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NIGER CEREALS PROGRAM

An End-of-Year Appraisal By ADO/Niamey

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1. Impact on Farmers, 1976

In 1976, our start up year, we were able to have only limited impact on farmers. One hundred and fifty "aide-encadreur" were hired by Agriculture and some supplies of fertilizer and insecticides and seeds were made available to Departments for demonstrations. The demonstrations were primarily in Dosso Department where about one quarter of some 500 mutuals (GMPs) were involved (3,400 ha), and in Zinder where demonstrations were carried in several hundred villages (1,000 + demonstrations).

2. Impact on Farmers, 1977

In 1977, we expect to see the number and extent of millet demonstrations increase, and we are working to improve the quality of demonstrations. Specific targets are being established by the Extension Service, with the CID extension advisor, for four Departments. In Niamey, with the Niger Productivity Project*, we plan millet demonstrations for the first time ever in some 50 villages. In Dosso, where there are about 500 operating GMPs with about 50,000 farmers, the aim is to at least cover half their villages. In Tahoua, where the main action is in the Badegaichini Valley, an effort will be made to initiate millet demonstrations in the context of the crop rotation scheme being introduced. In Zinder Department, we project some 2,000 demonstrations in 1,000+ villages. Hence in 1977, in toto, we are aiming at a total of around 1,500 villages with interim demonstrations of P3 Kolo.

3. Impact on Farmers, 1978 and after

What about after 1977? There are 26 arrondissements with appreciabl farmland with over 350 mm of rainfall (average) per year. This is the NCI target area. The number of villages in this area is not now known (the Statistical Service is researching this), but it must be around order of 4,000 to 5,000. In 1978, we should be able to increase coverage to about 2,000 villages. This brings us through the first three years of the project. The project is scheduled to be extended for two years.

*Niger Department Development

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If that happens, by the end of 1980, we could expect to have all the target villages covered with at least one year's round of demonstrations. And we could expect that in about 1/2 the targeted villages, say 2,500, a majority of the farmers will have adopted the new varieties, and the total package of practices. Needless to say if this can be achieved it will represent a major advance in agriculture in Niger. (The more so since implicit in all this is the development of a farm delivery system able to furnish necessary inputs and guidance on a timely basis.)

4. A Major Problem

One major result of the past year has been to lead the GON and ourselves to face up to the issue of how to make the extension system work better. This has come about through the need to secure more and better demonstrations, which means effective extension. The GON and we are beginning to focus on this problem, and in 1977 we hope to see further progress.

5. Research.

The CID researchers (3 men) only arrived in September and were formally assigned to their jobs only in October. They are now at work and well intergrated into the National Research Institutes' programs. The NCP did sponsor 80 field trials in six departments in 1976, and monitored them with a staff assistant. We got a leg up on training by sending six well qualified agriculturists to the States for degree training (BS and MA). They should be returning starting 1978. We also sent four Nigerians to India (Icrisat) for training in millet and sorghum research. These four have returned and are working on the field trials program. We had a staff assistant, Don Ada s, at Tarna Research Station all year. He put together a complete story of past research for the CID research group. We also settled on a site at Quallam for first of three research sub-stations. Construction of the well and buildings is underway. A great deal of effort went into the design of the central lab, office and training facilities at Tarna. Bids for construction are to be let early in 1977. Major progress has been made in establishing a soils testing lab in Niamey, scheduled to begin operating next summer (this is a $1.0 million facility paid for by the GON).

6. Research In 1977

Past research has identified a number of varieties which do much better than F3 Kolo (millet), or existing sorghum varieties. The work plan for 1977 provides the retention of one or two improve varieties of millet, and one or two sorghum varieties for foundation seed production beginning May/June 1977. Farmers will first see this seed in 1978; more major distribution will commence in 1979.

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The research plan of work for 1977 has been completed and should shortly be formally approved. The local currency budget will be ready by January 15. A significant new element in the program will be research in soil and water conservation in farming practice, for the first time in Nigar's history.

7. Seed Multiplication

In 1976, we established three seed multiplications farms at Gaschiam, Madaoua, and Magaria on which were produced 52 ha. of millet seed. (Next year's goal is 60 ha.). Construction of the physical facilities is underway and will be completed before the next crop season starts (May/June 1977). On each center there is a fifteen man Nigerian team headed by an AID supplied staff assistant. Operational responsibility is to be transferred to the Nigerian team leader in 1977. The CID seed specialist, Mr. Hall, arrived in September and was formally assigned by the GON to his functions in November. He has been delegated full responsibility for this program by the GON. Two agriculturists have been sent to the U.S. for degree training in seed technology. A great deal of on-the-job training have been done.

In 1977, two additional seed farms are to be established. (The sites have been selected after great debate.) The seed processing facilities have been designed by the Genie Rural and the bid documents are expected to be ready by February at the latest, thus resolving what has been a major problem. The equipment for seed farms and the processing facilities will be ordered next week (with the visit of the ARDSO procurement advisor.)

8. The Foundation Seed Farm

The foundation seed farm's location at Lhossa has been confirmed following very careful review of the adequacy of the irrigation facility there. FAC is financing the irrigation (now under construction). INRAN hopes that planting can start at Lhossa this spring. The AID project manager feels we will be lucky if farming can be started in the fall with irrigation. Contract for buildings and for a well at Lhossa were let in the fall. Lhossa has also been a major problem which now appears resolved.

9. UNCC

One might ask why the project design included the UNCC at all. The reason is that the UNCC has an important role to play in a) extension (for example, UNCC personnel handled 1,200 demonstrations in Dosso Department in 1976), b) delivery of farm inputs, c) marketing

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of farm supplies and d) farm credit. The assistance decided upon was construction of field facilities, training, a full-time advisor and commodities and supplies. Construction on nine small field office/warehouse complexes started in the fall. Forty new agents were hired by the UNCC and the Cereals Project has financed nine months of in-country training for this group of field agents. The training (360 man months) will be completed in February 1977. Three Nigeriens will be sent to the U.S. in 1977.for degree training in cooperative administration and marketing. Another six participants are to be given short-term training program in the U.S. The U.S. Co-op advisor (CID) has been here since July and has performed effectively as a principle advisor. He works with the Deputy for cooperative development, Mr. Dantada. One contribution of this adviser has been work on the development of an important cooperative law giving rural co-ops legal status. Another contribution has been increasing recognition of the need for a national training center for UNCC field agents (probably at Saga, the old Chinese Irrigation Rice Center near Niamey). $200,000 worth of animal traction equipment and hand tools, and $300,000 worth of fertilizer, have been ordered for demonstrations and seed farms.

10. Procurement

At our suggestion, the GON entered into a contract with the Afro-American Purchasing Center to serve as procurement contractor to the Niger Government. PIO/C's which we issued were in each instance reissued by AID/W without any consultation with us. About $2.8 million of commodity procurement is to be involved (vehicles, farm machinery equipment, office equipment, fencing, etc.) We presently have in the pipeline $942,000 ordered since last June. We expect to order another $600,000 worth of commodities in January. Nothing has arrived and we have yet to receive scheduled delivery dates on anything. We are hoping that the bulk of the $900,000 will arrive before March; otherwise the program will suffer. Over the next two years we will also need another $1.3 million in U.S. commodity procurement. For what its worth we feel that there have been major problems in U.S. procurement which we feel are due to inadequate support by AID/W. We have had excellent support from REDSO. There seems to be something wrong with the backstopping system. If AID/W wishes to evaluate the effectiveness of backstopping, our experience might provide a good example of the problems. It ought to be easier for us to procure Stateside. The opposite is true.

10. Financing

Project funding was established for 3 years for a total U.S. contribution of $9.6 million. Total construction costs were underestimated, as were costs for contract technician. We now calculate on the basis of solid unit costs, that total project costs for 3 years

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will require a U.S. contribution of $12.0 million. In addition, GON contribution will need to be increased by 275 million CFA ($1.1 million) which we expect to cover from counterpart. The increased funding will be justified in a project review now in preparation. AID has also agreed to consider funding a peanut seed storage and processing component to the project expected to cost about $600,000. The design work on the peanut seed components is scheduled to take place in January/February. The PP revision will be available for review in Washington in April.

A major problem in financing this program is in the offing. Funds for FY 1977 of $2,476,000 are adequate (just barely). But for FY 1978 we need dollar funding of over $4 million, so far the Bureau has only budgeted $2,300,000. Apparently AFR/DR is convinced that we have funds available in the pipeline which can be used. But in fact all funds made available to date have been obligated and are needed for services and goods being procured or under contract.

We also need to be thinking ahead to FY 1979 and FY 1980 when additional funds will be required for the extension and completion of the project to its full five year term.

12. Our agreements with the GON provided for an annual evaluation. By this is meant a joint review of past performance, progress and problems, and agreement on the following year's work. The first review was held in early December with good results. Three members of CILSS were invited and their conclusions have been reported separately. The formal minutes of the wrap-up session are being prepared by a Canadian advisor to the GON and should be available soon. The principal results of the December evaluation include:

a) Action by the GON to strengthen the office of the Niger Cereals Program Coordinator, and to improve coordination with the agriculture research and genie rural departments.

b) Agreement to complete approval of work plans and on the 1977 local currency budget in January.

c) Agreement to establish quantitative targets for on-farm demonstrations in 1977.

ADO/Niamey
JLivingston/ARBaron
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