PLAN FOR COOPERATIVE RURAL RESEARCH

Organization—Scope—Results

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PLAN FOR COOPERATIVE RURAL RESEARCH

UP TO THE ADVENT of the depression of the early thirties research by Federal and State agencies working in the rural field was largely concentrated on the physical and economic aspects of rural life with much less attention paid to the human elements. As a result, when the National Government was faced with the necessity of dealing with widespread distress in rural areas, the requisite knowledge of the human elements in the situation was far from complete.

To supply such knowledge general national pictures were necessary as well as detailed analyses of local conditions. For this reason the Federal Emergency Relief Administration early decided to centralize only part of its program of study in Washington and to stimulate local research in the State agricultural colleges. Through the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research developed in the latter part of 1934 State supervisors of rural research were appointed in the various States and provided with the staffs necessary for conducting large-scale field surveys. Not only were the supervisors responsible for the collection of data in connection with studies set up in the Washington office but they were also encouraged to initiate local research projects.

Results

While it is too early to evaluate the full results emanating from the first 4 years of the operation of the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research, it is clear that it has had an important effect on the development of rural sociology and rural research throughout the United States. A number of States, in order to take full advantage of the cooperative plan, strengthened their departments of rural sociology and of rural social research.
In a few instances rural sociologists were added to the staffs of State agricultural experiment stations for the first time and the first courses in rural sociology in those institutions were inaugurated.

In practically all States included in the cooperative arrangement, rural social research was expanded and was more carefully geared to practical problems of administration than hitherto. The utility of the various surveys for State as well as national administrative purposes was constantly stressed.

In many cases the State supervisors of rural research had Federal funds made available for State projects or for the analysis of State data from national surveys which made possible research on a much broader scale than would have been practical under local research budgets, even though local budgets were also increased under the impetus of the expanded scope of the field surveys undertaken. At all times, moreover, the supervisors had available constructive assistance on their special problems and access to data and techniques for comparative purposes. To a limited extent also regional conferences were held for the clarification of problems incurred in both national and State surveys. Hence, it seems justifiable to state that rural research in the States has benefited not only quantitatively but also qualitatively from the setup.

Personnel

State supervisors, carefully selected on the basis of research ability, have had the opportunity to develop greater facility in survey techniques and to publish significant studies based on original data. Not only has their work in individual institutions been strengthened but also a number of them have been sought for more important positions.
As assistant supervisors a number of relatively inexperienced college graduates in the social sciences were able to gain experience in practical research under competent supervision. As the turnover among these assistants was substantial, the number so trained was considerably greater than the number of States involved. Some advanced to better jobs with other agencies, a number going to the Resettlement Administration, State Departments of Public Welfare, and Works Progress Administration as statisticians and research workers. Others went on with their training by completing the requirements for an advanced degree. In this respect the assistant supervisor's job was in the nature of a fellowship for laboratory experience in rural research.

A group of technicians interested in the social science field was trained in each cooperating State to perform the functions incident to schedule enumeration, local tabulations, and preliminary analyses of data. These technicians have in many cases been retained by the agricultural colleges on their permanent research staffs, while some of them have used this experience as a stepping-stone to more responsible research positions or have continued their professional training.

The major result of the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research from the Federal viewpoint was the provision of a local agency for fact-gathering on a Nation-wide basis with a staff alive to local situations and peculiarities. The local knowledge was of particular value in setting up the system of sample counties upon which the relief censuses were based and in interpreting variations in the survey data. By decentralizing supervision, moreover, it made possible a much smaller Washington staff than would have been practical with central control of field work.
The data collected under the cooperative plan have been made widely available through three general types of publications by the Washington staff, exclusive of memoranda to meet administrative needs. With few exceptions the major findings of all rural research surveys have been incorporated in a series of monographic reports. The purpose of this series has been not only to analyze the results of the surveys for administrative use but also to expand the knowledge and understanding of rural destitution and rural institutions in general and to make the basic data available for further study. To date 11 monographs have been completed, and additional monographs are in preparation. All of these reports are the result in whole or in part of special rural field studies with the exception of Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects, which is based on previous studies by various agencies, the general literature, and census data dealing with rural youth. In the aggregate these monographs present a detailed analysis of the major aspects of the rural relief situation since 1932. Both broad general surveys and detailed studies of special problems have been utilized in the attempt to survey the full gamut of rural relief needs.

A second category of publications includes reports on the rural relief situation which are of wider scope and significance than the usual bulletin, but which do not contain the wealth of data or the detailed analysis characteristic of the monograph series. They are based both on survey data and on material from secondary sources. To date four such special reports have been prepared.

1 For list see p. 18
2 For descriptions of these field studies, see pp. 19-35.
3 For list see p. 18.
To meet immediate needs for information on special topics, numerous bulletins in the rural relief field have been issued. While the data included in more than 100 such bulletins have been incorporated subsequently into research monographs, in numerous instances bulletins on topics which did not warrant the more extensive treatments afforded by the monographs and special reports have been made available. To date 31 such research bulletins have been published. In addition a series of reports presenting current statistics of public and private relief in rural and town areas was issued for 18 months and was then transferred to the Social Security Board.

State

From the viewpoint of productive research the States have been able to illuminate local situations and local problems not covered in detail in the broader, Nation-wide studies. More than 200 State publications have been issued as a result of this cooperation. They fall into the following broad classes:

Rural problems generally related to relief, such as part-time farming, mobility, standard of living, tenancy, rehabilitation, etc. - 37 bulletins.

Local data gathered for national relief census - 58 bulletins.

Local relief problems - 31 bulletins.

Miscellaneous nonrelief rural problems - 83 bulletins.\(^5\)

The results of the studies have been widely used by State and local relief administrators, employment offices, State agricultural experiment stations, State Departments of Public Welfare, and State planning boards

\(^4\) For list see pp. 38-56.

\(^5\) Of the 83 bulletins so classified 65 were issued by Tennessee.
as a basis both for meeting current problems and for developing long-time programs. Not only have the studies had definite utility in making available accurate and concrete data but also many of them have attracted general attention to special problems within the States and have led to a keener appreciation of the value of social research.

In a number of instances the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research has been instrumental in bringing the research workers more closely in touch with the various State agencies and in fostering the development of cooperative arrangements with them. In addition the difficulties frequently encountered in securing complete case data have frequently resulted in improved local records.

Even during the brief period analyzed the national surveys were of importance as a source of stimulation for other research in the States. At the same time the foundations were laid for much valuable research in the future on basic socio-economic problems within the individual States.

General Plan of Organization

The preliminary steps in the development of the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research were taken almost immediately after the organization of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in order to meet the pressing demand for data concerning relief needs in rural areas. In August 1933, E. L. Kirkpatrick of the Wisconsin Agricultural Experiment Station joined the staff of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration as Rural Relief Advisor. He was responsible for bringing an initial group of rural sociologists to Washington to carry on research essential to the administration of the relief program and designed to portray the rural situation

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6 For number and fields of State surveys see appendix tables 1 and 2.
Arrangements were quickly worked out for the appointment of a number of temporary State supervisors, usually well-trained rural sociologists and economists at the State college of agriculture, to handle the field staffs for rural surveys originating in the Washington office. The first consideration in selecting States to include in the early surveys was roughly to scatter the sample areas over representative parts of the United States, taking into account the principal type-of-farming areas.

Much of the cooperative research during the latter part of 1933 and early 1934 was carried on in connection with the short-lived Civil Works Administration. Then, in July 1934, as a result of the proposed expansion of rural research a special Rural Section was organized within the Division of Research and Statistics of the FERA, and Dwight Sanderson of the Department of Rural Social Organization, Cornell University, became the first Coordinator of Rural Research.

The mutual advantages to be derived from definitely tying up the rural research of the FERA with the rural sociologists in the agricultural experiment stations was becoming increasingly evident. Only through considerable decentralization with heavy reliance on local knowledge of conditions could large-scale rural surveys be most satisfactory. Hence, in August 1934 formal cooperation in research on problems related to rural relief was offered to a group of about 20 States with which informal arrangements had already proved effective. The number of States rose almost immediately, however, as the advantages to be derived from the cooperative arrangement became evident. At the close of the year Dr. Sanderson

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8 See p. 12.
returned to Cornell University. For the next few months, T. C. McCormick, who was already a member of the staff, served as acting coordinator until J. H. Kolb of the University of Wisconsin took over the work in March 1935. In the fall of 1935 Dr. Kolb returned to Wisconsin, and T. J. Woofter, Jr., of the University of North Carolina became Coordinator of Rural Research. 9

The plan of organization submitted to the States under the cooperative arrangement was highly flexible and readily adaptable to meet varying conditions within the different States as well as fluctuations in the number and scope of surveys initiated by the Washington office. The proposal was entirely optional, and the program was set up only with the full approval of the State Emergency Relief Administration. Its essential features, which have been characteristic of the Works Progress Administration period also, were developed as follows:

Allocation of Responsibility

Federal funds for rural research were made available through special allocations by the FERA and WPA. In addition State funds were available for research under the provisions of the program for Professional and Non-Manual Works Projects.

Office and miscellaneous facilities were made available by the State agricultural colleges or by other local cooperating agencies in the few States in which the plan was not connected with the agricultural colleges. In each cooperating State the Federal Emergency Relief Administration

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9 The Rural Section of the Division of Research and Statistics, FERA, subsequently became the Rural Unit of the Research Section, Division of Research, Statistics, and Finance, FERA. On November 29, 1935, as a result of the initiation of the Works Progress Administration, the rural research organization became the Rural Section of the Division of Social Research, WPA.
provided salaries and expenses for the part-time services of a State supervisor of rural research and for an assistant supervisor. Project personnel was drawn from local relief rolls insofar as practicable.

State Supervisor of Rural Research

The State supervisor of rural research was selected jointly by the Washington staff and the State administration with the approval of the director of the experiment station and the dean or president of the State college. He was closely associated with the statistical and research office of the State Emergency Relief Administration. His duties included supervision of any rural research surveys in his State undertaken by the Washington office of the FERA, preparation of local reports on such studies, planning of special State or local rural research projects of administrative significance and analysis of the results of such projects, advice on State projects of the FERA, advice and assistance in rural rehabilitation surveys, and help in coordinating rural research projects of the FERA and other agencies, such as State planning boards.

Assistant State Supervisor of Rural Research

The assistant State supervisor was selected by the State supervisor and State emergency relief administrator, subject to the approval of the Washington office. His duties included immediate responsibility for selection and organization of field staffs and supervision of the collection of schedules within the State on national projects planned in Washington. He was also available for the conduct of special rural research projects within the State under the direction of the State supervisor and for assistance in the analysis of local data.
Supervision

The degree of centralized supervision and of local initiative varied with the type of project. In national surveys where uniformity of results was imperative and time was sharply limited, close supervision was maintained by the Washington office. Schedules and instructions were sent from Washington and central editing and tabulation were performed there. On State studies standard procedures were occasionally suggested. For the most part, however, competent personnel having been secured, the State supervisors were expected to develop their own projects with only general approval and suggestions from the Washington office. State projects had to be approved, however, by the State Emergency Relief Administration as well as by the Washington staff before they were undertaken.

In the early days of the program when extensive surveys were being put into the field concurrently or in rapid succession, it was necessary to maintain a small group of field men on the Washington staff, responsible to the Coordinator of Rural Research, who could keep closely in touch with the progress of studies from the central office and yet could be available for extended field work. Much of the credit for maintaining a smooth-working organization with the State units is due to the efforts of this staff in interpreting the program, in helping select competent personnel, in assisting in setting up the field work, and in coordinating the research within the various States. Area research supervisors kept in general touch with all research projects although they did not actually direct rural surveys. They were responsible, however, for the necessary fiscal arrangements with State administrations on all projects involving the use of direct Federal allocations.
With the development of an efficient organization in the various States and with the shift in emphasis from extensive general surveys to more detailed analyses of specific problems, this special field staff was no longer necessary. Thereafter, all arrangements were handled by the Coordinator of Rural Research working in conjunction with the regional research supervisors who served as the field representatives of the Division.

Publication of Results

Rights of publication of the results of Federal projects were reserved by the Washington office. In most instances copies of the material were retained by the State supervisor or were made available to him for more detailed analysis than was possible in Washington. For example, on the relief censuses the national publications contained only State and area totals, but a number of States used the county data for detailed analysis. In addition the cooperating States have published the results of State projects. All State publications financed in whole or in part through the cooperative agreement have received a general editing in Washington, mainly for consistency with Nation-wide totals. A complete file of the State bulletins based on both Federal and local surveys has been maintained in the central office for reference.

Cooperating Agencies

It was inevitable that a research program of the scope developed under the cooperative plan would lead to joint undertakings with other agencies as well as to dependence on other organizations for special information and technical assistance. Chief among these have been the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics; Division
of Farm Management and Costs of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics; Resettlement Administration; Farm Security Administration; National Youth Administration; Civilian Conservation Corps; and Bureau of the Census. In addition the Rural Section of the Division of Social Research and its predecessors have had the advantage of close cooperation with a subcommittee of the Committee on Social and Economic Research in Agriculture for the Social Science Research Council.

Cooperating States

To keep pace with the rapid expansion in the scope of the national surveys undertaken, the original group of cooperating States was expanded early in 1935 to include 36 States. At one time or another 41 States have been included within the cooperative plan (table 1 and fig. 1).

The cooperating States have fallen into two general groups: (1) those whose personnel in rural sociology was of sufficient research training and experience to avail themselves of the full staff of supervisor, assistant supervisor, and field workers; and (2) those without available, competent personnel in rural sociology but for which it was important to secure information to help build up a national picture of the relief situation. In the States within this latter group temporary supervisors of rural research were placed in the State Emergency Relief Administration office without any direct connection with the agricultural experiment station.

The seven States which were not included at any time in the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research were omitted either because administrative agreements were not readily available or because their inclusion was not
Table 1.--States Included in the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research, December 1933–June 1938

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<td>California</td>
<td>November 1, 1934–March 31, 1937</td>
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<td>Colorado</td>
<td>December 1933--operating</td>
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<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>October 16, 1934--operating</td>
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<td>Florida</td>
<td>April 1935–June 30, 1936</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
<td>March 1935–June 1937</td>
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<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Summer of 1934–May 31, 1937</td>
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<td>Indiana</td>
<td>November 1934–June 30, 1937</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>September 16, 1934--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>September 16, 1934--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>September 16, 1934–June 30, 1937</td>
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<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>October 1, 1934--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>November 1, 1935--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>May 16, 1935--operating</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>October 1, 1934–November 30, 1936</td>
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<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>October 1934–June 30, 1937; July 1938--operating</td>
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<td>Mississippi</td>
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<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<td>New Jersey</td>
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<td>New Mexico</td>
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<td>New York</td>
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<td>November 1, 1934--operating</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
<td>January 1, 1935–June 30, 1938</td>
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<td>South Dakota</td>
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<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>June 1934--operating</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
<td>October 1, 1934--operating</td>
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<td>Utah</td>
<td>September 24, 1934–June 30, 1937</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>November 1, 1934--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>May 16, 1935--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>November 1934–April 30, 1937; August 1934--operating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>August 1934--operating</td>
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1 Temporary supervisors only.

Note.--The periods covered include informal arrangements prior to August 1934 as well as formal agreements after that date.
FIG. 1 - STATES INCLUDED IN THE PLAN FOR COOPERATIVE RURAL RESEARCH
DECEMBER 1933 - JUNE 1938

States with:
- No cooperative arrangement
- Temporary supervisors only
- State supervisors of rural research
considered essential to the presentation of a national picture of the rural relief situation.\textsuperscript{10}

The individual States have played a triple role in the functioning of the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research with widely varying degrees of emphasis on each aspect from State to State. First, all States which have cooperated with the Washington office have assumed responsibility for the field work of such Federal surveys as were conducted within their boundaries and for the prompt transmittal of schedules and other requested information. This has involved the setting up of a competent staff within each State which could be utilized for both Federal and State research. The size of the staff has fluctuated in accordance with the surveys under way.

Second, combined Federal-State responsibility for the issuance of the results of national surveys has proved exceedingly worthwhile in a large proportion of the cooperating States. Under the general cooperative agreement the States have had the complete data from Federal surveys conducted within their counties or townships available for detailed analysis.

The third aspect of the cooperative arrangement of value to the States has been that providing for the allocation of Federal funds for the pursuance of approved, State-initiated projects. It is to be regretted that more States have not taken full advantage of this method of developing local research, but in those States where such projects have been carried out, highly significant and valuable results have been obtained.

\textsuperscript{10} Maine was included in the Survey of Closed, Opened, and Reopened Cases, but the supervision was handled entirely by the Washington staff.
The detailed project reports by States leave the overwhelming impression of a tremendous amount of work accomplished and a wealth of data collected. As many of the supervisors have pointed out, however, it appears probable that too little emphasis has been placed on the analysis of the data on a State basis. If the full value is to be derived from the cooperative arrangement, it appears that henceforth more attention must be devoted to such analysis and to the publication of State reports.
Publications

of the Rural Section

Division of Social Research

Works Progress Administration

Research Monographs

I. Six Rural Problem Areas, Relief--Resources--Rehabilitation
II. Comparative Study of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households
V. Landlord and Tenant on the Cotton Plantation
VIII. Farmers on Relief and Rehabilitation
IX. Part-Time Farming in the Southeast
XI. Rural Youth on Relief
XIII. Effects of the Works Program on Rural Relief
XIV. Changing Aspects of Rural Relief
XV. Rural Youth: Their Situation and Prospects
XVI. Farming Hazards in the Drought Area (in press)
XVII. Rural Families on Relief (in press)
Rural Population Mobility in the United States (in preparation)
Youth in Agricultural Villages (in preparation)
Public Assistance in the Drought Area (in preparation)

Special Reports

Areas of Intense Drought Distress, 1930-1936
The People of the Drought States
Relief and Rehabilitation in the Drought Area
Five Years of Rural Relief (in press)
Cultural Regions Within the Rural Population (in preparation)
Federal Surveys

To meet administrative needs for broad surveys of the relief population as well as more detailed studies, Federal surveys were developed in rapid sequence both prior to and after the formal development of the cooperative plan. While the smaller studies, supervised entirely by the Washington staff and issued in bulletin form, are not included, the following summaries give the purpose and scope of all major surveys conducted in cooperation with the States. Assistance by the State supervisors ranged from complete responsibility for field surveys in certain States to advisory services when supervision was provided from other sources. Detailed methodological statements have been purposely omitted as they can be found in the published reports based on the surveys.

At the inception of rural relief studies the problem of developing sampling procedures and survey techniques which would make possible the rapid collection of large quantities of data generally representative of rural relief conditions throughout the United States immediately arose. In many respects the field was an uncharted one. In the earliest studies, put into the field with little advance preparation, the sampling was admittedly technically defective on many counts although subsequent surveys substantiated the findings to a surprising degree. With the passage of time sampling techniques were developed which were widely applicable and which resulted in increasingly reliable surveys.
The Survey of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Families, October 1933 (DRS-30 and 16) was designed to amplify the information obtained by the Unemployment Relief Census of October 1933. Data were obtained during the winter of 1933-34 in 47 sample counties in 19 States falling within 13 distinct type-of-farming areas. The chief value of the investigation lies in the social and economic comparisons it afforded between fairly large relief and nonrelief populations in selected rural areas. In each county surveyed a random sample of relief households and the two nearest neighbors not on relief were interviewed. About 5,600 relief and 11,200 nonrelief families living outside centers of 2,500 population or more were included in the survey.

The sample for each county was then weighted in accordance with the total rural relief population of which it was representative. In comparison with nonrelief families in the same neighborhood, it was found that households on relief averaged about one person larger, showed greater unemployment, smaller incomes, less formal education, and less ownership of the means of production. There were also differences in age, nobility, family composition, and usual occupation and industry. Although significant differences between the relief and nonrelief households were found, there was considerable overlapping in the case of every trait measured. That no sharp line could be drawn between the two groups is reflected in the fact that many rural households not on relief in October 1933 have been obliged to seek assistance since that time.
Survey of the Rural Relief Situation in Selected Areas of Eighteen States

With a view to supplementing the October 1933 data regarding the current and probable relief situation, a special Survey of the Rural Relief Situation in Selected Areas of Eighteen States (LSB-25) was made as of May 1934. Of the 51 selected counties covered 47 had been included in the previous survey. A county schedule was filled for each county or part of a county surveyed, information being obtained from local officials.

Although the areas studied were not considered typical of the country at large, they did represent characteristic relief areas and associated types of problems. Statistical and descriptive data were assembled dealing specifically with the following four subjects: the number of households on relief on May 15, 1934, in the open country, in villages of less than 2,500 population, and in population centers of 2,500-5,000 persons, together with the amount of relief received during the entire month; probable reemployment prospects and the future trend in relief; resources available for the rehabilitation of farm families; and the prospects of rehabilitating village families, the resources with which they should be supplied, and the problems to be faced in such a program of rehabilitation.
Survey of Rural Problem Areas

The Unemployment Relief Census of October 1933 revealed that most of the areas with exceptionally high relief rates were rural regions in which the majority of the people lived in the open country or in villages and towns of fewer than 5,000 inhabitants. Further investigation of these areas indicated that certain permanent combinations of factors were associated with the high relief rates. Six such areas, containing approximately one-half of the rural relief population, 36 percent of the total rural population, and 43 percent of all farmers in 1930 were delineated for special study in the Survey of Rural Problem Areas (DRS-60). Sixty-five counties in twenty-three States were selected to represent insofar as possible in a limited sample the range of conditions prevalent in these areas. Data were obtained from case records, through interviews with local relief workers, and from other available sources. A total of 10,770 schedules was filled.

The causes underlying the necessity for relief, the characteristics of the relief population, and the prospects for the rehabilitation of the rural families on relief in June 1934 were investigated.
Survey of Closed, Opened, and Reopened Cases

A Survey of Closed, Opened, and Reopened Cases (DRS-12A and 14A) was made in 49 counties in 22 States from November 1933 through April 1934 to reveal the volume and rate of turnover of rural relief cases, the extent to which the relief population was affected by the various opportunities for reemployment, especially the program of the Civil Works Administration, changes in the characteristics of the relief population coming on and going off relief rolls, the methods by which families were transferred from relief to self-maintenance, and the relation of these processes to the various rural occupations and industries. Schedules were taken by personal interview for all cases as they came on and went off the relief rolls during the period of survey. A total of 92,244 schedules was filled.
Survey of the Rural Relief Situation, October 1934

As the first of a series of surveys of current changes in the rural relief situation, the Survey of the Rural Relief Situation, October 1934 (DRS-77A and 77B) was conducted in rural and town areas. Approximately 29,800 schedules were transcribed from relief records in 136 counties representative of 9 major agricultural areas and 2,500 schedules in 6 Pacific Coast counties and 41 Connecticut townships. Supplementary to the relief schedule, a similar form was used for cases receiving advances under the rural rehabilitation program. Bulletins based on the survey, indicative of the scope of the data obtained, covered usual occupation of the heads of relief households; residence of the relief population; the trend of rural relief from October 1933 to October 1934; an estimate of the proportions of farm operators and other groups expected to need relief by February 1935; expected changes in the relief situation between October 1934 and February 1935; workers and dependent age groups in relief households; mobility of the rural and town population; types and value of relief received; relief history of rural and town cases from May through October 1934; and a comparison of relief and rehabilitation cases in rural areas in October 1934.
Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population

The most extensive rural relief survey which was undertaken was the Survey of Current Changes in the Rural Relief Population (DRS-109 and 109A and supplementary forms), initiated in February 1935 and continued until the end of the year. Data were obtained from case records. In February 138 sample counties, representative of 9 agricultural areas, were surveyed. For June and subsequent months the sample was expanded to include 304 counties and 116 New England townships selected as representative of 34 States in order to meet the administrative need for information concerning the rural relief situation in particular States as well as in agricultural areas. In addition to cross-section studies of the rural and town relief population made in February, June, and October 1935, samples were taken of cases closed during the interval March to June, inclusive; of cases closed, reopened, and closed each month July to October, inclusive; and of cases opened and reopened during November and December. A total of approximately 286,900 schedules was filled.

The specific objectives of the survey were to obtain information periodically concerning the number and characteristics of rural families and persons on relief, to analyze the monthly relief turnover, to determine the types and amounts of assistance given in rural areas, to evaluate the effect of the various programs developed to meet the situation, and to obtain information concerning the basic factors underlying the relief situation in rural areas. The wealth of detailed data resulting from this survey made possible a number of comprehensive reports. They included not only a careful analysis of the changing aspects of the rural relief population as a whole but also special studies of families, of farmers, and of youth on rural relief rolls.
Plantation-Tenant Survey

In order to analyze the human elements associated with the land tenure system in the Eastern Cotton Belt, an enumeration of landlords and tenants on 646 cotton plantations in 6 Southeastern States, with supplemental data for South Carolina, was conducted in the summer of 1935. For purposes of the Plantation-Tenant Survey (DRS-200 and 204), a plantation was defined as a tract farmed by one owner or manager with five or more resident families. These might include the landlord, laborers, share tenants, or renters. The plantations selected for study were distributed proportionately by States and by the homogeneous areas of the Cotton Belt which extend across State lines. The alarming increase of tenancy, the burden of debt and exorbitant interest rates, the social effects of excessive devotion to cash-crop farming, the soil-exhausting traits of cotton farming, low incomes, inadequate standards of living, poor educational facilities, and other difficulties confronting the cotton farmer were analyzed. The special efforts for the relief and rehabilitation of cotton tenants were also described with emphasis on the importance of assistance by the Federal Government in the future reconstruction of the Cotton Belt.
Survey of Combined Farming-Industrial Employment

In the spring of 1935 the Survey of Combined Farming-Industrial Employment (DRS-138 and 139) was undertaken by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in cooperation with the Land Utilization Division, Resettlement Administration, to determine the possibilities for further development of desirable farming-industrial combinations in the Southeast as a means of improving living conditions and increasing economic security. Information was secured by personal interview on the farming activities and off-the-farm employment of a selected sample of 1,113 households in 5 major industrial areas of Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina. For comparative purposes household and employment data for a sample of 1,334 nonfarming industrial workers were also included in the study. The survey made possible the appraisal of existing types of combined farming-industrial employment and showed that a cash income from industrial employment is essential to the success of households engaging in small farming enterprises.
Farm Rehabilitation Survey

To analyze the natural and economic factors which have determined the relief needs of farm families in the drought area of the Great Plains, a Farm Rehabilitation Survey was initiated in the spring of 1935 by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in cooperation with the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Available information pertaining to the area was assembled from weather reports, soil surveys, reports of the United States Census, and farm practice studies previously made. In addition, almost 1,000 farmers in 13 selected counties were interviewed to determine the farming system followed, the past record of crop yields, the financial condition of the farmers, and their financial progress since they began farming in the area. Since the 1934 drought merely accentuated serious agricultural ills, major emphasis was placed on needed programs for the permanent rehabilitation of the farmers of the area.
Survey of Households That Received Relief in June and Were Closed Prior to December 1, 1935

In order to analyze the effects of the transfer during the latter half of 1935 of needy rural cases from the rolls of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to more specialized programs of assistance, including employment on the Works Program, care by the Resettlement Administration, or relief from other public assistance from State and local agencies, a Survey of Rural Households That Received Relief in June and Were Closed Prior to December 1, 1935 (DRS-409A) was initiated. A total of 5,377 rural families in 71 sample counties in 7 States was studied. The selected States represented different types of farming and of rural non-agricultural industries, varying degrees of relief intensity in June 1935, and differences in the degree of their dependence on Federal funds for relief. In general the proportions of the closed June relief cases which received relief again in December appeared to vary in direct relation to the comprehensiveness of State relief programs.
Survey of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas

The Survey of Public and Private Assistance in Rural and Town Areas (DRS-160 and 162) was undertaken to provide an indicator of month-to-month changes in the volume and cost of relief in rural and town areas which would complement the urban series of relief statistics of the Social Security Board. The types of assistances included were public general assistance, public veterans' assistance, public aid to the aged, to the blind, and to dependent children, Resettlement emergency grants, and private assistance. The survey was made in 385 rural and town areas. The list of counties included in the current change survey was modified only to insure representative counties with towns of up to 25,000 population and to include sample counties in 3 additional States. Current reports on expenditures and cases were secured from all agencies in the sample areas from January 1936 through June 1937. In addition relief statistics were compiled for the years 1932, 1933, 1934, and 1935 in as many of the counties as had reliable records for those years. In July 1937 the series was transferred to the Social Security Board.
Survey of Village Youth

To ascertain the place youth occupied in the economic and social organization of a selected group of 45 agricultural villages, a survey was made as of June 1, 1936, under the joint auspices of the Works Progress Administration, the American Youth Commission, and the Columbia University Council on Social Research. The villages ranged in size from a little over 400 to almost 2,700 population. By means of the Survey of Village Youth (DRS-11-005) schedule information on sex, age, marital status, race, residential and work history, educational attainments, economic status, and recreational activities was secured for village youth. In addition more limited data were obtained for economically independent youth who had migrated from the villages and for the total population in each village. Schedules were secured for approximately 8,000 youth 15-24 years of age and 3,200 youth 25-29 years of age.
Survey of Public Assistance Extended to Households in Drought Areas

To supplement preceding analyses of the relief situation in the drought area, a Survey of Public Assistance Extended to Households in Drought Areas (DRS-275) was conducted in 64 counties covering the period July-December 1936. A monthly record of relief expenditures, by agencies, was secured for each household in which one or more members received any type or types of public assistance. More than 75,000 cases were enumerated. The survey determined the extent to which families received aid from two or more agencies simultaneously during a given month or alternately during a period of months, measured incidence of relief among the various types of farm operators and non-farming families, obtained information on types and amounts of aid extended and on the extent of relief turnover, and determined the household composition and characteristics of members.
Resurvey of Agricultural Villages

To determine changes in rural social life since 1930 and to study 140 village-centered agricultural communities previously surveyed in 1923-24 and 1929-30, a resurvey of these villages was conducted early in 1936. Data secured from local records and local leaders in each village made possible a detailed institutional analysis of each village and indicated rural trends.

Information was secured on such topics as migrations, trade areas, town and county cooperation, industries, social organizations, cooperatives, schools, adult education, and churches.

Although the survey was a joint project of the Council for Research in the Social Sciences of Columbia University and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, the State supervisors cooperated by conducting or supervising the field surveys in a large number of villages.

1 Not a survey under the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research. It is included here, however, because many of the State supervisors assisted in the survey.

2 It was directed by Dr. Edmund deS. Brunner and Dr. Irving Lorge.
Survey of Rural Population Mobility

In order to provide more detailed data on rural population movements and the characteristics of the migrants than are available from census data, special studies have been carried on in eight States since the beginning of 1935. Within each State the selection of the sample areas and the size of the sample were determined by local needs, interests, and resources. In the Survey of Rural Population Mobility data were secured for the period from January 1, 1926, to January 1, 1936, or from January 1, 1928, to January 1, 1935, in the various States. Only changes of a relatively permanent nature were included by arbitrarily limiting the recorded migrations to those which involved a change of residence from one minor civil division to another. Approximately 25,000 schedules were filled in the various States.
Survey of Employable Cases on General Relief

As of both January and February 1937, investigations were undertaken to determine the extent to which employable cases on general relief had been transferred to WPA employment. Two distinct phases of the problem were analyzed: (1) policies of local relief agencies with respect to care of employable cases and their definition of employability as compared with the criteria used for certification; and (2) individual interviews with cases referred by local agencies as employable to determine their ability to hold WPA jobs and their availability for assignment.

The Survey of Employable Cases on General Relief (DRS-290) was conducted in 127 counties in January and 123 counties and Connecticut in February. While the only reports consisted of administrative memoranda and the survey was conducted by the Special Inquiries Section rather than the Rural Section, it is included here because of the large number of State supervisors and their staffs who assisted in the field work.
Table 1.—States in Which Specified Federal Rural Relief Surveys Have Been Conducted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line No.</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Rural Relief Surveys</th>
<th>Rural Population Mobility</th>
<th>Resurvey of Agricultural Villages</th>
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1 States in which study was confined to cities are not included.
2 New Jersey was in the cooperative plan for a few months but was not included in any Federal survey.
3 Includes Maine which was not in the cooperative plan.
4 Includes Wyoming which was not in the cooperative plan.
5 Includes Delaware and Idaho which were not in the cooperative plan.
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Table 2.—State Projects Conducted Under the Plan for Cooperative Rural Research through June 30, 1938

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<th>Economic conditions</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rehabilitation and Resettlement</th>
<th>Problems related to agriculture</th>
<th>Submarginal areas and stranded groups</th>
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* States included in the cooperative plan did not conduct State surveys.