program operators.

XI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study team was impressed at the dedication of the §402 program operators, and found that many programs were effectively serving migrant and seasonal farmworkers, populations that are among the hardest to serve in the JTPA system. The programs have considerable experience in delivering both employment and training and supportive services to farmworkers, who look to these agencies as a source of assistance both when they are migrating and at home. Many programs have adapted their service delivery to the needs of the eligible populations in their areas, and continue to adapt them as populations shift and directives from the Department of Labor change. However, the study team found that the quality of program services was uneven, and makes the following recommendations for improvements by the §402 grantees. In addition, the Department of Labor can play a role in disseminating information about innovative practices and encouraging their replication.

OUTREACH, RECRUITMENT, AND TARGETING

1. **Program resources for employment and training services should be further focused on the hard-to-serve.** In most cases "hard-to-serve" means those farmworkers who have not graduated from high school, have limited English, are otherwise deficient in basic skills, or have multiple barriers to employment. As described in Chapter III, data from the NAWS and the characteristics of MSFW terminees receiving services-only indicate that there are a large proportion of farmworkers with extremely low levels of education. These are the clients for whom very few alternative services exist in the community; hence, they are most in need of specialized instruction, in areas such as ESL, basic literacy and numeracy skills, job safety information, and negotiation skills.

   In many cases, there was good targeting by the §402 programs, but the study team found a number of instances where better-prepared individuals who had

done intermittent farmwork were the focus of program services. These individuals can usually be served under Title II, which has greater resources and covers all geographic areas. Section 402 funds should be reserved for those farmworkers who cannot be effectively served by other providers.

2. **Programs should institute specialized recruitment techniques to reach migrant and hard-to-serve seasonal farmworkers.** We found that migrants and to a lesser extent hard-to-serve seasonal farmworkers were difficult to recruit through passive methods such as word of mouth and referrals. These groups require more personal techniques such as visits to migrant camps and homes. Because migrant farmworkers are more likely to be Hispanic in all areas of the country, it is increasingly important that outreach personnel be bilingual, and many of the most effective are former farmworkers themselves.

3. **Programs should use their supportive services-only components as recruitment devices for employment and training services.** A number of programs described their practice of using services-only as an effective recruitment tool, by offering information about employment and training services to those clients coming for emergency assistance. While the objective of services-only is primarily to alleviate immediate needs, it is an opportunity to inform groups that might not otherwise be reached, especially migrants. Programs that have had difficulties recruiting migrants should especially consider adapting their services-only practices with this purpose in mind.

CLASSROOM TRAINING

4. **Programs should offer a range of basic skills training, preferably in-house or otherwise tailored.** The basic skills deficiencies of farmworkers are their primary barrier to mainstream employment; without improvement in basic skills, they generally cannot obtain either vocational skills training or jobs with the potential to support a family. Basic skills instruction is also important for those farmworkers who remain in agriculture, since basic literacy, job safety, and

negotiation skills can make them less subject to exploitation by farm labor contractors and employers.

Programs that operate in areas where appropriate options exist in the community may not have to provide their own training (although we found that most non-tailored programs did not meet the needs of farmworkers), but should provide enough supportive services to allow participants to take advantage of community classes. Farmworkers should be able to look to §402 programs to obtain ESL instruction, ABE remediation, and GED preparation courses. In order to make basic skills training responsive to farmworkers' needs, it should be offered in sufficient intensity that participants make progress in a fairly short period of time (e.g., at least four hours a day), and be of sufficient duration to make real gains (e.g., at least two months of daily instruction). Migrant workers who wish to remain in agriculture may require special arrangements, such as classes that meet at night in the camps.

More programs should explore the possibility of working with existing systems, such as the adult education system or Migrant Education, to offer tailored training using non-§402 funding streams. Several visited programs had ABE-funded teachers providing ESL or ABE/GED classes at §402 program sites, thus maximizing the resources of both systems.

The Department can continue to support the provision of basic skills training to farmworkers by retaining the employability enhancement as a positive outcome from employment and training services. Basic skills improvement in and of itself is the groundwork on which future training can be built. Furthermore, there is also evidence that participants who receive only basic skills training can be placed into jobs by §402 programs without further training.

5. **Programs should make available vocational classroom training that is tailored to the needs of farmworkers.** We found the in-house vocational training provided by four of the sample programs to be the most responsive to the needs

of farmworkers. However, this model provided training in a limited number of occupations, and is only appropriate where there are large concentrations of farmworkers and the local economies can absorb the graduates, conditions that do not hold in many program service areas. Therefore, we recommend more assertive efforts on the part of §402 programs, especially those with large numbers of participants, to work with existing providers to adapt their training to the needs of farmworkers. These efforts might result in the development of shorter courses with lower entry requirements, bilingual aides in regular courses, ways to integrate larger amounts of basic skills instruction into vocational classroom training, or customized training for local employers.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING

6. **Programs should improve their OJT practices by more carefully matching clients to available positions, ensuring that reimbursements are used for extraordinary training costs, and better monitoring of the quality of training.** The study team found that a number of the OJT positions examined were not responsive to the needs of farmworkers, and often represented a subsidy to the employer while providing little training to the participants. Program staff have often depended on OJTs to provide guaranteed placements and immediate income to participants, making them more of a subsidized direct placement than a form of training. However, the study team also observed examples of OJT positions that addressed the barriers faced by farmworkers in suitable ways. These contracts allowed participants who would otherwise not have been eligible for vocational training to obtain vocational skills, and a few innovative positions addressed basic skills needs as well. Improved OJT practices would better ensure that this type of training meets the needs of farmworkers.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

7. **The Department of Labor should consider raising or eliminating the current 15% cost limit on supportive services-only, thus giving programs more**

freedom to respond to fluctuating needs. It should also consider whether full-fledged eligibility determination, including documentation of work history and income, is necessary for services with low value (e.g., under $50). While few programs spent the allowable 15% of funds on supportive services-only, the limit does prevent flexibility when dealing with natural disasters and other unforseen circumstances that bring large numbers of farmworkers to §402 programs for emergency assistance. Although programs should be held accountable for these funds, the eligibility determination process uses staff time that could be better spent on training or other activities. The probability of fraud seems small, and in the case of small amounts, farmworker self-declarations of eligibility would likely fulfill the same purpose as work history and income documentation.

8. **Programs should reserve the bulk of supportive services-only funds for migrants away from their homes, and emphasize connections to existing community resources for seasonal workers.** While migrants are the majority of SSO recipients, a fair proportion are seasonal farmworkers. Because these participants are residing in their permanent homes at the time they request services, mainstream community resources are more available to serve their needs. Using §402 funds for seasonal workers only as a last resort would allow programs to serve more migrants, who are often refused services by community providers when they are on the road.

9. **Support for training should be sufficient to allow MSFW clients to maintain themselves through training.** Support for training included both stipends and supportive services such as transportation and child care assistance. The level of this support varied considerably among programs, and was a source of dissatisfaction among some participants; many others probably deterred from entering training due to the low level of supportive services. It is appropriate for programs to consider other sources of support sometimes available to participants (e.g., Pell Grants, unemployment insurance), and to offer varied support depending on the local cost of living, but it should nonetheless offer real, not

nominal sustenance. Improving support levels would make training available to a broader range of participants and encourage longer-term training. On the other hand, support should not exceed the wages of minimum wage jobs.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

10. **Programs that contract with providers for services should increase their oversight to further ensure that the needs of farmworkers are being met.** Farmworkers are difficult to serve, and service providers do not always attend closely to their needs, especially when they form a small proportion of the service population. We found some circumstances where farmworkers were not well-served by contractors that had multiple responsibilities, especially where §402 funds were only a small portion of their overall budget. This was also true of some individual referrals to classroom training providers, and of some employers with OJT contracts. Therefore, programs must be vigilant about their providers' activities, by establishing clear objectives, on-site monitoring, and if necessary withdrawal of funds when providers fail to serve this population effectively.

11. **Programs should examine their staff qualifications, to determine whether the needs of farmworkers are being met. The Department should continue to encourage and support capacity-building activities that improve qualifications of existing staff.** Many programs are currently involved in self-examination on the question of staff qualifications. The question of the professionalism of staff in the §402 program is being raised for a number of reasons. These include the growing emphasis on hard-to-serve clients, the trend toward longer-term training, and the general maturity of the overall JTPA program. The desire for professionally trained staff is tempered by the realization that former farmworkers and others who have been with the program for long periods have advantages in terms of rapport with clients and understanding of their lives. The ideal is to have both, and capacity-building in the form of staff training and education is one way to upgrade the qualifications of existing staff. However, there is little room in program budgets for such activities. DOL could facilitate these efforts through

means such as offering special grant funds for this purpose, or offering training workshops directly (e.g., on assessment or case management techniques).

There are also professionally trained staff within the system who do not meet the needs of limited English-speaking farmworkers. The Department could support language training for these staff as well.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR POLICIES AND PRACTICES

12. **Departmental capacity-building and technical assistance efforts should be expanded to enhance the quality of all facets of §402 program design and operations.** Although the quality of MSFW programs is generally adequate and even exceptional in some instances, programs could benefit from improved expertise in a number of areas. DOL is in the best position to spur these efforts and exercise broad leadership. These activities could take the form of developing additional Technical Assistance Guides or an information clearinghouse, sponsoring workshops and training seminars, supporting regional networks or staff exchange programs, or disseminating information on best practices. Some examples of areas where capacity-building would be useful include:

- *Assessment.* Farmworkers represent a particularly difficult population for formal assessment, and program staff do not always have the expertise to determine appropriate formal assessment tools. Programs could especially benefit from increased guidance in the effective use of vocational and basic skills assessment for populations with low basic skills and limited English proficiency. The need for DOL's guidance in this area will be particularly important if MSFW programs will be subject to the same regulations that will govern the rest of JTPA under the new amendments.

- *Basic Skills and Vocational Classroom Training.* The need for programs to offer basic skills and vocational classroom training tailored to the needs

of the farmworker population is especially pressing. Many programs are currently struggling to develop effective ESL or ABE classes, for example. Models of programs working with service providers to tailor vocational classroom training are limited. Some programs are unsure how to integrate basic and vocational skills training, either in the classroom or on-the-job. Therefore, examples of effective basic skills curricula, tailored vocational instruction, and integrated services would be very valuable.

- *On-the-Job Training.* Despite recent issuances and other directives, some programs are still having difficulty developing strong OJT, and need further guidance in methods for matching participants' training needs to jobs, writing OJT contracts, and monitoring the quality of training. DOL should disseminate both minimal expectations and best practices in order to improve service provision across the country.

- *Leveraging and Cooperation.* We found considerable variation in the amount of non-§402 funds used by the sampled programs, and the extent of their cooperation with other human service agencies. In some cases, program staff may have been unaware of steps taken in other states to obtain outside funds or develop cooperative agreements. While the availability of alternate funds and agencies varies from state to state, there are commonly-available sources. DOL could provide a forum for programs to learn from each other about funding and cooperative strategies.

13. **Further clarification needs to be provided to MSFW grantees about the purposes of employability enhancements.** The introduction of employability enhancements as an outcome is already changing the way many programs think about their service programs. However, there were considerable differences in the activities considered to be enhancements, and in the ways programs documented and measured enhancements. Programs are currently developing

enhancement activities that meet the needs of their clients, but the outcomes are not comparable across programs. Greater guidance from the Department about what enhancements represent would be helpful to grantees. If enhancements will be used as a performance outcome, then more precise definitions are needed concerning the minimal level of skills gains needed to claim a particular enhancement.

14. **The Department should provide further clarification about whether it will monitor programs based on their performance relative to standards or relative to their plans.** We found that programs were sometimes unsure which was more important -- to make sure that their "planned vs. actual" numbers were in order, or to focus on outcomes, especially when these two things were in conflict. DOL should clarify the purposes of both kinds of program assessment and be clear about its monitoring goals.

15. **A system whereby eligibility determination can be transferred across §402 programs should be facilitated by the Department.** Farmworkers who travel from state to state may obtain services from more than one §402 program. Re-establishing eligibility uses considerable staff time; however, since each program is separately audited, each wants to protect itself by conducting its own intake. A national system to document eligibility would eliminate inefficiency. As a longer-range goal, a national database could also contain information about a client's assessment results, service plan, and prior training. This would reduce assessment time and encourage participants to continue training activities as they travel.

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GLOSSARY

ABE	Adult Basic Education
AFOP	Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs
ASR	Annual Status Report
BPA	Berkeley Planning Associates
BST	basic skills training
CEE	cost per entered employment
CBO	community-based organization
CPS	Current Population Survey
CRT	classroom training
CSBG	community services block grant
DOL	Department of Labor
E&T	employment and training services
EDP	employability development plan
EER	entered employment rate
ESL	English as a Second Language
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Act
GED	general educational development
IRCA	Immigration Reform and Control Act
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act
MIS	management information system
MSFW	migrant and seasonal farmworkers
NAWS	National Agricultural Workers Survey
OJT	on-the-job training
PIC	Private Industry Council
PSA	public service announcement
PY	program year
SAW	special agricultural worker
SLIAG	State Legalization Impact Assistance Grant
SPR	Social Policy Research Associates
SSO	supportive services-only
TA	training assistance
TOE	try-out employment
TRSS	training-related supportive services
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VCRT	vocational classroom training
VESL	Vocational English as a Second Language
WE	work experience

APPENDIX A
USING THE NAWS AND CPS TO PROXY ELIGIBILITY

The National Agricultural Workers Survey (NAWS) and the CPS supplement were obviously not designed to be used to proxy MSFW eligibility rules. Nonetheless, the wealth of information collected from respondents in both surveys means that reasonable approximations can be developed. Decision rules used in defining MSFW eligibility and their potential limitations are discussed with respect to each of the major criteria for MSFW eligibility for each survey. These decision rules are summarized in Table A-1.

SEASONALITY OF FARMWORK

MSFW Regulation

To meet the seasonality restriction, eligible farmworkers must have performed during the eligibility period (see below) seasonal farmwork in one of a number of industries delineated by SIC codes for at least 25 days or earned at least $400 from this work, without a constant year-around salary.

NAWS Proxy

Using data on the respondent's employment history, persons meeting the seasonality restriction were defined to be those who performed at least 25 days in farmwork during the year or earned at least $400 from their most recent pay period in farmwork (total earnings throughout the year from farmwork is not available in the NAWS). Additionally, those who performed farmwork in more than 45 weeks during the year were presumed not to have met the seasonality restriction. Slippage occurs primarily with respect to two groups of eligible workers who will be missed using this definition:

Table A-1

OPERATIONALIZATION OF MSFW ELIGIBILITY FOR FARMWORKERS USING THE CPS AND NAWS

Eligibility Rule	Operational Definition Using	
	NAWS	CPS Supplement
Performed seasonal farmwork for wages at least 25 days or earned at least $400 from farmwork without a constant year-round salary.	Performed farmwork at least 25 days in past year or earned at least $400 in most recent pay period in farmwork. Did not perform farmwork in more than 45 weeks in past year.	Performed farmwork for wages at least 25 days in past year or earned at least $400 from paid farmwork in past year. Did not perform farmwork for wages in more than 10 of the last 12 months.
Received at least 50% of total earned income or been employed at least 50% of total work time in farmwork.	At least 50% of total work time in past year was in farmwork.	At least 50% of total work time in past year was in paid farmwork for wages or at least 50% of earnings in past year was paid farmwork.
Is a member of a family that received public assistance or one whose annual family income does not exceed the higher of either the poverty level or 70% of the lower living standard income level.	Someone in household received either AFDC, general assistance, or disability insurance in past year. Total family income in past year does not exceed the higher of the poverty level or 70% of LLSIL for 1990. Total family income was computed as the midpoint of the income category identified by the respondent. Family size was computed as one; plus one if the respondent was married; plus the number of children aged 14 or younger the respondent has; plus children, siblings, parents, or grandchildren aged 15 or older living with the respondent.	Total family income in past year does not exceed the higher of the 1987 poverty level or 70% of the LLSIL, based on the respondent's region of residence for 1987 and family size. Family income was computed as the midpoint of the income category defined by the respondent.
Is a citizen, a permanent resident, a lawfully admitted refugee or parolee, or otherwise has work authorization.	Is a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, or applied for legal status under IRCA or as a Cuban/Haitian entrant, who has been granted temporary or permanent residency or whose application is pending, and has general work authorization.	Not available.

- The NAWS samples from those engaged in farmwork in crops and perishables. Those employed as seasonal workers in industries not covered by the NAWS but who are eligible for MSFW services will be missed. These are primarily those working in sugarcane, silage, or select other crops and all livestock workers. These persons may constitute 30% of all agricultural workers, but probably a much smaller proportion of those who meet the remaining MSFW eligibility rules.

- NAWS does not elicit information on the amount of money earned from farmwork during the year. Specifically missed by our operationalization will be persons who worked less than 25 days and did not earn $400 or more during the most recent pay period, but did earn this much sometime during the eligibility period (without also working more than 45 weeks in agriculture).

CPS Proxy

The CPS asks directly about days the respondent worked in farmwork for paid wages during the last year and the amount of earnings from this work. Using these data, the minimum work requirements for MSFW eligibility could be defined directly. The restriction against year-around employment was operationalized by requiring that CPS respondents could not have worked in more than 10 of the last 12 months in farmwork. Slippage occurs primarily in that respondents self-define farmwork. Thus, it is not possible to restrict the sample only to those who worked in the SIC codes defined by the MSFW eligibility rules.

DEPENDENCY ON FARMING

MSFW Regulations

To be eligible for services, persons must also be dependent on agriculture. Dependency is defined to include those seasonal farmworkers who, during the eligibility

period, received at least 50% of their total earned income from agriculture or who worked at least 50% of their total work time in farmwork.

NAWS Proxy

Only the work time restriction could be operationalized using NAWS. Using the work history information for the 12-month period preceding the interview date, those dependent on agriculture were defined to be those whose work time in farming was at least 50% of their total work time. Persons potentially eligible for services who will be missed by this definition are those who worked less than 50% of their total work time in farming but who received at least 50% of their total earned income from farming.

CPS Proxy

The CPS supplement asks respondents to identify the number of days they worked during the last year in farming for paid wages, in farming as an unpaid family member, as a self-employed farmer, and in non-farmwork. Annual earnings from the first and last of these sources also was elicited. Those dependent on farming were defined to include those whose work time for paid wages in farming was 50% or more of their total work time (summing work time across all 4 of the categories listed above), or those whose earnings from paid farmwork was at least 50% of their total earnings from paid farmwork and non-farmwork. Assuming respondents reported accurately, this operationalization matches the MSFW eligibility rules nearly perfectly.

IS ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED

MSFW Regulation

Those eligible for services must be a member of a family receiving public assistance or whose annual family income does not exceed the higher of either the poverty level or 70% of the lower living standard income level. A family consists of those persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption who are children who cannot be claimed as a dependent on another person's income tax or are aged 18 years and older

who are either the family's principal earner, the spouse of the principal earner, or another adult receiving at least 50% of support from the family.

NAWS Proxy

Respondents are considered to be members of a family receiving public assistance if anyone in their household receives general assistance, AFDC, or disability insurance. The respondent's total family income in the last year is available from NAWS respondents, with income coded in categories (e.g., $5000 to $7499, etc.). In defining eligibility, the midpoints of these categories were used. Family size, necessary for defining the income cutoffs used in classifying families as disadvantaged, was computed as the sum of: 1 (for the respondent); 1 if the respondent was married; the number of children the respondent has who are aged 14 or younger; and the number of children, siblings, parents, or grandchildren who are aged 15 years or older and living in the respondent's household. Slippage occurs because:

- Whether any household member receives public assistance will not perfectly identify whether any member of the respondent's family receives public assistance.

- Income cutoffs used in defining 70% of the LLSIL are published for each of 4 regions of the country. Because it was difficult to get access to geographic identifiers in the NAWS, this proved difficult to implement. The income cutoff used instead alternated between the values published in 1990 for the West and Midwest (the middle 2 values of those for all 4 regional categories used to define the cutoff for 70% of LLSIL).

- Midpoints of the respondent's family income were used rather than actual income. Thus, persons whose actual income was within the income category but below the midpoint have imputed earnings that are higher than actual, while others whose actual income was within the category but above the midpoint have imputed earnings that are lower than actual.

This will cause some persons to be included or excluded as being economically disadvantaged erroneously.

- The calculation of family size is imprecise. It erroneously excludes those aged 15 or older not living with the respondent at the time of the survey. This particularly might be a problem for migrant workers who are living away from home at the time the survey is conducted, and who therefore are providing the household composition for their temporary domicile. It erroneously includes children under the age of 15 the respondents have who are not their dependents. It also erroneously includes children, siblings, parents, or grandchildren aged 18 or older living with the respondent at the time of the survey who earn 50% or more of their own support.

CPS Proxy

Total family income during the year also is available in the CPS supplement in income categories, so midpoints of these ranges were used. Economic disadvantage was defined using the 1987 poverty guidelines and 70% LLSIL, by region, for families of different sizes. Slippage occurs because of imprecision in using the midpoints of income ranges, as discussed with respect to the NAWS. Also, information was not available on whether any family member received public assistance.

CITIZENSHIP OR WORK AUTHORIZATION

MSFW Regulations

To be eligible for participation, individuals must be citizens, permanent residents, legally admitted refugees or parolees, or others with work authorization.

NAWS Proxy

Those defined as eligible by this criterion in the NAWS were those who identified themselves as citizens or permanent residents and others who claimed to have general

work authorization gained through the Immigration Reform and Control Act. Assuming no reporting error, this operationalization should successfully identify most persons who qualify for MSFW services under this eligibility rule.

CPS Proxy

No information is available on citizenship or work authorization in the CPS supplement. Thus, illegal aliens and undocumented workers interviewed by the CPS can be erroneously counted as eligible.

ELIGIBILITY PERIOD

The conditions for eligibility described above must apply during any consecutive 12-month period within the 24 months preceding the eligibility determination. However, a 1-year look-back period was used in both the NAWS and CPS operationalizations described above. Thus, persons who settled out of farming within the last year but who have met the eligibility rules in the preceding year will not be counted as eligible.

APPENDIX B
Information About the Client-Level Database

There is not yet a national client-level database for the §402 program, and there were insufficient resources allocated for this study for the research team to collect new client-level data. Therefore, study staff discussed the possibility of obtaining existing client-level databases with grantee staff during the first round of site visits. Not all programs had fully automated data systems that were easily transmittable to BPA. However, we were able to obtain data from 9 of the 18 sample programs in the study, for a total of 4,426 individual cases of PY 91 terminees. These programs, and the number of terminees in each individual data set, are listed in Figure B-1.

The programs included in the database span the size distribution of the §402 programs, from very small to some of the largest. Both upstream and homebase states are represented, and the programs are geographically diverse. Unemployment rates (for 1991) for the nine states ranged from 3.4% to 10.5%. Programs had a variety of service designs, with some offering in-house services and some utilizing resources in the community. Several programs emphasized classroom training in their service designs, and others emphasized OJT. Multi-state organizations are overrepresented in the database, since those organizations were more likely to have automated data systems.

Participant data obtained from the nine programs included: client characteristics reported on the ASR, type of service received (classroom training, OJT, work experience, tryout employment, training assistance), service duration in hours or weeks, and outcomes at placement and follow up. A few variables were not obtained for a few programs, but all variables that were obtained were by and large uniform across all programs. Therefore, the nine separate databases could be combined into one large database for analysis.

Figure B-1

PROGRAMS PROVIDING DATA FOR CLIENT-LEVEL DATABASE*

	Number of Terminees
California Human Development Corporation	472
Florida Department of Education	1,387
Transition Resources Corporation, Indiana	111
Telamon Corporation, Maryland	57
Telamon Corporation, North Carolina	630
Midwest Farmworker Employment Training, North Dakota	77
Midwest Farmworker Employment Training, South Dakota	130
Motivation Education and Training, Texas	1,515
Telamon Corporation, West Virginia	47
TOTAL	4,426

* One other program, Center for Employment and Training (California), provided data too late to be included in the analysis.

While not a random sample from the universe of MSFW terminees, the resulting database appears to fairly represent the country as a whole. Table B-1 shows the means of client characteristics for the universe of §402 programs and the client-level data sample. The client-level data sample contains a higher proportion of intrastate migrants than the country as a whole, most likely due to the presence of two large homebase states in the sample. The sample is more evenly balanced by gender than the country as a whole; the sample has 47% females, compared to only 39% in the universe. The sample has a higher proportion of youth and students.

Ethnic differences are slightly differently distributed in the sample, which has a higher proportion of blacks and Hispanics and a lower proportion of whites than the universe. While the sample programs had a lower proportion of dropouts, long-term agricultural workers, and those with limited English than the universe, they had a higher proportion of those reading below the seventh grade level.

Table B-1

CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND CLIENT-LEVEL DATA SAMPLE

	Mean for All 402 Programs* (n = 50,000)	Mean for Client-Level Data Sample (n = 4,426)
Intrastate Migrant	9%	22%
Interstate Migrant	16%	14%
Seasonal	74%	65%
Female	39%	47%
Male	61%	53%
Age 14-21	29%	35%
22-44	63%	59%
45+	8%	6%
Dropouts	60%	54%
Students	3%	6%
Graduates	37%	40%
White	19%	11%
Black	18%	22%
Hispanic	61%	64%
Other	2%	3%
Unemployed	84%	85%
Long-term ag-workers	45%	39%
Limited English	36%	29%
Receiving Public Assistance	27%	29%
Single head of household	12%	16%
Reading below 7th grade	38%	47%

* Means for the universe were obtained from PY 91, ASRs, weighted by size of program.

Table B-2 illustrates the services received and outcomes experienced by terminees from all programs and from the nine sample programs. As in the case of client characteristics, the sample seems to be fairly representative of the universe. Terminees in the sample programs were less likely to terminate from training assistance, and more likely to receive classroom training and work experience. They were less likely to be employed at both termination and follow-up, and more likely to have received an employability enhancement. The kinds of enhancements they achieved were very similar to those for the universe. Their mean wages were lower than the universe at termination and higher at follow-up.

Table B-2

OUTCOMES FOR ALL PROGRAMS AND CLIENT-LEVEL DATA SAMPLE

	Mean for All 402 Programs (n = 50,000)	Mean for Client-Level Data Sample (n = 4426)
Number of Terminees		
(E & T only)	310	492
Percent E & T Terminees from:		
CRT	45%	49%
OJT	33%	31%
WE/TOE	8%	10%
TA	14%	10%
Outcomes		
Employed at termination	62%	59%
Wage at termination	$5.66	$5.23
Employed at follow-up*	78%	55%
Wage at follow-up	$5.28	$5.38
Employability enhancement only	14%	17%
Overall enhancement rate	37%	41%
Type of enhancement:		
Entered non-402 training	2%	3%
Returned to school	6%	11%
Completed major level of education	13%	13%
Completed worksite objectives	20%	22%
Completed basic/occupational skills proficiency	59%	52%

* Of those employed at termination.

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