

ONE YEAR AND ONE MILLION BOOKS LATER

By

Francis H. Vittetow
Education Materials Advisor
United States Agency for International Development
Vientiane, Laos

April 1965

A Mid-Tour Operational Analysis
of a Materials Development Effort in the Ministry
of Education, Kingdom of Laos, With Emphasis on
Factors Serving as Change Agents

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I. Introduction

This paper describes a materials production effort which was initiated by the writer in the Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Laos, while serving as the Education Materials Advisor with the Agency for International Development in Vientiane from November 21, 1963 to the present time.

Efforts will be made to outline the structure, or climate, from which the project was initiated, and is currently proceeding, as well as the factors present, or defined, in producing the needed changes to effect better materials production in the Ministry of Education.

This analysis will also attempt to show that it is sometimes necessary to know, and understand, how factors such as morale, working in terms of host country's purposes, and encouraging experimentation, can be directly related to success or failure. Learning that it is sometimes necessary to use indirect means to accomplish stated objectives can also be a meaningful experience.

The current project of materials development also emphasizes the approach that it is leadership's role to encourage all members of a staff, a division, a bureau, or an agency to make their maximum professional contribution and, in the process, to become more self-directing.

Throughout the life of the project it should be kept in mind that the Advisor has unstated objectives. These relate to trying to prove that certain values of human relationship, leader-group principles and corresponding practices and procedures for working through problems to successful conclusion have more ramifications for change than the tangible end-product of producing large quantities of materials.

II. Thorough Planning and Organization of Work is Essential

Project planning, organizational patterns and methods of implementation need to be carefully reviewed. Results do not come automatically just because we are Americans and are overseas. The same fundamental concepts, vital to good management practices, are applicable overseas as well as in the United States. Once overseas, all of us probably have to depend upon our individual resources to a larger degree than if we were in the United States where all forms of assistance would be readily available. An Advisor's professional skills will undoubtedly be utilized at a lower level overseas, while in all probability the managerial skill level requirement will be at

a much higher level than in the United States.

A. Some Basic Steps in Planning

None of us question the need for planning our work. All of us plan. Some plan more than others. Some persons may think that shallow planning can produce desired results which, of course, is a fallacy. But too often we want to implement and show project results too soon which are based on a foundation of incomplete or insecure plans and procedures. Scope and sequence patterns are vital to projects.

The following have been found to be a successful sequence in the project being described:

1. Evaluate the present situation in terms of who, when, where, how, what and why;
2. Establish on a priority basis, short and long-term goals and objectives;
3. Analyze available resources in terms of quantity and quality;
4. Establish some forms of control over "things" and with people in order to be able to determine trouble spots;
5. Establish procedures to achieve objectives;
6. Consider primary and secondary alternatives in the decision-making process; and
7. Re-evaluate on a regular basis, project goals, implementation, procedures and resources.

B. Host Country Involvement Necessary

The Advisor's counterpart and key members of his staff at the Materials Production Center were involved early in the establishment of the preceding basic steps in planning. Full discussions on needs, objectives, as well as current and/or needed resources to support these objectives were initiated. Development of guidelines for implementation was agreed to preparatory to initiation of actions designed to start processes.

III. Overt Actions and Practices Affecting Development of a Favorable Climate to Produce Materials

Seemingly insignificant and unrelated actions often develop into major problem areas. A series of such actions, on the part of several aid groups working in Laos attempting to give support to materials

development, establish an actual "climate of rejection" for materials development on the part of the Ministry of Education.

These actions, documented, are as follows:

1. An aid agency sent a writer during 1963 to work with Materials Production Center. Copy for one elementary book was developed over a one-year period of time. The visiting writer insisted that if it was to be printed by the United States it had to be contracted for at a particular printing source. This the U.S. Advisor refused to do. As a result, this same copy was given to a Vientiane printing plant eight months ago. No books have been printed to date.
2. Another instance concerned the development of "Ten Centers of Interest" charts. One international group during 1963 had sent a person to work with Materials Production Center in the development of visual aids. The United States offered to print these charts during the early stages of its project. The international organization's advisor insisted that charts be printed on special "metallic" type of material for durability - which, of course, is an excellent idea. He would not release charts otherwise. But the cost factor overshadowed the durability concept. As a result, the USAID Advisor was not permitted to use own judgement to print on regular, water resistant chart paper. The copy for charts was finally sent to another country to receive "approval for printing". This was seven months ago. The charts have just been delivered to the Ministry of Education.
3. An additional effort at large-scale materials production was with another aid group. A Thai contract writer, funded by USAID, had developed a Grade 1 Arithmetic textbook in the early stages of the project. The Ministry of Education, in efforts to get books to children quickly, pulled the book off production line and requested the aid organization concerned to fund 50,000 copies. After the copy had been at a Vientiane printer for about a year, only 3,000 to 4,000 copies had been printed. (Finally, the book was recalled from this printing source by the Ministry of Education and returned to Textbook Project for regular processing and printing. 76,500 copies of this book have now been printed and delivered.)

4. During early FY 1963, USAID/Laos contracted to print two books in Bangkok. Due to unreliable vendor selection it was not until September 1964 that 50,000 copies each of Science, Grade 1, and Geography, Grade 1, were finally delivered to the Ministry of Education. Even then the books were of a poor quality.
5. A final spasmodic effort was made by the Ministry of Education. An action was taken by the then Director General of Education working with Chinese printers to get books printed on a "print now - pay later" basis when books would be sold to school children. This idea was deemed not functional and was abandoned.

Several sources, both inside and outside of the Lao Ministry of Education, indicated that the Director General of Education had previously been exposed to adamant and sometimes indifferent patterns of planning experiences with Americans. It seemed that plans would be formulated, policies determined and "things" given without the understanding and general support of the Director General. As a result, there had developed an unwholesome attitude, or climate, throughout many sections of the Ministry in which slow methodical planning could not be accomplished.

The Advisor's and Chief Education Advisor's initial contacts with the Director General involved long periods of listening in an effort to determine the best point of professional entry. The project acceded to several of his requests - which were very logical. Gradually, through give-and-take sessions, the project direction and objectives were established.

(Even if persons, or nations do not have all we think they should have, by our own standard, a person or a nation must protect the last of their resources - PRIDE and EGO and the RIGHT OF CHOICE.)

The understanding and treating of this problem with patience by the Chief Education Advisor did much to smooth the way to the Director General's acceptance of USAID/Laos' offer to print elementary textbooks.

Based on the foregoing experiences it was no wonder that USAID/Laos had some difficulty convincing the Lao Ministry of Education that it could evolve a coordinated, workable plan that would produce a large volume of materials. Because of the need to convince, sell, and prove to the Ministry of Education that the U.S. intent was profound and sincere, the planning and "getting ready" stage was purposefully longer than is considered normal in known USAID projects. As a result, this project is evidencing a shorter, and more productive, implementation stage. The beginning of the implementation stage can be taken as May 3, 1964, the date the Director General of Education authorized USAID/Laos to print all of the Laos elementary school textbooks for Grades 1-6.

IV. Preparing for the Process of Materials Development

Several intangible areas of administrative and supervisory concern had to be reconciled by the Advisor before the actual planning of materials development could be started.

First, there was no difficulty whatsoever in securing Mission support for this project. The Offices of the Director, Assistant Director for Technical Services, and Program ^{Office} have given unqualified support and assistance to the Education Branch in this endeavor. These actions have served as a real catalytic agent to the Education Materials Advisor.

The Project Manager approach, in which one person is delegated the authority for each phase of the Education Branch's program, initiated by the Chief Education Advisor, has served well in permitting the Advisor to utilize his own initiative in the planning, programming, implementing and evaluating processes.

It was also recognized that the following items had to be given due consideration in order that the long-range effect of a program of materials development would have value to Laos and could be justified by the United States:

- A. The administrative staff of the Director General's office and of the Materials Production Center would have to SANCTION a full-scale materials development effort, especially in the textbook field.
- B. There would have to be CONFIDENCE on the part of the administrative staff of the Ministry of Education and USAID/Laos that the current writers and other officials at the Materials Production Center, in cooperation with the USAID advisor, could define, discuss and agree on the direction of materials development.
- C. The administrative staff of both the Ministry of Education and USAID/Laos would have to have PATIENCE and realize that materials development is not planned and implemented in the same manner as building a bridge. The identification, grouping, determining direction and utilization of human resources play key roles in such educational projects. Progress cannot be timed and compartmentalized as easily as one would like to think, or as some books inform us.
- D. Channels of COMMUNICATION would have to be kept open at all times. Persons being affected by a decision would have to be kept informed as to the process of arriving at the decision, have a part in making the decision, or be persuaded that the decision was a part of their own.

Once the preceding principles were fully understood by all persons concerned so that a profound feeling of confidence and mutual benefit began to exist in the project structure then, and only then, the Advisor could proceed to specific planning actions to develop materials.

Underlying Principle Serving as Change Agent

Expect any change to be a gradual process. Sometimes we expect people to see in half an hour what has taken us months to think through. We can't change people; they change themselves.

V. The Need for Materials Development

A. The Problem

For many, many years it has been generally known that the Royal Lao Government has been confronted with the necessity of providing all of its school children one book, in each subject, in all grades 1-6.

An education materials survey¹, initiated by the project in December 1963 and completed during the first week of February 1964, readily confirmed the Advisor's initial observations. The materials vacuum was so great that it was just a question of the place of emphasis and when someone would go to work on the problem.

The survey revealed:

1. No elementary school textbooks in the Lao language to support the Education Reform Act of 1962;
2. No teacher guides to give direction to textbooks or classroom procedures;
3. No planned approach being utilized to eliminate fragmented supply patterns of supplementary materials;
4. No leadership program at the provincial and national levels in materials development;
5. No professional library to support writing or curriculum development; and

¹ See "The Lao School Child and His Search For a Book", by Francis H. Vittetow, Agency for International Development, Vientiane.(1964)

6. No habitable place in Ministry of Education for materials development personnel to work.

Much school time continues to be wasted because teachers must, of necessity, laboriously copy lessons from their lone notebooks to chalkboard so a child can, in turn, copy from chalkboard to notebook. Chalkboards are in insufficient quantity so as not to permit even teachers to present large amounts of work at one time. Compounding this, the rooms are usually so crowded the children can't get up to participate in chalkboard exercises even if they have the opportunity.

When the 1,823 schools opened in September 1964 to the 156,000 children, a total of 1,375,000 books were needed, representing at least 55 separate titles. The problem increases at a 20% quantitative rate with each school year. In September 1965, the book need will increase to 1,650,000 copies. Coinciding with this vast need, the 4,000 teachers require 31,000 "teacher guides" to accompany these texts.

In addition it seemed necessary to:

1. provide each classroom with some supplementary materials such as maps, charts and pictures;
2. provide training programs for writers and materials development personnel at the national and provincial levels;
3. provide a professional library for writers at the Materials Production Center. Reference sources were to be in: Laotian, English, French and Thai languages; and
4. provide for renovation of Materials Production Center which would include new rooms for writers, new wiring, audio-visual projection room, painting, water closets and new roof on main building.

Underlying Principle Serving As Change Agent

Approach change through evaluation.
When we make decisions about change in light of the evidence collected, it takes the decision away from what 'I' think or 'you' think, but places it on a basis in which no one has to 'win' or 'lose'.

B. Background of the Problem

The future of a nation is just as secure as the amount of attention it gives to its children. Thousands upon thousands

of Lao school children were not having access to the varied types of material necessary to their educational growth and development. The teachers, supervisors and administrators for these same children were not having contact with the barest minimum of teaching aids. Recreational reading materials continue to be non-existent.

It was recognized that without continuing contacts with all classifications of teaching-learning materials the children of the Kingdom of Laos would never know the full meaning of the term EDUCATION.

The lack of materials in the Lao school structure is not of recent origin. It persisted during the French tenure in Laos and has continued since Independence in 1949. The continuing political and military instability of the country has not made the matter of materials gathering and development any easier.

Prior to the development of the current project there seemed to be an unwritten conspiracy against the Lao school child in that he could not gain access to learning materials.

Teachers can be trained, buildings can be built, better administrative and supervisory approaches considered, but all of these will be to no avail until a child has something to read and study. Until this basic, and critical, material shortage is resolved, to satisfaction of teacher and pupil, the Lao schools will continue to participate in a "professional exercise" without too much meaning.

C. Related Problems

The basic problem of supplying huge quantities of educational materials to Lao school children is compounded by past inability of the country to identify need, assemble and train human resources. Such related problems revolve around the following:

1. Lack of trained Lao citizens for writing, art work and library development;
2. The Lao language is in a period of transition, and the spelling is not standardized. Philologists are needed;
3. Lack of information on the social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth characteristics of Lao children from which to develop a meaningful school curriculum;
4. Lack of trained curriculum development personnel;
5. Lack of fundamental knowledge of textbook content, and its proper utilization with children, will pose immediate, but not insurmountable, problems to Lao school personnel.

This is supported by fact that 1,073 of the elementary school teachers have had less than six years of formal schooling. Another 2,495 teachers have had no more than six years of education. Approximately 500 teachers have had more than six years of schooling.

D. Basic Problems are Categorized

The basic problem areas in the Materials Production Project were ultimately categorized into two broad groups:

1. Method of determining operational procedures that would produce results.
2. Method of overcoming Ministry of Education's initial "climate of rejection" or inertia, for materials development.

Once these areas had been defined then it was a matter of applying basic principles of management and human relation factors. The project was started upon the assumption that children did need textbooks and that the Ministry of Education would agree upon the cooperative approaches if sufficient proof could be shown that a workable procedure had been evolved.

VI. Establishing Objectives and Procedures

A. General Purposes

The counterpart and members of his staff and the Advisor agreed to try to achieve two goals:

1. Provide each Lao elementary school child with one book, printed in Lao language, in each subject in every grade, 1-6; and
2. Provide for a continuing training program in materials development which would stimulate the Lao Ministry of Education into a pattern of self-sufficiency.

B. Specific Objectives

Once goals were agreed upon, then specific operating objectives were listed:

1. Provide at least 1.6 million elementary school textbooks, representing approximately 55 separate titles, to the Ministry of Education by October, 1965. Books to be distributed to children for free use.
2. Print books of a bulletin type and of uniform size, 6" x 9". Format to be standard, including the picture

- of the King of Laos, credit and title pages, plus a message of the Ministry of Education to students and teachers. Outside backcover to contain a map of Laos and adjacent regions. All covers to be in four colors, with content in two colors;
3. Provide teacher guides to accompany classroom textbooks;
 4. Provide each classroom with some supplementary materials such as maps, charts and pictures;
 5. Provide training program for writers and materials development personnel at the provincial and national levels;
 6. Provide a professional library for writers at Materials Production Center. Reference sources to be in Lao, English, French and Thai languages; and
 7. Provide for renovation of Materials Production Center which will include new rooms for writers, director artists, new wiring, painting, audio-visual projection room and water closets.

Underlying Principle Serving as Change Agent

Work in terms of host country's purposes. All entities have certain phases of their program they want to improve. As we begin to work with them on improving these particular aspects, we can be helpful and some progress can be made. If we attempt to force host countries to work on our purposes their participation will be half-hearted.

C. Establish Procedures to Achieve Objectives

After basic goals and objectives were agreed to, procedures, or courses of action, had to be determined. Operational charts were prepared in order to show a "plan of work" for each manuscript. With many manuscripts in various processes of writing, design and layout, minute planning was essential.

It was determined that the following sequence of information would be needed on each manuscript at all times:

1. Title - Grade - Quantity
2. Status of Copy: Not Started, Underway, Completed - Number of Pages
3. Lao Control Committee Actions: Under Review, Approved, Not Approved
4. Transmittal of Copy to USAID
5. Art Work: Underway, Completed, Not Started
6. Project Implementation Order/Commodities(PIO/C): Requested, Issued
7. Translation Process (Lao to English): Underway, Completed, Read, Revised and/or Approved
8. Final Typing: Underway, Completed
9. Proofing: Underway, Completed
10. Typesetting (or typing): Underway, Completed
11. Illustrations:
Cover:- Underway, Completed
Body:- Underway, Completed
12. Copy and Art Work: Approved for Layout
13. Dummy Prepared
14. Layout: Underway, Completed, Approved
15. Completed Layout Sent to Manila
16. Blueprint Received from Manila
17. Blueprint Approved
18. Blueprint Returned to Manila
19. Books Shipped from Manila
20. Books Received at Vientiane
21. Books Shipped to Provinces thru Community Education Project

The charts were developed after several "dummy runs" on actual materials. These were placed in the offices of the Advisor and his counterpart and the charts are kept up to date for obvious reasons of planning.

A flow of work must be maintained if a project is to accomplish stated objectives. In this project, the term "cooperation" is not just a pleasant word for a report, but something that has to be achieved.

During the early stages of the project, "shake down" delays cropped up. Someone wouldn't get a proof completed as promised, a proof was found to contain errors, artwork was to be redone, or a copy would get lost. The project was, and continues to be, exposed to hazards so well known to all Advisors.

At the moment, some phases of the project are on schedule, some ahead of planning, while other items are behind initial thought. The Advisor concedes that the project would be off schedule today, had time not been given for consideration of the preceding and related questions.

Underlying Principle Serving as Change Agent

Place major emphasis on the procedure for working through a problem rather than on the final product sought. People's actions change through experience. The final product of any given study will be changed in the light of future study if the process has been the kind that keeps the channels of communications open at all times.

D. Alternate Procedures

It is essential that "secondary" plans be constantly kept in reserve. In developing countries, and especially Laos, it has been found that what we thought we had decided yesterday, is not what may happen today. Reserve operating procedures are always at the ready, but it is essential that the basic purpose of getting materials to children never change, although changes in procedure may be necessary.

Also, concern has to be shown for the following questions:

1. What persons will become involved at each stage of decision-making and/or implementation?
2. What will be the specific duties and responsibilities of the persons concerned?
3. When can the project expect to begin and end each phase of the stated objectives?
4. Where will the project operate each procedure?
5. How much of the project do we need to phase over a period of time?
6. How good should the materials be based on the current resources available?

The answers to these questions came after about four months in the project. Once generally known, the tentative answers were charted according to objective and time factors.

VII. Analysis Made of Available Resources
in Terms of Quantity and Quality

A. Developing Incentive in People as a Basis for Encouraging
Release of Potential

To come to work each day, to go home to an inadequate living standard, with not too much hope of an immediate upgrading, and then to come back to a bleak work pattern does not in itself offer much incentive to an individual. If physical comforts cannot always be forthcoming it is then vital to develop ego and group-centered patterns in a project to try to cancel out some of the feelings of frustration on the part of individuals and groups. The lack of such development can have repercussions on the individual, and in a group, and ultimately throughout a project. People in a project seem to get more satisfaction from known support and a "pat on the back" than seeing "things" being given to a project which they know they can never possess as individuals. The appreciation pattern does not start and end with a counterpart (s) but extends to all persons in a project structure.

Lack of an adequate salary, a suitable place to work and appreciation for effort expended affects all nationalities. All MPC personnel seemed to have at the beginning of the project a resigned feeling towards themselves and their work because of factors mentioned previously.

B. The MPC Staff Situation

The Director of the Center and his staff of approximately 50 persons were in a sense, "putting in time". There were no stated purposes for the Center's existence. Salaries were, and continues to be, inadequate. Based on an exchange rate of Kips 500/- to a U.S. dollar, the Director made about \$50.00 per month. The writers received \$25.00 per month, while some of the typists and casual-hire personnel made 32 cents per day. These figures were being supplemented by meager rice allotments based upon family status.

The education of the persons responsible for materials creation and production range from a third grade education through a U.S. grade 10 equivalent.

None of the staff at the Center had had any special training for the work they were doing. Three or four of the typists had "passed through" a short, local, typing course. Writers were learning "on the job". One person from Center was receiving instruction in Bangkok in printing techniques. He had been sent to

Bangkok two years earlier. Five persons had been sent to Bangkok four years earlier from Fine Arts School in Vientiane to be trained as artist illustrators. These persons have now returned and are awaiting assignment.

Other categories of persons included a Thai writer and a Thai artist who had been working in the Center for one year, funded under the USAID Teacher Training Project.

In the USAID office two Lao were assigned to areas of materials development. One was a writer, the former Director of Elementary Education, and the other a young Lao who had had no training whatsoever in materials development, and very little training in typing. This young person's interest to improve and yearning to learn were the main factors in choosing him as a key person in the textbook project.

Underlying Principle Serving as Change Agent

Have faith in the ability of the staff with whom you work. People live up to what we expect of them.

B. The Physical Plant and Equipment

A habitable place to work looms large in the ego patterns of individuals. The place an individual works, and the equipment and supplies furnished reflects what an organization thinks of the worker's contribution.

The Materials Production Center of the Lao Ministry of Education was found to be housed in a cast-off school structure in the middle of Vientiane. There were no lights, no water, no supplies and, in general, the building was in a state of constant deterioration.

The Materials Production Center, on several occasions, had been proposed as a place to print all kinds of educational materials for the Ministry of Education. Such proposals had been made by UNESCO and some USAID/Laos/Education officials during FY62 and FY 63. The Ministry of Education had almost been led to believe that it had human resources and facilities to print materials in a large volume.

Equipment consisted of two small multilith presses, one camera, one enlarger, one paper-cutter and one outmoded stitching machine. From this meager equipment, efforts were being directed toward the printing of 3,000 Lao-Lao dictionaries. After two years of labor only 1,500 of these had been completed, and of a poor quality. In efforts to bolster the equipment aspect some additional production equipment had been ordered on PIO/Cs during FY62 and FY63.

The items consisted of a stitching machine, camera, proofing-table, film developing sink, and four fonts of Lao type. The Advisor found that all items were entirely too advanced for use by present Materials Production Center personnel. These were equipments that a first class printing plant would utilize.

The maximum utilization of the new equipments would necessitate long periods of in or out-of-country training for MPC personnel. This problem still remains to be resolved, but first thoughts on the matter deemed it proper to have the equipment utilized "out of project".

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C. The Situation Pertaining to Policies and Procedures

In addition to serving as Director of the Materials Production Center, the Advisor's counterpart, worked as Director of Fundamental Education, Director of Information and Director of Statistics for the UNESCO Commission. In all of these positions he was reporting directly to the Director-General of Education. No stated purposes for the Center were generally known.

The persons supervised by the Director of the Center are now grouped as writers, artists, radio education, audio-visual, librarian, typists, printing and photography and folders and/or casual-hire. The writers also serve in a double function as the Lao Control Committee, which approves manuscripts for publication by the Ministry of Education.

At the outset of the project, there was no defined flow of work or written job descriptions for personnel. On a typical day the Director would be sought after by as many as 3 or 4 aid groups in addition to his attempts to try to work on problems in his four areas of responsibility. It was literally the proverbial "three-ring circus". The result: Activities of a sort were underway - a movement of people and "things" but nothing substantial being accomplished.

The Lao Control Committee, one of the keys to the creation and production of books, was taking an inordinately long time to review and approve what work was before them. Since there were no incentives before them - salary, facility, equipment or purpose - why work too hard?

VIII. Establishing Forms of Control

A. The Records System

At the beginning of most projects there seems to be a natural dearth of records or incentive for the development or keeping of such documents. The Education Materials Production Project was no exception.

The Education Branch had adequate records on previous financial and commodity patterns, but no records, of any good quality, were available at the Materials Production Center. The Advisor requested USAID/Laos Controller's Office to review the MPC fiscal records, including an audit of counterpart funds and to make appropriate recommendations. This resulted in the on-the-job training for the MPC fiscal agent. An appropriate set of financial records was established.

Errors in book keeping on counterpart funds were found. These had been recurring over some months. These were corrected. Because of this the fiscal agent at MPC comes even now occasionally to USAID office to determine accuracy of monthly reports about to be formally submitted.

Further, transmittal forms for manuscripts from Royal Lao Government to USAID/Laos were prepared. Purpose was to show request for printing according to certain technical specifications as well as Education Branch's acceptance of the copy. Another feature of the form was for RIG to assure USAID/Laos that the manuscripts were not violating copyright laws. Prior to submission of camera-ready copy to Regional Service Center, Manila for printing, the forms served as an assurance that the copy was correct according to the Ministry of Education "standards". On more than one occasion these forms have served their purpose well when some discrepancy showed in books after printing.

On commodities supplied to the Materials Production Center, duplicate PIO/C folders, containing records of purchase, arrival and delivery were developed in cooperation with the MPC fiscal agent and copies of all PIO/Cs, PIO/Ps and Pro-Ags were begun to be supplied to the MPC for record. A system of information on participants was established in cooperation with the USAID Training Office and MPC.

IX. Efforts Made to Reduce Magnitude of Problems

A. The Staff Situation

The Advisor learned to know each individual in the Materials Production Center, to listen to their problems (through an interpreter), and invited key members of staff to dinners in Vientiane and at his home. On special holidays, small gifts of sweets were given to each worker at the Materials Production Center.

Their advice was sought on the best way to repair building as well as on the design and layout of textbooks. Each commodity item purchased was the result of lengthy discussions as to its usefulness and feasibility of operation by the Lao themselves. These approaches did in no way undermine the Advisor's counterpart because he was utilizing a similar approach in working with staff.

The Advisor requested the Director of the MPC to review all salaries being funded under USAID project to see if these were in line with other project-supported salaries. It was found that a cost-of-living increase could be given to the four writers and the 18 casual hire personnel. The increase supported by Advisor, and granted by USAID through counterpart funds, amounted to 10-15% of base salary, retroactive to July 1964.

Job responsibilities were reviewed and assigned. The importance of each person, or group of persons in the textbook effort was, and continues to be, stressed.

An immediate analysis was made of tasks to be performed in creating, designing and producing textbooks. Resources were compared with jobs to be performed. The deficiencies revealed were the obvious pre-conditions for training actions.

During the initial stages of assessing staff requirements there was an immediate need for assistance in art and layout work. Through the splendid cooperation of personnel of USIS/Vientiane this need was overcome until the project's own staff could be recruited.

Short-term, "holding action" type of training was initiated for several persons from the Materials Production Center.

Persons, with little or no training, had been assigned to the creation and production of materials, but even these persons could not be spared for training over long periods of time. So, short-term training of 60 days was scheduled for six writers in the Materials Production Center, Thailand Ministry of Education, during FY 64 and FY65. Each writer was scheduled to take with him a manuscript in actual process of writing or review. One or two artists, currently working at the Materials Production Center, under Personal Service Contract, were asked to accompany writers to complete necessary art work. Sixty days of training was provided to a librarian, an audio-visual man and 11 in materials production in Thailand. The short-term training was meant only to encourage and give more insight into a situation that could be slowly improved.

Long training periods for personnel of some countries, and Laos in particular, can have adverse effects. There is first the absorptive capacity of the individual based on previous education as well as the absorptive capacity and change-rate of the situation itself. It seems better in this country to "stage" training for groups of persons. Short terms of training, work awhile, leading to higher understanding could possibly develop fruitfully into necessity of longer periods of training.

The Director of the Materials Production Center was programmed to a ten-week Book Industry Seminar in New York and Boston, sponsored by the Franklin Book Programs, Inc., and funded by USAID/VI, which began on February 15, 1965. The purpose of this training was to offer opportunity to the Director to learn the overall procedures of book business from copy creation to distribution.

1. On-The-Job Training

In addition to the Third-Country effort, an on-the-job training program initiated. The fiscal agent at MPC underwent a short, intensified type of training under guidance of USAID/Controller's office. Because of this a good financial control system was initiated in the project. The same person was also trained in record-keeping of commodities coming into the project. This phase of the project was developed by the TCN Administrative Assistant of the Education Branch, USAID/Laos. MPC now has an identical set of commodity records as our USAID/Education office.

Since good typing is a crucial part of manuscript development, a series of on-the-job sessions was initiated for individual typists. Each typist came to the Materials Production Project office of USAID for a two-week orientation. The Lao administrative assistant to the Advisor conducted these sessions and at the same time explained the entire effort of USAID toward materials production.

The Lao Administrative Assistant/Translator has for the past twelve months, in a sense, been undergoing an on-the job training program in the USAID/Laos Office. In this training the Advisor has taught: (1) better typing, (2) how to prepare dummies, (3) how to proof, (4) how to prepare layout, (5) some design, (6) how to prepare final make-up for off-set work, (7) and some techniques of liaison work with printers and artists. He has also been enrolled in a typing class for 16 weeks under Mission sponsorship.

2. Personal Service Contracts Required

In addition to the utilization of the Thai writer and artist funded under the USAID Teacher Training Project, it was necessary to place two additional Thai artist-illustrators under Personal Service Contracts for a one-year period. These are to be replaced by Lao fine arts personnel who have completed a five-year course in Thailand during 1965.

B. The Equipment and Materials

It should be emphasized that USAID/Laos did, for a long period, support the Lao Photo Press, a Lao Government entity. There are four other small printing shops in Vientiane under private management. In addition, there is the Service Geographic, another Lao Government printing plant. Even though these facilities exist, they cannot meet a "crash" program of printing 1.6 to 1.8 million books in an eighteen month period of time.

Because of these inadequate facilities and the lack of skilled personnel in the Ministry of Education (and the local printing shops themselves) the Advisor deemed it best to curb the development of the Materials Production Center into a production unit.

The difficulties of providing lengthy and costly training for personnel in the Ministry of Education to run printing equipment was patiently explained. It was further pointed out that once trained the persons could, and would, demand more salary than the Ministry of Education could afford. The regular printing plants in Vientiane would siphon off trained personnel.

Additionally, it was rationalized that once the backlog of textbooks were printed there would not be sufficient feeding in to warrant such skilled personnel and equipment under continuing auspices of the Ministry of Education.

Such reasoning prevailed and the Center's direction was changed from a "desire for a production unit" to that of a place "to create, design and layout materials" preparatory to printing elsewhere.

In view of the urgency of the need for immediate, and capable, printing facilities, it was decided to elicit cooperation of the

Regional Service Center (USIA) in Manila. Meetings were held with the appropriate RSC officials and details for such printing evolved. Camera-ready copy is now transmitted to Manila on a regular basis under the appropriate PIO/C procedures.

Once the textbook vacuum is filled then reprints, with necessary revisions, can be handled by Vientiane printing facilities. About ten books per year, representing 300,000 copies, will need to be considered over the ensuing five years.

The Materials Production Center's capability can, and should, be channelled to the printing of Ministry of Education circulars and memoranda, as well as the creation, layout and design and printing of a bi-monthly Teacher's Journal of 4,000 copies.

C. Policies and Procedures

In the process of analyzing purposes each Section began to see more clearly what the Ministry of Education was expecting of them. First reaction was "we aren't trained to do some of the requirements" and second, "we don't have proper facilities and supplies". During such a process it became clearly evident that the Center could, with present personnel, operate only as a place to begin to create and to bring some materials up to a point preparatory to actual printing.

The next procedure concerned itself with beginning to formulate job descriptions vs actual duties of all of the 50 persons. The end-product of this effort was to serve as a base line for better understanding of job responsibilities.

Next step was to try to assist the Director to find time to work, on a regular basis, with the Advisor. The simple procedure of setting up regular weekly appointments at the Materials Production Center and Education offices did much to bring some order to planning. These planning sessions were vital and did much to assist in projecting ideas for budgeting, participant training, commodity needs, renovation of building and especially in updating approval procedures of Lao Control Committee.

In sessions with the Lao Control Committee it was learned that the entire committee of eight Lao writers reviewed one book in its initial stages. This was very time-consuming when one remembered that it was difficult for agreement to be reached on the spelling and meaning of Lao words.

The technique of sub-committee work was inaugurated so that up to three books could be reviewed simultaneously. However, the full committee still functioned as a unit to give final approval to a manuscript.

Underlying Principle Serving as Change Unit

Share decisions concerning policy and procedures. Our emphasis in approaching an interview or conference should be on how to attack the problem rather than on how to sell our answers. When people share, they care. People assume responsibility when they have had a part in planning.

X. Follow-Up an Integral Part of Project Process

During early stages of the project a very delicate balance of resources, acceptance of ideas and production existed. Continuous follow-throughs on agreements continue to be made.

Extreme care continues to be taken with the Advisor's process of "keeping his word". This deals with appointments, releases of money into the counterpart funds, ordering and delivery of supplies and requests for format development.

It must be kept in mind that the Advisor is always in "competition" with other aid groups in the country for the counterpart's time. Because of this, follow-up procedure must have purpose and not just a "visit".

Again and again the Advisor emphasizes the importance of adhering to basic plans agreed to. Constant checks are made to see that processes started do not have "loop-holes" that might be used against objectives and procedures.

XI. Evaluation of Planning and Implementation Processes

The end-product of planning and implementation is the achievement of objectives.

It is the hopeful intent of most U.S. Advisors in foreign countries in any professional endeavor that some of their observations will be noted and recommendations will gain acceptance. In this business a one-third acceptance of recommendations offered would seem to be a good batting average.

Thus achievement of stated, or even unstated, objectives remain paramount in a foreign aid project. The following programmed objectives are compared with accomplishments to date:

A. Objective

Provide each Lao elementary school child with one book, in each subject in every grade, 1-6, printed in the Lao language, or a total of 1.6 million books representing approximately 55 titles.

B. Achievement

1. Twentytwo(22) books, representing 700,000 copies, printed. 12 delivered to the Ministry of Education, representing 320,500 copies.
2. Nine (9) books, representing 175,000 copies, in press at the Regional Service Center (USIA), Manila.
3. Sixteen (16) books, representing 500,000 copies, in various stages of writing, design and layout.

C. Objective

Provide each of the 2,500 elementary schools with some supplementary materials such as maps, charts and pictures.

D. Achievement

1. Two Arithmetic charts, size 32" x 42", of 5,000 each, printed and delivered.
2. Approximately 165,000 copies of King of Laos picture delivered.

E. Objective

Provide a professional library for writers at the Materials Production Center. References to be in Lao, English, French and Thai languages.

F. Achievement

1. Writer's library being established. Eight hundred of 1,000 proposed volumes delivered.
2. Organization and renovation of library completed.

G. Objective

Provide training programs for writers and other materials development personnel at the provincial and national levels.

H. Achievement

1. Third country training in Thailand for four writers, one audio-visual man, one librarian, one materials production man and ten persons from as many provinces during FY64 and FY65.
2. The Director of the Materials Production Center now in New York, attending a ten-week Book Industry Seminar.

I. Objective

Provide for renovation of Materials Production Center which will include new rooms for writers, Director, fiscal agent, artists and secretaries, new wiring, painting, small audio-visual projection room, new roof and water closets.

J. Achievements

1. Plans drawn, contract let, with renovation of main building structure now 95% complete.
2. Plans drawn, contract let to renovate remaining part of complex no later than June 1.

K. Change in Behavior is Important

All advisors look for by-products in a project. Some of the more vital end results seem to revolve around changes in behavior of the persons with whom you work. The following have been observed in the project:

1. The RIG decision-making process seems to have been accelerated.
2. A more definitive relationship between decision-making and the assumption of responsibility seems to be emerging.
3. More concern seems to be shown for "what is in documents" and what they mean to a project.
4. Counterparts visit USAID offices with more ease and on a regular basis. As a result, there seems to be a freer exchange of views.
5. A "think twice" attitude seems to be emerging when counterpart requests a commodity or service. This is due to necessity that commodity or service must be immediately functional and not something for display.
6. The definition of need, and selection of participants seems to be taking on more characteristics of long-range planning.

L. Language . Uniformity Expected

Another by-product of the project will probably be some "standardization" or "stabilization" of the Lao language. This seems to be a natural evolution if nearly two million books are fed into a school population which has not had previous access to materials.

XII. Other Principles Utilized in Project which have Served as Change Agents

A. Study of Culture Important

Place strong emphasis on the study of a country's culture patterns in order to determine "entry points" for proposed change. Project

achievement can probably be increased if during initial period of planning, cultural factors are given due consideration. This approach seems essential before efforts are made to initiate an "American schedule" of change in "things" or people.

B. Projects Will Be Criticized

Recognize criticism as a first step in assuming responsibility. When a person criticizes he places himself in a position to suggest more effective procedures. Set mental state to accept criticism from counterparts or colleagues and then you will be in a more enlightened position to offer constructive advice.

C. Recognize that leadership's function is to help all members of a staff release their professional potential. If host country counterpart officials are not becoming more self-directing as a result of our efforts then our leadership role is not effective.

D. New Ideas Important

Bring new ideas to conference table or project. People get tired of hearing the same problems and the same (unworkable) solutions. Try to visualize yourself being advised by your counterpart in your office in the United States. You would "listen" to the "advice" but you wouldn't "hear" it. Intervisitation to other projects, or cross-activity workshops and utilization of "out-of-project" resource persons can assist projects very much.

E. Experimentation is Necessary

Support counterparts who are trying new procedures by providing evaluative assistance. Do not, in any way, show displeasure or subconsciously penalize a person who is trying to improve but makes errors. Counterparts grow as they experiment.

F. Recognition is Important

Share credit for achievement. Under no circumstances should we expect enthusiastic participation from people, especially counterparts, in a situation in which we are trying to make a name for ourselves. If you are effective, or ineffective, the "word" will get around.

G. Morale is important. Unless workers, and especially counterparts, feel contented in their job they will not be concerned with improvement. Showing a genuine interest in professional problems affecting individuals contributes much to the improvement of morale.

XIII. Helping the Lao School Child - Complete His Search for a Book

During the remaining months, from now until November 1965, efforts of the Advisor will be directed toward the following:

- o Completion of ten to fifteen additional elementary school textbooks as approved under the Education Reform Act of 1962.
- o Development of the Writer's Library into a curriculum laboratory. This will form base from which elementary school textbooks will be revised and secondary and adult education materials can be prepared.
- o Establishment of an apprenticeship writing program to serve as a vehicle for continuing interest in writing and production of materials.

A. Textbooks and Pre-Service

Teachers cannot teach any more than what they know or what they are as a person. The developing countries are striving desperately to overcome decades of apathy and indifference either from themselves, or others, who may have had vested interests. They want to do this quickly. In developing countries, and especially Laos, there must be a minimum of wasted actions in achieving our objective.

Since teaching is simply a process of spreading information in an effort to change attitudes, it behoves all of us in foreign aid efforts to be sure that teacher trainees, as well as those in service, will have adequate knowledge and skills to impart to others. Developing countries do not have the "luxury of time" to learn all of the "proper ways" of how to do something. This seems to come after years of refinement and usage processes. A person well grounded in content will not have too much difficulty in transmitting this information to children.

1. An Assumption

Teachers must know academic content before they are qualified to teach at any level in the school structure.

2. A Need

Teacher trainees in Laos, as well as teachers already in service, have a continuing need to learn content of the new elementary school textbooks as approved under the Education Reform Act of 1962. Since these books will be the only ones to be taught in the public elementary schools this seems to be an obvious first need.

3. An Activity

Each teacher trainee studying at the National Education Center should be required to review, and learn, content of all new textbooks being printed. Each trainee should have access to a copy of one book in each subject being taught in elementary grades, 1-6, as he is guided through the teacher training experiences.

4. An Assumption

Each subject in a curriculum offers its own unique opportunity to a teacher. All teachers are not prepared to elicit the maximum response from an author's intent without professional assistance. If a student cannot analyze and define subject direction he is not teacher material.

5. A Need

Simple "Teacher Guides" need to be prepared to accompany each elementary school textbook as approved under the Education Reform Act of 1962. These "guides" could well be the prelude to fullscale curriculum guides which can serve as a basis for future textbook revision, writing or for teacher training purposes.

6. An Activity

As a process of learning about teaching, all students, at some point in their training, should become involved in reviewing procedures in the development of simple teacher guides. This type of an approach is in concert with actual preparation of daily or weekly lesson plans. A teacher must certainly know overall relationships of a particular subject before he can prepare an adequate lesson plan.

The Lao Control Committee of the Materials Production Center, in cooperation with the Faculty and Student-Teacher Committees of National Education Center should be utilized to formulate, on a grade and subject basis, simple teacher guides to correlate with textbooks approved under the Education Reform Act of 1962.

Books printed for the elementary schools have definitive objectives in each subject in a scope and sequence pattern. Teacher guides should correlate with these books to show:

(a) Objectives

A statement of the purposes of the subject should be made. These should come from Education Reform Act and be in simple language so teachers and pupils can understand intent of a subject.

(b) Experiences

Examples of several possible activities needed to achieve stated objectives should be listed in a concise manner.

(c) Methods

Each teacher is unique and brings his own experience pattern to the methods he uses in teaching. A brief discussion of possibilities in the Basal, Unit and Core approaches might be helpful.

(d) Materials

A listing should be made of the actual materials that will be available to support the activity being engaged in to achieve the objectives of the subject. (Materials are usually classified into (a) printed, (b) audio-visual, (c) making and/or constructing, (d) environmental, (e) recreational - indoor and outdoor, and (f) human resources.)

(e) Evaluation

A simple procedure needs to be shown to determine if objective of subject has been achieved. Usually a changed attitude and a practical application of a subject matter on the part of the student is sufficient evidence of good teaching.

B. Teachers In Service

Once the teacher guides have been prepared the next step will be to review these with the "power structure" of the school system. This means officials in Vientiane, Primary Inspectors, the newly trained materials development personnel, principals of groupe scolaires and key officials of the Teacher Training Program.

1. Once these persons fully understand the intent, and content, of the guides, then the processes of how to hold workshops for teachers should be taught to this power structure. This power structure could be taught at the newly renovated Materials Production Center. Films, in French, and English, on discussion procedures, plus other aids, would be available by July.

2. A "standard" in-service program concerned with the topic "How to Use a Basic Textbook" needs to be developed. This standard format should be utilized in all the provincial meetings. This "standard" program of information to be given to all teachers should be prepared during the Vientiane sessions. The power structure in the field then needs to set up sessions in groupe scolaires to train the teachers in the proper use of the textbooks for the welfare of the children utilizing the teacher guides as a point of departure.

EPILOGUE

This Textbook Project is not an expensive foray for the American taxpayer. The project does not utilize high priced, or "name" people to achieve objectives of the United States foreign aid program. The project is not glamorous. It will not take four or five tours involving several Americans to achieve the end product of textbooks for Lao school children.

A. SOME FACTS AND FIGURES

The following simple analysis shows the cost factor to date:
(Programmed and/or Spent)

Description	1964	1965	1966
		\$	\$
1. Technical Support	30,326.00	36,420.00	33,460.00
2. <u>Participants</u> Writers, Materials production, librarian, audio-visual, cur- riculum development	1,950.00	20,800.00	14,000.00
3. <u>Commodities</u>			
Printing of books	29,250.00	190,000.00	23,000.00
Library books, films, film- strips, jeep, miscellaneous office supplies	15,000.00	1,500.00	-
Other Cost (I-RO items)	2,000.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Transportation	1,000.00	40,000.00	3,500.00
4. <u>Counterpart Fund (Dollar Equivalent)*</u>			
1. Personnel Services	6,046.89	12,823.00	10,005.00
2. Contract Services, Con- struction, etc.	23,782.13	4,583.00	2,500.00
3. Commodities	666.67	2,083.00	667.00
4. Other Costs	20,000.00	-	1,750.00
Total	130,021.69	309,709.00	90,382.00

The preceding figures point up to the fact that the average cost of each of the 1.6 million books that have been, or will be printed, will cost the United States 30¢ per unit.

If backstopping charges are eliminated and printing costs, only, are utilized, then the cost is only 12.5¢ per book.

B. PAPERBACK OR HARD COVERS

During planning stages of project the matter of printing books in "paper back" or "hard cover" was discussed. The rationale for paper backs was as follows:

1. It was a known fact that books would have to be revised at an early date. It would be a waste of money to print in hard covers, revise, and then discard.
2. The time factor was an important element. The U.S. wanted quantity in a short time in order to assist the long-suffering Lao student, and to prove a point that a project such as this could succeed in Laos.
3. A book printed in hard cover, size 6" x 9", of 100 pages, with four color covers and two color content would cost approximately 100% more at a private printer. Even at the Regional Service Center, Manila, the cost would be approximately 25% more.
4. A final factor that was considered concerned desirability of covers: High temperatures, excessive rains and lack of adequate home and school storage facilities would probably destroy hard covers long before contents disappear.

In reviewing the foregoing reasons it was then obvious that paper backs would be feasible as well as more economical to the United States. Once the revisions have taken place, and the Lao language reaches a more mature stage, then a "hard cover" type of book could be considered - but not necessarily recommended for general school use.

C. Uncensored Writing Is Important

The reader should remember that schools are the avenues for developing, or controlling freedom of thought. The Ministry of Education and USAID/Laos should congratulate themselves that they have had the opportunity to participate in an effort of free and uncensored writing dedicated to giving the Lao child a chance to learn and choose for himself.

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