

7. *Coordination and cooperation*

(a) Within FHA, the EO rural loan program is operated as an organic part of the agency's rural credit responsibilities under the Administrator. Two divisions in the national office are directly involved: the Farm Operating Loan Division (loans to individuals) and the Association Loan Division (loans to cooperatives). In addition, the farm planning and supervision section of FHA has responsibility for training and guidance of the FHA family advisers assigned to selected counties of concentrated poverty where they work with low-income borrower families. FHA State directors are responsible for EO rural loan operations in their respective States. Coordination is maintained at all levels and with all programs in the agency.

(b) Rural loan administration and liaison with OEO is coordinated with other Department of Agriculture activities through the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Rural Development and his staff. In States and counties, Department of Agriculture technical action panels have been established as part of the rural areas development program. One of their most important functions is to coordinate programs of the Department and make use of these programs imaginatively to help rural communities solve problems. The EO rural loans and other aspects of the OEO program are regularly on the agenda of technical action panel meetings. The FHA supervisor is chairman of the panel.

(c) As indicated previously, FHA has established a liaison position within its headquarters office to coordinate administration with OEO through the latter's Assistant Director for Interagency Relations. Representatives of the various agencies administering delegated EO programs meet regularly together in OEO and separately to discuss mutual problems concerned with these and other EO programs.

(d) Through its State directors, FHA has numerous regular contacts with State government agencies in the agricultural, welfare, economic development, and other fields. Representatives of such agencies have been fully informed of the aims and administration of the rural loan programs.

(e) It is the policy of FHA to cooperate closely with all local government agencies with the objective of increasing the effectiveness and impact of the agency's supervised credit programs. FHA supervisors cooperate closely with local rural areas development program committees and other local citizen groups and councils to promote effective use of all the agency's programs. Such local relationships are a continuing and important aspect of the agency's program administration.

(f) FHA has working agreements with the Department's Foreign Agriculture Service and the Agency for International Development to provide U.S. foreign missions with information and technical assistance concerning U.S. rural supervised credit programs and to provide training for foreign nationals visiting the United States under AID programs. Information on EO loan procedures and administration has been distributed through these channels. Operation of the EO rural loans at the county and farm level also are now an important subject of study for foreign trainees visiting the United States, since problems facing EO rural loan borrowers often are very similar to those of low-income farmers in underdeveloped countries.