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PD-AAG-878

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LIBERIA
IMPACT STUDY

RURAL TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTES

669-0012

Grant : \$4,400,000
Duration : 1958-1971
Initial Funding: 1958

LIS-3-80
Monrovia
August 1980

Executive Summary

The Liberian Rural Teacher Training Institutes, RTTIs, were created (1) because there had been a dramatic increase in Liberia's school age population, especially in the rural areas; and (2) because the late President Tubman's 1954 Unification Policy for the first time drew attention to the plight of the rural tribal Liberians who had to be integrated into the national fabric, which included their access to basic schooling. Education, therefore, became a priority under the Tubman administration and the USAID-supported construction program of rural school facilities around the country gave rise to an increased demand for qualified teachers to operate the growing number of rural elementary schools. Hence, the RTTIs and AID's support to make them viable entities, capable of producing growing numbers of trained teachers.

The project was conceived and implemented within the framework of a massive sectoral approach to USAID assistance in Liberia beginning in the late 1950s. The RTTI project was designed specifically to at first provide teachers to the more than 50 AID-financed Rural Primary Schools and later on for other rural government-operated schools as well. It was, however, not envisioned that these RTTIs would supply the entire country with primary teachers. There were four elements to the USAID Rural Schools Program: (1) administration and supervision of rural schools, (2) school construction, (3) teacher training (the RTTIs), and (4) adult education.

The objectives of the RTTIs were fourfold:

- the improvement of the standard of primary education throughout Liberia;
- the introduction of a primary school curriculum responsive to the rural development needs;
- the training of primary school teachers who would also be qualified to serve as community leaders in rural areas; and
- the upgrading of existing primary school supervisors, principals and teachers and instructing them in rural development techniques.

The project which was active from 1958 through 1970, was implemented through a contract with Tuskegee Institute.

It would appear in retrospect that the RTTI project was only partially effective. However, it did achieve some positive results: (1) three facilities were constructed and equipped; two became fully operational and are still functioning; (2) thirty-five Liberians were trained, both in the US and on the job in Liberia, and new salary scales were established for them, while RTTI graduates earned salaries at twice the level of their untrained colleagues; (3) a curriculum was developed at the RTTIs; (4) standards and certification requirements were established for the teaching profession for the first time; (5) three thousand rural primary school teachers have been trained at these RTTIs.

The major problems that retarded the optimal success of this project fall into three categories: design, implementation and post project support. Design: It was hastily prepared under circumstances occasioned by impatient GOL officials and planners. A major design error was to try to train teachers to be rural development workers. Their salaries were so low that they had to work to earn additional income elsewhere and therefore had no time or energy left to work at rural development. Finally, the duration of the project was too short, given the conditions under which fundamental change was attempted and the many objectives the project was designed to achieve. Implementation: The contractor provided a very competent chief of party, but other contractor personnel were from fair to poor in overall effectiveness. The curriculum for the RTTIs was intended to be developed along with the Ministry of Education's curriculum for primary schools. While AID supported both efforts, they weren't very well coordinated with the result that they tended to develop independently. Post-project Support: Not enough attention was given to the budgetary implications for the GOL of putting facilities and functions into place and expecting the host country to pick up full financing responsibility when USAID phased out. As is so often the case, AID put facilities and functions into place and then walked away from them, never looking back or maintaining contact with either institutions or people. It would have been preferable that after advisory/technical assistance phased out, AID had continued to monitor, give advice and show continued interest in the RTTIs.

As a result, the project ended up having only limited impact.

Lessons learned from this project are that:

1. Design and planning to be effective must be conducted in an atmosphere of realism. Failure to do so, particularly in institutional development projects, causes implementation problems which could have been avoided. For example, for nearly all institutional development projects, the process is fetal in nature. Some projects have a longer gestation period than others but they all require specific growth periods. The task is to determine which project has the gestation period of an elephant or of a rabbit. Obviously the time frame for the RTTI project was too short, even with ideal implementation.
2. Select a contractor who will provide the kind of services needed. When a university contract is utilized, the principal value is the in-house capability to meet all major technical expertise required. This is a lesson we have learned before but not followed. (We currently have in Liberia a university contract team of seven persons only one of who is from the campus staff; not even the COP is from the campus.)
3. Conduct regular evaluations and assessments of all aspects of the project, from the design to simple logistics, and be prepared to make mid-course corrections or major revisions (or termination) if necessary. The evaluations carried out in connection with the RTTI projects were routine and largely based on contractor reports.
4. Develop projects with rather than for host country people. We don't always necessarily know best what is good for others.

I. Introduction/Background

The Rural Teacher Training Institutes (RTTIs) at Kakata in Gibi Territory and Zorzor in Lofa County grew out of an increasing need for the proper training of elementary (primary grades 1-6) school teachers to man the expanding elementary schools in the rural areas of Liberia during the late 1950's and early 1960's.

Before 1947, practically all attempts at professional training of teachers had met with little or no success. It was during that year that a definite and formal teacher training program was instituted under the joint sponsorship of foreign mission boards and the Government of Liberia (GOL). In 1950, GOL established for the first time a standardized four year degree-granting teacher training college at the Liberia College which was supported solely by public funds. Subsequently, Cuttington College, established in 1949, added a Department of Education, while the Maryland College of Our Lady of Fatima was founded in 1954 for the express purpose of preparing primary and secondary school teachers. In 1957, all three institutions produced only 20 graduates out of a total enrollment of 185 with a teaching staff of 26 (15 Liberians and 11 non-Liberians). The curricula covered both general education and professional training but they were traditional and urban-oriented and most of the graduates opted for administrative or supervisory position or went abroad for further studies. Furthermore, the educational system of Liberia at the time favored the inhabitants of the coastal counties of Sinoe, Maryland, Montserrado, Bassa and Grand Cape Mount where public schools-primary and secondary were available and accessible to the school-age children. The school age children in the rural hinterland on the other hand, had to do with little or no formal schooling except in cases where they were integrated in the "ward system" or were luckily enough to be selected to attend school at an occasional Christian church mission in the interior. It was also during the years prior to the construction and operation of the RTTIs that there was a considerable increase in the school-age population and an acute shortage of trained teachers, some of whom were hired and served on the basis of ad hoc arrangements. In the interior public schools were very few and were sometimes without teachers, instructional materials and a curriculum relevant to the needs of rural Liberia.

Because of the growth in school-age population, education became a priority of the Tubman administration and the USAID-supported

construction of rural school facilities around the country gave rise to an increased demand for qualified teachers to operate the growing chain of rural elementary schools.

To quote from The National Education Survey, 1978:

"The growth of educational opportunities has indeed been dramatic and has greatly broadened the horizons of the Liberian people. The period of 1960 to 1970 witnessed the establishment of 414 government, mission and private schools at all levels, a record number of schools established in any ten-year period previously. From 1970 to 1978, an additional 403 schools were established. This eruption of educational institutions all around the country exemplifies the fact that the initial traditional reluctance of parents, especially in the rural communities, to forego the earnings of child labor (and other cultural attachments in the case of girls), is gradually yielding to social prestige and economic value of education. During this period of explosion of educational opportunity for all, government attempted to control and guide the spread of educational institutions in order to attain the goal of equal distribution of educational opportunity throughout the country"

In recognition of this need, the American Government, through the USAID, entered into a technical assistance agreement with the Government of Liberia through the (then Bureau of Instruction) Ministry of Education (MCE) in 1958, to construct and help staff and operate institutions in the rural areas for the training of elementary school teachers.

II. The Project

A. General

The RTTI project was conceived and implemented within the framework of a massive sectoral approach to USAID assistance beginning in the late fifties. The RTTI project was designed specifically to at first provide teachers to the more than 50 AID-financed Rural Primary Schools and later on for other rural government schools. It was not envisioned that these RTTIs would supply the entire country with primary teachers.

There were four elements to the USAID Rural Schools Program:

(1) Administration and Supervision of Rural Schools: To establish county and district offices of education and train the supervisors, USAID provided four direct-hire Regional Advisors (Gbarnga, Voinjam, Saniquellie and Zorzor) along with commodities for regional offices and participant training for Liberian Supervisors.

(2) School Construction: Some 15-20 self-help schools were constructed at first (1960-1963) with USAID providing materials, and international volunteers (IVS) as teachers/advisors. Later (1963-1968), USAID financed the total costs of 20 schools in Bong County, 10 in Nimba and 10 in Lofa County.

(3) Teacher Training: The RTTIs were constructed in Zorzor, Kakata and Webbo to train teachers for the AID-funded demonstration schools.

(4) Adult Education: Between 1961 and 1963 USAID assisted with the implementation (and publication) of a survey of informal adult education activities, conducted by missions, concessions and other private groups with special interests in Liberia. The total costs of these programs ran well over \$1 million each year and enrollments were in the thousands. A large portion of these activities consisted of literacy classes, health education and non-formal groups focusing on agriculture and community development activities.

The RTTI projects at Kakata, Zorzor and Webbo were the result of a contractual technical assistance agreement between the GOL and the American Government (USG) for the purpose of meeting the most urgent needs for teacher education and training to staff, operate and administer the expanding rural education programs of Liberia. The project was conceived as an emergency measure to augment the low output of teachers by the then existing institutions of higher learning.

A further catalyst for the establishment of the RTTIs was a meeting held in East Africa by Heads of Educational Ministries/Agencies in the late 1950's. It was at this meeting, attended by observers from UNESCO and USAID, that the concept of establishing Teacher Training Institutions in the rural areas of Africa received widespread acceptance with African educators. Nathaniel V. Massaquoi, the (then) Secretary of Public Instruction represented Liberia at this meeting and upon his return to Liberia, succeeded in getting USAID to collaborate with GOL in establishing ZRTTI.

According to the book, Objectives of the Rural Primary Teacher Program by J. Schweighofer, the objectives/goals of the RTTIs are fourfold: (1) the improvement of the standard of primary education throughout Liberia; (2) the introduction of a primary school curriculum responsive to the rural development needs; (3) the training of primary school teachers who would also be qualified to serve as community leaders in rural areas; and (4) the upgrading of existing primary school supervisors, principals and teachers and instruct them in rural development techniques.

Another source noted that:

"the main objectives for which the RTTIs were established were (a) train a core of rural primary school teachers who would serve as community leaders and stimulators of local initiatives; (b) to produce instructional materials, particularly for rural schools; and (c) to provide in-service training for rural teachers and educational personnel."

As a means of differentiating between the objectives/purposes of the individual institutions, it was noted by some respondents that the Zorzor Rural Teacher Training Institute (ZRTTI) was to be based on the training of teachers already in-service, while the Kakata Rural Teacher Training Institute (KRTTI) and another (Webbo)^{1/} were to focus on pre-service training.

Implementation proceeded generally on schedule, with its share of contractor problems and delays in construction, participant training and commodities. However, by 1965 with AID contract advisors, ZRTTI was fully operational while KRTTI was operational by 1968.

The primary beneficiaries of the RTTI project were to be the untrained teachers who would get training under the project, and the ultimate beneficiaries would be the rural elementary school students.

B. Funding

Not much is known about the funding of the project except that the American Government developed the project almost in its entirety in the form of a grant of \$4,402,000 under an implementation contract with Tuskegee Institute in Alabama.

^{1/} The Webbo RTTI, although constructed, never became operational. The site was chosen from a map, as there was no permanent road, with a promise from Public Works that a road would be built. No new road was built until years later. The RTTI at Webbo was completely unused until recently when it became a secondary school. Both GOL and USAID just let things ride at Webbo, hoping that the problem would go away.

Most of the interviewees felt that during the life of the project, the project was adequately funded, but after the USAID assistance phased out, the Liberian Government was unable to sustain the level of funding achieved during the USAID's involvement. (GOL's operational costs for both institutes from 1969-1979 can be found in Appendix II; no records are available to indicate funding in earlier years.)

C. Staffing

The project was staffed by a contract team from Tuskegee Institute which was responsible for the administration and operation of both institutes, while Liberians were selected to study abroad, or to work as counterparts/understudies to the contract team members for the purpose of skills and technology transfer. Thirty-five Liberians received project-related training, mostly in the U.S.

III. Impact

A. General

Looking backward from 1980, with only a few of the facts and conditions in perspective (the USAID Mission lacks most documentation and records on this project), it would appear that the RTTI project was only minimally effective. This is true, but when all the factors are brought into view and the results of the project are assessed along with other similar projects at that time in Liberia, it did achieve some positive results:

(1) Three facilities were constructed and equipped; two became fully operational and are still functioning. (2) Liberians were trained, both in the US and on-the-job in Liberia, and new salary scales were established for them. Most rural teachers were receiving \$35-50 monthly; RTTI graduates received \$75 and later \$125. (3) A curriculum was developed at the RTTIs, though weak and unrealistic in many ways. It was in fact a traditional approach to teacher training along US lines, with a bit of Liberian flavor added. (4) Standards and certification requirements were established for the teaching profession for the first time; again, along traditional Normal School lines used in the US in the early 1900's. (5) Three thousand primary school teachers were trained in these RTTIs. The bulk of them served at least 1-2 years while some of them are still there. By any standard they were better equipped to teach with the training than without it.

The major problems that retarded the optimal success of this project fall into three categories: design, implementation and post-project support.

1. Design Problems: Generally, the project was well designed but there were some weaknesses. It was hastily prepared under crisis circumstances occasioned by impatient GOL and GCL central planners. The research and analysis required to install new institutions in rural Liberia were grossly inadequate. Logistics and backstopping were afterthoughts that plagued the project throughout. However, this was a common problem in nearly all AID/LDC projects at that time, and still is.

A major error in design was the effort to train teachers as rural development workers and animators. This was well intended with strong GCL backing but it has not worked out for very good reasons. The training for community development was inadequate and the salary scale did not support the teachers even under ideal village circumstance. Thus they "made farm" or engaged in other work that did not permit them to perform the role of a community development worker. Closely related to this same problem was the fact that the rather plush residential facilities created new expectations in life style that could not be replicated in village areas. This had the result of training the teachers not to go back to the village, or if they did it would be a temporary arrangement.

Another and more obvious design problem was the duration of the project. This project should have been at least a 20-year undertaking. Even though it lasted some 12-13 years, there was a lack of continuity. People came and went, many of whom had different approaches and views. Its beginning and development was like Topsy and its termination was like Humpty-dumpty.

2. Implementation Problems: As mentioned previously, implementation was generally effective but there were some major problems:

(a) The contractor furnished a very competent chief of party (COP) from the Tuskegee Institute campus but other contractor personnel were from fair to poor in overall effectiveness and most were not members of the home campus staff. There was almost no orientation for contract employees before arrival. Problems of adjustment were excessive. Some went home after only a few weeks. Very few were able to develop effective counterpart relationships and appeared to make only token efforts.

(b) The Curriculum for the RTTIs was intended to be developed along with the MOE's curriculum development program for primary schools. While AID provided assistance to both efforts, they were not well coordinated and tended to develop independently. As a result, the RTTI curriculum program moved ahead of the MOE effort out of necessity to begin operation of the RTTI's and the MOE primary school curriculum effort never really caught up.

3. Post-project Support: Not enough attention was given to the budgetary implications for the GOL of putting facilities and functions into place and expecting the host country to pick up full financing responsibility when USAID phased out. At that time the project was considered to be quite a success but without the GOL capability to carry on in absence of external assistance. The project was extended but the extension did little to enhance GOL capability. There were many reasons for this, some of which were attributable to factors outside the project. The GOL was trying to do everything at once and had neither the funds nor the personnel to do so. Teacher salaries were low. Graduates from RTTIs did not have the material support from the MOE to utilize their training. Job opportunities were numerous elsewhere for teachers and administrators trained under the project and therefore there was a high attrition rate. As is so often the case, USAID put facilities and functions in place and then walked away from them, never looking back or maintaining contact with either institutions or people. USAID did not maintain a presence or evidence of its continued interest. It did not show proper "ownership" of the RTTIs. They were turned over to the Liberians without the kind of support that could sustain them. It would have been preferable that after advisor/technical assistance phased out, AID had continued to monitor, give advice and show interest in the RTTIs.

B. Economic Impact

The overall economic impact of the project is difficult to evaluate quantitatively. The direct beneficiaries of the project were the approximately 3,000 additional teachers trained at KRTTI/ZRTTI who, coming from the subsistence economy, had an opportunity to enter the money economy. They were, therefore, initially able to rise from an annual income of \$125-150 (mostly in-kind) to a salary income of \$800-\$1,000. Even though it has been reported that many of them left the rural schools after their contractual obligations were met, some went on to teach in urban rather than rural schools, some rose to administrative positions, while others went on to university level studies, they had their initial opportunity to do so as a result of the RTTI's.

The ultimate beneficiaries were the rural children who had a chance to enter and complete primary schools, staffed in part by RTTI graduates, thereby improving their chances at a wider range of economic and social opportunities. Since it is impossible to relate RTTI graduates with their subsequent placement in rural elementary schools and in turn link this with increased enrollment / completions at the rural primary level and increased job opportunities, one remains constrained to stating only that the overall economic effect was positive, without referring to specific magnitudes.

Yet, despite the fact that the Rural Teacher Training Institutes made a number of positive economic contributions to Liberia, the inescapable fact remains that the educational system as a whole is, and has been for many years, one of the real constraints to development. There are not enough schools for the needs of the school-age population; there are not enough qualified teachers to staff the existing schools; the curriculum is not geared to Liberia's development needs nor to the employment needs of those who attend; and the quality of education is below that of other West African countries.

Annual budget allocations to education have ranged from 10% to 15% of total, while in other African countries it has been between 20% and 25%. As a result there are not enough schools, teacher salaries continue to be too low to provide the necessary incentives for people to choose teaching as a profession, and the existing schools lack equipment, supplies and textbooks. Teacher training colleges by themselves can make little impact on this long-existing syndrome. The problem is perhaps best illustrated by the Director of TRTI who raised the following question in the 1978/79 Annual Report of the Ministry of Education:

"... does the increase in the production of trained teachers at the two training institutes help to reduce the high number of untrained teachers in our schools? The answer is no, because more and more of the qualified teachers are leaving the profession due to the comparatively low salaries, lack of incentives and disparity in salaries with (others) having the same qualifications."

Unless higher salaries and other incentives can be provided, then the answer is not training more teachers for rural schools who either will not go to rural areas to begin with, or who will leave these areas as soon as they can, but rather to find another method whereby untrained teachers already there can be made more productive. From a strictly economic point of view, the alternative of using standardized programmed

teaching materials, currently being developed and field tested under the Improved Efficiency of Learning (IEL) project in Liberia, may in the long run turn out to be less costly and more efficient than training ever-increasing number of uncommitted teachers to staff rural schools.

The economic impact of such an IEL program, especially when this goes hand in hand with curriculum change and when based on projected skills and manpower needs, would greatly exceed that of the RTTI's project. However, at the time the RTTI project was conceived, programmed teaching and learning concepts were still being developed in more advanced countries, so that this alternative was not available at the time.

The idea that rural teachers could double as change agents in rural community development was theoretically sound, but proved to be practically unrealistic in the Liberian setting. Given overcrowded conditions in rural schools and the high teacher/pupil ratios, in addition to lack of motivation on the part of teachers due to low salaries (and therefore the need to supplement income from other sources), it was perhaps too much to expect that they would have any time left to devote to community development efforts. This concept therefore failed, both under USAID as well as under subsequent UNESCO support to the RTTI's, so that little or no additional benefit derived from this element of the project.

C. Social Impact

To what extent have the RTTI's benefitted the Liberian people socially (i.e., improved education standards of elementary schools in the rural areas of Liberia)?

According to the Jan 1 - Dec 31, 1977 annual report of the MOE, the aims of the Division of Teacher Education were spelled out as follows:

"to carry out programs in the development of human resources and ensure quality education to improve the teaching of primary education which is a key factor in any educational system; to increase productivity in the in-service and pre-service training program in order to meet the nation's goal by 1985; to train a new type of teacher who would be prepared to serve as a community leader, and to increase the relevance of the teacher training curriculum to the needs of rural development and the pupils' experience and adapt it to innovations especially in elementary education."

In response to the objectives outlined above, the RTTIs which bear the responsibility for producing qualified, trained rural elementary school teachers, have had some positive effects on improving educational standards in the elementary schools in Liberia. (Key informants responding to questions regarding factors contributing to project success stated the RTTIs have produced more and better qualified teachers for elementary schools). This is verified by the 1,456 teachers trained at ZRTTI and the 1,500 teachers trained in KRTTI.

When asked whether the impact of the RTTIs on target groups was negative or positive, most of the key informants responding to the question found overall impact to have been generally positive but illustrations in support of the positive impact were rather imprecise, ("it liberated the youths in rural areas from ignorance, disease and eventually poverty").

One may assume that this was due to the modernizing role of the teachers in their areas. This perhaps suggests increased socio-political participation by teachers (leaders in their communities). In addition, according to the appraisal of a Secondary Education Project by the World Bank, the primary teacher training allocation of \$384,000.00 in 1974 averaged \$906 per student over 90% of whom were residential. This implies to a certain extent that living conditions at the RTTIs indicate improved living, health and nutrition standards compared to the living standards of the students before they were admitted to the RTTIs, with annual rural incomes at \$125-150. The fact that this led to increased expectations of similar conditions after leaving RTTIs, which simply were not available in rural areas, ultimately led to disillusionment.

Background information also supports the contention that there was a transfer of responsibility to the Liberian educators who were trained to administer the operation of the institutes after the contract phased out. Furthermore, because women were also trained as administrators as well as teachers, one can safely assume that there was increased importance in the role of women. All of these indicate some positive social impact on the primary beneficiaries of the project. Again, in support of the foregoing, some USG officials familiar with past education sector projects in Liberia had this to say:

"Tuskegee started from scratch in developing the RTTIs at Kakata and Zorzor, and the contract team operated these institutes for a number of years; however, members of the team made a real attempt to transfer responsibilities."

In terms of opportunities for administrative advancement of counterparts, other USG officials pointed out that:

"One way Tuskegee (team members) worked themselves out of a job was by selecting trainees for Stateside education who returned and took up the job and worked right along beside contract team members--this enabled the Liberians to acquire skills and expertise to take over the operation of the RTTIs during the phasing-out stage. The fact that after the contract team left, they turned over everything (i.e., their houses, materials, etc. to Liberians) is another indication that the project contributed meaningfully to improving living standards of at least the staff of the RTTIs. Another positive result of the project in terms of housing, nutrition, and education was that the institutions were built up by providing the Liberian faculty with houses, free electricity, water and a reasonable salary. The physical presence of the contract team on campus was extremely important in insuring an early "hands-on" approach to getting things done i.e., the Tuskegee team worked when the lights went out, the pumps broke, the hogs (pigs) got out of their pens; the team was there to help".

In a way this could have helped to change some of the attitudes of the Liberians at the RTTIs towards working under strictly rural conditions such as working without lights; but this did not occur.

On the negative side, the orientation of the Institutes' curriculum was American rather than Liberian oriented. Insufficient attention was said to be given to teaching performance of graduates, compounded by reported subsequent inability of graduates to fit into rural communities (life style), including their reported arrogance and lack of community development skills outside of the classroom; loss of graduates (after their period of "indentured service") to the bright lights and greater opportunities of the cities, and lack of sufficient incentives for graduates to remain as rural teachers.

Key informants responding to questions on social and economic impact of the project on the target population noted that local community leaders were not consulted on their views about the development of the Institutes' curriculum and if they had been consulted, the curriculum would have been more suited for fulfilling the needs of the rural community. In particular, some respondents stated that KRRTI never did achieve its community development goals because the local community to a

large extent did not get involved in the project. Some of the reasons for this were stated to be that "the contract team members tended to stick together; they had poor relationships with the community in which they worked and the people with whom they worked." There also seem to have some interpersonal problems and tensions because some of the Tuskegee team members were perceived as not liking Liberians and therefore found it difficult to live and work in remote rural areas. Of course, in any group of people, one will find some good, cooperative and hardworking group members along with other group members who are uncooperative, some who cannot relate to others alien to them and some who are patronizing. This means that even though there were some members of the contract team who contributed positively, there were others who did not and it is this group which stands out like a sore thumb and is blamed for whatever socially negative elements resulted from the project.

Some of the key informants felt that the "counterpart" relationship was not the best suited for the transfer of technology to have a multiplier effect. This reportedly resulted in the unreadiness of the Liberian staff to assume responsibility when the project phased out. Another negative social indicator was said to be that "the project raised the expectations of many rural youth who subsequently could not be admitted into the RTTIs due to shortage of space and accommodations." It was also felt that not enough emphasis was placed on community development efforts by the graduates, but this could be due to the fact that their salaries are so low that they have to attend to their farms after school hours so that little or no time remains for community development activities.

In summary, with only 23 percent of the 3,818 primary teachers currently properly trained and qualified, the quality of instruction remains unsatisfactory. The frames of reference used in teaching are often foreign and unrelated to the life experiences of the Liberian students, based in part on irrelevant textbooks and unsuitable curriculum. Overcrowdedness in schools and high student/teacher ratios, inaccessibility to schools by the school-age population, and their parents' inability to buy their books and uniforms create a negative impact on the quality of education as a whole, but these do not reflect on the RTTIs. However, on the whole, the RTTIs have contributed some measure of success to a general positive environment if only to say that out of the current total of 3,818 primary schools teachers, ZRTTI contributed 1,456 and KRTTI contributed 1,500. It is clear that there

has been considerable attrition given the fact that of the currently employed primary school teacher, only 23 percent are considered to be properly qualified.

D. Policy Impact

What policy changes or new directions resulted from the RTTIs project? Key informants were asked whether the RTTIs had any impact (positive or negative) on the government's policy on education, i.e., education for teachers to ensure quality education for rural school-age children in Liberia. Some claimed that the project did in fact have a positive impact on the GOL's policy on education in rural Liberia. They noted "GOL had always left rural education to the missionaries and that the RTTIs were a shift away from the old policy." They also cited other examples of positive policy implications in terms of expanding education into the rural areas and dealing with teacher training shortages (a current example of this policy shift is the Improved Efficiency of Learning project) and the fact that government has continued its rural teacher training programs with the resulting increase in the numbers of trained and qualified teachers in the rural areas. They also indicated that improving rural elementary education has become a more pronounced priority.

In terms of budgetary policy it was noted that the GOL has over the years steadily increased its budgetary allotment to the RTTIs (see appendix II on operating cost of RTTIs from 1969-1978). As regards new directions in education policy, the ZRTTI in 1977 put into effect a crash program to train pre-service teachers for one year post-secondary school completion along with its 3 years post-9th grade in-service teachers training program. This new direction serves to fulfill the immediate demand for teachers in elementary and junior high schools, operated under the community development scheme (Community Schools Project, MOE).

Along with these changes, there had to be a concurrent change in curriculum, opportunities for advanced studies, incentives for promotion in the organizational hierarchy, fellowships, ect. According to the 1977 MOE annual report, 12 fellowships were awarded to ZRTTI instructors by the World Bank for training in Psychology, General Science, Language Arts, Adult Education, Mathematics and Social Science. The initial policy was to recruit equal numbers of students from each county for training but the report of the World Bank on its Second Education Project for Liberia proposed that it would assist the MOE in improving the quality and expanding the output of trained primary school teachers, generally, but especially women. The emphasis would be placed on increasing the female proportion of the national output from 20 percent to 30 percent.

In terms of organizational growth and development, the Director of ZRTTI proposed in his 1978 annual report to the MOE to raise the standards of ZRTTI to a junior college level while the World Bank proposed a general increase in enrollment at KRTTI by converting its programs to one year post-secondary school completion, to meet the annual projected demand for trained teachers. This will result in leaving in-service, academic and professional upgrading, as well as refresher work to be done through vacation courses, weekend centers, correspondence courses, assistance from school supervision, and extension work of UL and CUC.

Thus, in effect, the RTTIs appear to have contributed to a number of positive policy directions for the educational system of Liberia as regards elementary and junior high schools teachers' education.

IV. Problems

A number of problems have been identified which are said to have contributed to the RTTIs' lack of success in achieving their objectives:

A. From the Americans' standpoint, the major problems, or the two more serious mistakes, were of their own making, namely paternalism and lack of long-term support. These two mistakes were identified in a report by Daryl Nichols, A Review of Past USAID Education Projects in Liberia. A number of USG officials interviewed during this review noted that these mistakes were exemplified by: 1) high expectation in anticipating that the kind of investment made in Liberia beginning in the early 60's would make a small country like Liberia a showplace of foreign aid; 2) overestimating the ability of the GOL to absorb such aid in light of budgetary and infrastructural limitations and ultimately support the institutions USG helped build (in particular, some of the rural schools that USAID helped build overloaded GOL's logistical and budgetary capabilities); 3) building American-type institutions fully equipped with American curricula; 4) designing projects which were considered by Americans to be in the best interest of Liberia; 5) "selling" American projects to Liberians rather than insisting on mutual planning; 6) operating some programs for Liberians too long before making sufficient provision for local assumption of responsibility, and; 7) using pressure (usually threat of reduced support) to ensure that USG's ideas prevailed.

In specific regard to the RTTIs, the former USAID Education Advisor in Voinjama, Lofa County, in his capacity as advisor to the Lofa Supervisor of Schools during the years 1965-1969, felt that a major problem relating to the limited success of the RTTIs was the lack of adequate GOL support after the project contract phased out. He also thought that even though students at the RTTIs were given the basic skills for teaching elementary students, these skills were not always relevant. According to other qualified observers, the second most serious mistake was the USG's failure to give long-term support to projects which were enthusiastically endorsed by American educators. This can be seen in (1) termination of projects before institutional capability was assured; (2) imposing recurrent costs of terminated projects on a weak budgetary structure when some minimal support might have allowed them to remain reasonably operational, and; (3) switching USG's interest from one project to another without sufficient follow-through and phase-out responsibilities.

Other problems cited include the irrelevancy of the American curriculum to the Liberian setting; one USG official concluded that "somehow the RTTIs project got maneuvered into using a syllabus that was suitable for Alabama and a teaching education curriculum that was suitable for Tuskegee." The textbooks used at the RTTIs should have had more African orientation. "We need to include the needs of Liberia to a greater extent in our texts and we need team members who have familiarity with Liberia", said two USG officials interviewed.

B. From the Liberian point of view, those key informants interviewed as part of the impact study, who responded to the question "what should have been done to make the project more successful" noted the following: recruits should have been selected on a more competitive basis to enforce the notion that the RTTIs were not "mass producing teachers but were training good quality teachers", which tends to indicate that by and large the recruitment and selection of candidates for the RTTIs were not competitive, thereby creating problems relating to quality of prospective teachers. They further noted that "a group of administrators should have been appointed who would have related more readily to the students, who understood the students' problems and would have assisted in helping them solve these." Another problem identified by the Liberians regarded USAID's involvement. They indicated that USAID should have been involved for a longer period of

of time and should have assisted in the area of supplies such as providing books, audio-visual materials as well as dormitory facilities." They also felt that GOL should have maintained the same funding level introduced by USAID and that a better arrangement for the acceptance of the transfer of technology from foreign experts to Liberians counterparts should have been made. For example, emphasis could have been geared to training of instructors/trainers rather than to counterpart arrangements; they felt that the "counterpart arrangement did not have a sufficient multiplier effect." As for community development, some Liberians felt that the project staff kept too much to themselves to relate sufficiently with the community and people with whom they were involved.

In relation to retention of RTTI graduates in the field, some informants felt that GOL should have been more committed to ensuring that adequate incentives were provided to keep the graduates working in the rural environment. They cited the lack of follow-up with graduates for purposes of adjusting training programs (e.g., increase in stipends of students at the RTTIs). Problems associated with the project's lack of success also included "lack of community leaders' involvement in the planning and consultative stage of the project." It was stated that "the local community should have been consulted (i.e., civic leaders, business people, concessionaires) so that they could have made suggestions on what to include in the curriculum, and ensure that expatriates transferred skills to Liberian counterparts in the very early stages of the project." In terms of funding, some found that USAID fell short by not ensuring adequate GOL funds would be available for the (subsequent) operation of the project, and not doing a follow-up on graduates in order to get their opinions on what they think should be done to make the project (training) more viable.

In summary, the major problems identified by Liberian interviewees which hindered the success of the RTTIs could be categorized as (1) lack of proper planning and consultation regarding administration, recruitment, budgetary allotment and follow-up on graduates of the RTTIs; (2) the irrelevant curriculum supported by unsuitable textbooks; (3) insufficient attention given to teaching skills per se; (4) the inadequacy of subsequent GOL support to the RTTIs.

V. Lessons to be learned

1. Design and planning to be effective must be conducted in an atmosphere of realism. Failure to do so, particularly in institutional development projects, causes implementation problems which could have been avoided. For example, for nearly all institutional development projects, the process is fetal in nature. Some projects have a longer gestation period than others but they all require specific growth periods. The task is to determine which project has the gestation period of an elephant or of a rabbit. Obviously the time frame for the RTTI project was too short, even with ideal implementation.
2. Select a contractor who will provide the kind of services needed. When a university contract is utilized, the principal value is the in-house capability to meet all major technical expertise required. This is a lesson we have learned before but have not followed. (We currently have in Liberia a university contract team of seven persons only one of whom is from the campus staff; not even the COP is from the campus.)
3. Conduct regular evaluations and assessments of all aspects of the project, from the design to simple logistics, and be prepared to make mid-course corrections or major revisions (or termination) if necessary. The evaluations carried out in connection with the RTTI projects were routine and largely based on contractor reports.
4. Develop projects with rather than for host country people. We do not always necessarily know best what is good for others.

Questionnaire Analysis:
RURAL TEACHER TRAINING INSTITUTES

1. Nineteen persons were interviewed as key informants on this project. All claimed to be familiar with it, even though they were not familiar with all aspects, notably USAID's role and rationale for supporting this particular project.
2. Of the eighteen informants who responded to this question, 17% became familiar with the project as civic opinion leaders, 44% as government employees and 39% in private capacity, mostly as students. Twenty-nine percent became familiar with the project between 1960 and 1965; 47% between 1966 and 1969, and 24% between 1970 and 1975.
3. All respondents provided adequate responses as to the project's main objectives, the target groups and the location of the project's elements (Zorzor, Kakata and Webho.) Fifty-three percent stated that the idea originated with GOL, while 47% claimed it was a concept jointly developed between GOL and USAID. Of the sixteen who responded to the question whether or not the project was feasible at the time it was undertaken, 94% said it was feasible while 6% didn't know or weren't sure. Ninety-five percent expressed an opinion as to why USAID chose to provide assistance. All, except one saw American involvement as altruistic and generally helpful whereas one respondent claimed that the USA rendered assistance "for her own selfish interest; she wanted to create friends and thought that by providing aid (it) would justify her reason." All respondents noted that the activities and facilities still existed, although it was noted that the facilities at Webho were not being used and had fallen into disrepair. Seventy-four percent claimed the project had personally affected them

(mostly as students or faculty.)

4. When asked if they made any decisions regarding the project, 79% responded negatively, while 21% claimed to have made various types of decisions regarding the implementation of the project:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Kinds</u>
top 2	technical 1
middle 1	administrative 1
low 1	

5. Sixty-eight percent stated that they became familiar with the project after the decision to go ahead with it had already been made; 11% became familiar with it was still in the planning and design stage, while 21% didn't know whether the decision had already been made or not.

6. In response to the question whether or not adequate consultation took place prior to the project being implemented, 32% responded affirmatively; 52% didn't know while 16% claimed that consultation had been inadequate:

- inadequate consultation to have trained, qualified Liberians^{to} take over at the expiration of the US management agreements, nor as to the availability of funds to run the institutions (after American assistance terminated);
- initial consideration resulted from a conference of African (Education) Ministries. Once the program was decided, if any consultation took place it was from top-to-bottom in the form of directives;

7/8. When asked if they knew whether or not other projects were considered as alternatives, 21% responded "No"; 68% didn't know or weren't sure, while 11% said that other projects were indeed considered as alternatives.

Seventy-nine percent of the respondents indicated that they knew why
this project was chosen:

- a need to expand educational training facilities in Liberia was of paramount importance.
- Liberia's educational system, especially elementary schools - its backbone - was in deplorable condition. In attempting to upgrade the teachers, the majority of whom had no formal training in teaching methodology, it was felt that some rural development orientation was necessary. There were also some political reasons (why the project was chosen):
 - the project was meant to equip elementary school graduates with the skills to teach in the rural schools;
 - in order to upgrade teaching skills of people who wanted to be teachers but lacked adequate education;
 - ZRTTI was already in existence and its program was based on in-service training; the others were to focus on the pre-service training;
 - to train pre-service teachers for the rural community ;
 - there was an urgent need to train the Liberian masses to give them that quality education, particularly for rural areas;
 - to upgrade rural teachers who did not have the professional or academic training;
 - to expose pre-service prospective teachers to the methodology of instructing youths in the rural communities;
 - the training of a new type of teachers who will be community leaders, with a thorough knowledge of the techniques needed for working in a rural environment.

9. Forty-seven percent of the key informants thought that the project had
N=19 been placed in the proper location. (with perhaps the exception of
Webbo institute which isn't being used); 37% didn't know whether or
not it had been sited correctly, while 16% thought that the project
elements should have been placed in even more rural areas. Especially,
the Kakata location was not deemed to be sufficiently "rural" for the
objectives of the program (prepare future teachers to live and work in
remote rural areas).

10. Respondents were then asked to express their opinion as to the success
N=19 of the project in achieving its objectives. Sixty-seven percent stated
it had indeed succeeded in achieving its objectives, although some expressed
some qualifications; 22% thought it had partly succeeded; while 11% said
it had largely failed to meet its objectives, stating that:

- The first and foremost among the reasons for the program's failure was the lack of adequate control over graduates (note: too many were said to not have gone on to teaching positions in rural areas but went to teach in Monrovia instead.) The second is the (problem) of salary scales. Rural teachers are underpaid and those teaching in rural areas sometimes cannot get their cheques until months afterwards;
- USAID terminated the project prematurely; basic objectives were not met with respect to community development; EOL did not give adequate support. This is illustrated by a proposed two - year follow-on project by UNESCO which sought to achieve the same objectives.

11. In response to the question, What should have been done to make the project more successful, 47% made the following suggestions:

- recruits should have been selected on a more competitive basis to enforce the notion that we are not mass producing teachers, but are training good quality teachers;
- a group of administrators should have been appointed who would have related more readily to the students, who understood the students' problems and would have assisted in helping them solve these;
- by keeping USAID involved for a longer time especially in the area of supplies such as books, audio-visual materials, as well as for dormitory facilities;
- GOL should have maintained the same funding level introduced by USAID;
- a better arrangement for the acceptance of the transfer of technology from foreign experts to Liberian Counterparts. Emphasis should be geared to training of trainers rather than to counterpart arrangements; the arrangement chosen did not have a sufficient multiplier effect;
- KRITI for example did not achieve community involvement;
- there should have been more commitment on the part of government. For example, there is no means of follow-up with graduates for purposes of adjusting training programs; the stipends should have been increased;
- the local community should have been consulted (civic leaders, business people, concessionaires) so that they could have made suggestions on what to include in the curriculum; ensure

that expatriates transfer skills to Liberian counterparts in the very early stages of the project;

- by ensuring adequate funds for the (subsequent) operation of the project; doing a follow-up on graduates in order to get their opinions on what they think should be done to make the project (training) more viable,

12. Key informants were then asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (low) to 5
N=19 (high), the project inputs, resulting in the following overall ratings:

Facilities and equipment.....	4.2
foreign technicians	2.5
foreign training fellowships.....	4.6
operational of logistical support.....	3.7

It appears that the technical assistance team (Tuskegee Institute - KRTTI or ZRTTI Alabama) received a low rating because of a variety of reasons, some of which were:

- They tended to stick together;
- related poorly with the community in which they worked and the people with whom they worked;
- there were interpersonal problems and tensions;
- some of them didn't like Liberians;
- they found it difficult to live and work in rural areas;
- they transplanted an American teaching approach and curriculum into Liberia and made no attempts to "Liberianize" their methods and content;
- counterparts were not used as understudies but were suddenly called upon to take over when the project phased out.

13. Respondents were asked if they considered the project to have been adequately
N=19 funded. The distribution of the answers was as follows

<u>During USAID</u>		<u>After USAID</u>	
assistance		phased out	
yes	58%	yes	11%
no	42%	no	89%
don't know	-0-	don't know	-0-

It appears that respondents who answered negatively to the question about funding levels during USAID's assistance mainly criticized the GOL for its perceived "failure to live up to its obligations," a situation which apparently became more pronounced and visible after USAID assistance phased-out. Records to either substantiate or disprove these allegations were not available, so that we have to settle for the key respondents' perceptions of the situation.

14. N-19 Seventy-nine percent of the respondents were able to identify the main target groups and institutions affected by the project; whereas only 37% were able to identify beneficiaries other than the target group (i.e. people in the rural areas); 21% could not identify other institutions also affected.

15. Seventy-two percent found the impact of the project to have been generally positive; 28% thought it was partly positive and partly negative. Illustrations of the positive impact were rather imprecise ("it liberated the youths in rural areas from ignorance, disease and eventually poverty") while the negative impacts were more carefully phrased such as:

- (it) raised the expectations of many rural youths who subsequently could not be admitted due to shortages (of space and accommodations);
- not enough emphasis was placed on community development efforts by the graduates, (but this is due to the fact that in most

that there is little or no time left for community development activities;

- proper utilization of the graduates is questionable; not enough of them stayed in the rural areas.

16. In terms of policy impact, 42% of the key informants claimed the project had no policy impact; 32% didn't know whether it did or not; while 26 claimed it had "positive policy impact"

- GOL had always left rural education to the missionaries; this project was a shift away from the old policy, which has been maintained;
- in terms of extending education into the rural areas and dealing with teacher training shortages; a current example of this policy shift is the improved efficiency of learning program (paraphrased);
- GOL has continued its rural teacher training programs and there has been an increase in the numbers of trained and qualified teachers in the rural areas (paraphrased);
- improving rural elementary education has become a more pronounced priority;

17. The key informants were then asked to rank the overall benefit of the project on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), which rendered the following distribution:

No benefit	-0-
marginal benefit	16%
average benefit	50%
better than average benefit	16%
greatly beneficial	10%

The project cannot therefore be termed a resounding success, although it did result in certain benefits accruing to rural Liberia.

18/19

Respondents were then asked whether or not the project generated any unintended side effects. Seventy-eight percent didn't know whether it had or not; 17% claimed it hadn't while only one person claimed it had; "most graduates decided pursuing further studies in the education area, which was seen as a negative side effect since they didn't stay in the rural areas as teachers and community developers, as intended.

N=18

20.

When asked who was generally regarded as the main implementor of the project, the distribution of the answers was as follows:

USAID only	-0-
GOL only	26%
USAID and GOL only	43%
USAID, GOL and others	26%
Others	-0-

The correct answer was USAID, GOL and others, as UNESCO also made a major contribution to the rural teacher training institutes. Seventy-

21.

nine percent of the respondents thought that a similar project would be appropriate elsewhere in Liberia, while 21% did not think so. The

N=19

latter's rationale was generally that what was needed was an upgrading and expansion of the existing facilities, rather than adding more mediocre quality institutes to train rural teachers.

22.

Forty-seven percent would not change the design of a similar project being prepared today, while 53% would.

N=19

- I would require that Liberians be given more substantive roles at the very beginning of the project life;
- students would have to be properly screened and funds should be controlled by locals with expenditures being monitored by

- do a feasibility study (first) and recognize new realities;
- ensure that GOL would maintain the same funding levels (as were given during the technical assistance phase);
- there would be changes in personnel, construction, instruction and equipment;
- the educational program should be geared to training teachers at the college level;

Others referred to suggestions already provided in answer to questions 11 (what should have been done differently to make the project more successful) and 13 (was the project adequately funded).

23. Repeats an earlier question.

24. When the key informants were asked if the functions/activities/facilities constitute viable entities to date as were able to operate without further outside assistance, 32% answered affirmatively, 58% negatively, 5% thought it was partially viable, while the remaining 5% had no opinion or didn't know. Those who thought it was viable cited the fact that the rural teacher training institutes continued to graduate trained teachers, without the benefit of further outside assistance, while those who thought the institutes were not yet viable quoted: the dismal failure of the Ubbu Institute, the fact that KRTTI and ZRTTI limped along without adequate financial support from GOL, the lack of quality in graduates; the need for continued external assistance. Some respondents suggested that the institutes should be upgraded to junior college level, however they did not specify what such an upgrading would achieve.

Appendix II

Summary of total operating cost and Government expenditure for RTTIs from 1969 - 79 (Analyzed from the central budget of Liberia)

Year	KRTTI	% Δ	ZRTTI	% Δ
1969	\$145,871	0.7	190,840	10
1970	155,651	11.6	209,675	21.1
1971	173,696	(23.7)	253,958	35.7
1972	140,365	0	187,092	0
1973	140,365	41.0	187,092	19.9
1974	198,000	55.4	224,395	36.0
1975	307,779	2.6	307,870	13.1
1976/77	315,007	55.6	347,334	41.2
1977/78	490,262	17.2	490,262	15.4
1978/79	418,205		515,261	

Operating cost and Government expenditure (in lakhs of rupees)
 Teacher Training Institutes (TTI) 1969 - 70

	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973
1. ZRTTI					
Personnel Services	\$36,860	88,840	99,740	96,460	106,200
Other Services	10,450	14,526	16,622	9,702	7,482
Materials and Supplies	68,550	70,389	90,266	61,250	58,210
Equipment	1,000	-	19,650	-	3,200
Subsidies & Grants	23,800	27,920	27,680	19,680	12,000
Stipends	-	-	-	-	-
Others (scholarships)	-	-	-	-	-
Total	\$190,740	209,675	253,958	187,092	187,092
2. KRTTI					
Personnel Services	\$74,280	82,080	82,420	82,420	90,170
Other Services	11,150	8,150	11,006	6,700	3,800
Materials and Supplies	44,941	50,421	50,921	40,505	33,212
Equipment	500	-	14,349	-	3,200
Subsidies & Grants	-	15,000	15,000	-	-
Stipends	-	-	-	-	-
Others (scholarships)	-	-	-	10,760	10,000
Total	\$145,871	155,651	173,696	140,385	140,585

(DOLLARS) for Zozor and Kikaha Rural

1/82

1974	1975	1976	76/77	77/78	78/79	79/80
103,564		136,274	142,115	197,102	241,565	256,624
11,130		9,152	7,752	7,752	19,592	19,512
66,850		144,064	178,197	178,197	204,842	204,842
-		1,976	7,870	7,870	-	22,000
12,000		7,870	-	-	-	-
-		-	-	-	24,127	27,966
-		-	-	-	-	-
193,544	307,070?	299,336	305,934	390,921	632,499	550,944
		46,078	63,137	78,000	85,182	75,221
		19,506	8,000	12,000	7,500	16,248
		22,324	16,363	17,000	16,353	25,531
		6,300	11,500	8,300	-	-
	101,730	145,800	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-
182,000	307,779?	147,200	68,000	105,300	108,045	117,000