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REPORT OF SHORT-TERM CONSULTANCY

By

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Human Resources Development Project (683-0226)

Report of Short-term Consultancy of Eugene Lerner

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INTRODUCTION

General Background to Mission

The USAID Mission/Niamey, with the agreement of the Minister of Rural Development, requested the assistance of Eugene Lerner, Consultant, to review the current status of the Human Resources Development Project (683-0226) concerning the reform and expansion of the Practical Institute for Rural Development (IPDR) at Kolo, and to provide advice and recommendations which might improve its implementation. The consultant was requested to engage in the following activities during his stay in Niamey:

- Discuss and analyze internal communication channels at IPDR/Kolo with officials of the Institute and make recommendations for improvement;
- Recommend measures for the improved coordination of project activities;
- Review the curriculum reform component of the project and recommend measures to facilitate its adoption and implementation in accordance with the needs of Niger;
- Present a summary written report of findings and recommendations.

In addition to the activities which the AID Niamey Mission requested that the consultant undertake in the course of his mission, the Minister of Rural Development proposed the following orientation for the consultant's work:

- That he confine his inquiries and recommendations to fit within the framework of USAID assistance and its relation to the overall operations of the reform and extension of the IPDR while verifying the reciprocal respect of the commitments between USAID and the other partners to the project;
- That he work in reference to the recommendations of the Technical Committee in order to ascertain to what extent its recommendations have been followed; to seek out and gauge the reasons for respecting or not respecting the measures proposed by the Technical Committee;

and to enlighten the Committee with regard to certain details of which it may be unaware;

- That he work in close liaison with the Nigerien technical personnel charged with carrying out the project, particularly those having directorial responsibilities at the IPDR;
- Finally, that the consultant's mandate is to complement the work of the Technical Committee and not to act as a substitute for it.

Within the framework of the above orientation and overall approach, the consultant was asked to pay particular attention to the following areas of concern:

- The situation concerning core courses in the various specialties;
- The problem of the degree of acceptance and comprehension by national and expatriate instructors of the "formation par les objectifs" method of instruction;
- The need for establishment of the annual academic calendar;
- Time and course allocation;
- Standardization of coefficients for grading;
- Academic performance criteria.

With the above tasks to be performed in mind, the consultant was able to confer while in Niamey and at Kolo with a number of officials and instructors, the latter being both Niger Nationals and expatriates of various countries. (See annex for list of persons contacted and/or interviewed) Due to the press of their work (both administrative in the case of school officials, and pedagogical in the case of instructors and department heads - the consultant arrived at the moment that the Village Operations stages were being prepared and stagiaires were being oriented) it was not possible to interview some instructors and officials. Nevertheless, the consultant believes that he was able to gain a good deal of information and some insight through interviews and talks with the teachers and administrators who were willing and able to give of their time and energy.

The Recommendations of the Technical Committee

The consultant was able to obtain copies of the Activity and Progress Reports submitted by the IPDR to the Technical Committee (Reports 1-4) as well as the bulk of the documents concerning Recommendations of the Technical

Committee (e.g., 2nd - 4th meetings of the T.C.). The recommendations of the 4th annual meeting (September-October 1981) will be referred to in particular, and an attempt will be made to examine them and to indicate whether or not, and to what extent, they are being implemented or if planning for their implementation is in process. These recommendations fall under a number of headings: instruction, organization, infrastructures and general (for details regarding the recommendations and the action planned or executed for carrying them out, see chart in annex A).

What flows from analysis of the documents, buttressed by numerous discussions with instructors and other persons associated with IPDR, is that after each annual meeting of the Technical Committee recommendations are made and between meetings only some of those recommendations are implemented; others are not, due to a variety of reasons: some are linked to actions which are dependent on outside financing (e.g., construction in the main, but also scholarships and staffing problems); others are linked to very real professional concerns (e.g., curriculum, methods of teaching, etc.); yet others to the complexity and cumbersomeness of the administrative process. There does not appear to be any really effective means whereby the recommendations of the Technical Committee are followed up between meetings; thus there is a tendency to let things slide until the next T.C. meeting is due. There may exist such mechanisms concerning reporting periodically to T.C. members between annual meetings; there does not appear to be evidence that these exist. The consultant believes that such mechanisms should be explored and created if they do not already exist.

One of the severest criticisms that has been made by a number of instructors and department heads is that the Technical Committee stays for too short a time during its annual visit to be able to analyze the real problems of the Institute, and, above all, is so set up as to virtually preclude receptivity to in-depth information from instructors and department heads. If the consultant's information is accurate, the Technical Committee does not appear to receive the annual report of activity and progress from IPDR sufficiently in advance to prepare for meetings and once there, to explore problems in depth. Whether this is objectively so or not, what is perhaps significant is that this feeling is fairly general among teaching staff and department heads.

In the main body of the present report, the consultant will attempt to address himself to the principal problems and areas of concern not only of

the Technical Committee, but of USAID as well. In the scope of the mission assigned to him, and given its necessarily limited duration, the consultant will not attempt, in this report, to deal with all of the problems of the reform and extension of the IPDR. He will necessarily be selective and will attempt to touch on what he perceives to be the most important ones, whether amenable to solution in the short run or over a longer period of time.

THE MAIN PROBLEMS AND AREAS OF CONCERN

The New Teaching Methodology and the Pedagogical Unit

What emerges from the various discussions, as well as the examination of the materials produced since the beginning of the implementation of the reform, are the following points:

- The methodology, "training by objectives" (formation par les objectifs), employs a concept, essentially "programmed learning" which has been developed for some time and applied with varying degrees of success in a number of countries (in Africa as well as elsewhere) and in various training/educational contexts. It has been, in all likelihood, successful above all in its application to technical subjects in particular and enables the learner to rapidly assimilate units of concrete knowledge. This basic technique, which is premised on the breaking down of bodies of knowledge into readily assimilable "packages" arranged in logical sequence, has within the context of practical training, at Kolo as in other similar institutions, been linked to the ultimate tasks which the graduate of the institution will be called upon to perform in his future professional career. There is little doubt that if the method is well understood by both instructors and students it can yield good results, perhaps better ones than those produced by the classic method of teaching. However, it does not necessarily yield better results in certain subject areas - it is doubtful whether it does in the socio-economic domain in particular, as opposed to the more technical knowledge dispensed at Kolo. What it appears to lack - because of its very analytical approach - is the capacity to foster the integration of the bits of knowledge acquired, even taking adequate sequencing into account. This is a serious drawback, particularly in the social and economic fields, but even with regard to such areas as

training in agricultural production, rural planning and infrastructure, etc. The basic problem is that, if development agents are technicians and must master certain techniques for accomplishing concrete tasks, they are also called upon to provide other kinds of leadership for the rural world, on the arrondissement, district and village levels. The methodology in question would not appear to address itself sufficiently nor adequately to that question. In addition, it is important to keep in mind the aspect of social and professional promotion of the future agent technique or technicien after he has been integrated into his job. This should be a real concern of any educational institution in a developing country; it is a strong concern for the cadres who are undergoing training and will assume their professional roles later on. The methodology in question - being above all pragmatic and purposefully limited in scope - does not address this problem.

- But the most serious problem with regard to the application of the new methodology and approach to the particular context of Kolo is the manner in which it has been implemented. The consensus of those persons interviewed is that the methodology was introduced without adequate regard for the sensitivities of the teaching staff and with little genuine effort to inform, to explain or to train instructors in the use of the method. There is little doubt that the present resistance to acceptance of the method stems from its manner of introduction. The few training-of-trainers sessions programmed appear to have been so with little or no regard for the teaching load or teaching commitments of the instructors. The fact of the matter is that most instructors, while paying lip service at best to the method, continue to give their courses in the classic way. There is little if any sign that the approach, as implemented by the present pedagogical unit, has been either integrated into the classroom situation or in the practical sessions (ferme d'exploitation, etc.).
- However, a recent activity sponsored by the School allows a small degree of optimism to emerge. The information trip to the Institut Agricole de Bouaké (Ivory Coast) and to the Ecole Nationale d'Economie Appliquée (Senegal) undertaken recently by five instructors (including department heads) from the School, appears to have been

somewhat beneficial in that they were able to see in action how the methodology can be applied to yield good results. The Bouaké approach (called "formation pour l'emploi") in particular impressed the visitors from Kolo and they came away from the experience more convinced that the methodology has merit and could be useful in the Kolo context. But it was pointed out that in the case of the I.A.B. the size and scope of the school (24 instructors) was much smaller than those of Kolo, that there appeared to be a good understanding of the methodology and that its application was smooth and well integrated into the life of the school. On the other hand, it was pointed out that the bulk of the I.A.B. trainees were destined to work in State-operated agro-industries and other state firms, as opposed to governmental services under ministries. Some IPDR officials and instructors think that bringing trainers from Bouaké or ENEA to explain and demonstrate the methodology might help to facilitate its acceptance at Kolo. But several of the persons who made the trip have indicated that bringing trainers from Bouaké for short stints would not produce the desired effect. They feel that only in seeing how it works within the context of I.A.B. can the methodology be convincing and thus more likely to be accepted. The trip report of the team has not yet been written nor presented, and it must be discussed and examined in meetings at Kolo to be able to draw any valid conclusions from the experience.

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that more serious attempts to explain the rationale and the mechanics of the methodology and, above all, training in its use and applications are an overriding necessity at Kolo in the coming academic year. Such training is intimately linked to solving problems of curriculum planning, scheduling of courses and other activities and staffing. But before examining those problems in any detail it is necessary to look at another major area of concern: internal communications at Kolo and their relation to the reform/extension of the school.

Communications at IPDR

Discussions with IPDR officials, department heads, instructors (both national and expatriate staff) have pointed up a number of serious problems concerning internal communications at the School - those between and among its various components, units, departments, as well as between and among individuals. Some of these problems are linked to some very basic structural facts: the multi-donor nature of the financing and staffing; the fact that

the Institute is at one and the same time a school and a project (and that the school existed before the project); the fact that the Institute is a technical school but under a specific ministry different from Niger's other technical schools; the presence of a multi-national staff having varying degrees of teaching experience and technical competence, etc. Informants have indicated that there are frequent cases of order and counter-order, of one-way communication (from the top down), of buck-passing and of bottle-necks of various kinds. But basic to the communications problems appears to be the manner in which the school's nature and functions are conceived. To be sure, any institution having tasks to perform must have structure and an internal organization. All schools that function well do so. But the structure and organization of a school, of a training institute, be it concerned with practical goals or not, must differ from those of an ordinary governmental service. Teachers are professionals whose role and attributions must differ considerably from those of bureaucrats situated in a well-delineated vertical chain of command. For best results - and best communications and achievement - they should be given a certain degree of responsibility and their opinions should be listened to. Even on the level of a technical secondary school, while perhaps not constituting a "band of scholars" they are nevertheless something more than simple executors of decisions taken by others in the hierarchical order. More scope for input from, as well as feed-back to, instructors would improve both the general regime of communications as well as performance. Thus more scope for horizontal as opposed to vertical communications networks should be developed. It is perhaps relevant to note that one informant who had made the trip to Bouaké stressed the degree of responsibility given to instructors at that institution.

Some of Kolo's communications problems are clearly linked to those of coordination with the school's various constituent parts and special units. A number of informants have expressed the feeling, for instance, that the Pedagogical Unit and the FAO project structure as a whole, in appearing to hold themselves apart from the rest of the institution, complicate the problems of communication.

Perhaps basic to an improvement in internal communications at Kolo is the absolute necessity to decide, if not once and for all, at least for the next several years, what the internal organization is to be. The Director of the Institute, in liaison with the Director of Studies, should appoint a special committee composed of department heads, one or two full-time instructors from

each department (both expatriates and nationals) and other persons deemed necessary, with a clear-cut mandate and a firm deadline (certainly before the beginning of the next academic year) to establish a clear, comprehensive organizational chart accompanied by explanations of each position and its functions. Once this is done the chart should be disseminated to all teaching and senior administrative personnel. It is recommended that such an organizational chart delineate horizontal relationships as well as the vertical ones and that its design be as concerned with functionality as is ostensibly the methodology of "training by objectives". Without such a first and indispensable step, communications as such within the Institute will not improve.

Another facet of the communication problems at Kolo appears to be the lack of regularly scheduled faculty meetings at which information can be disseminated, problems discussed and the various committee reports can be presented. It is recommended that such meetings be held at regular intervals, perhaps once a month.

Curriculum Planning, Class Schedules and Academic Performance

Despite an impressive list of courses (including course outlines) contained in IPDR's publication, Programme de Formation, Année Scolaire 1980-1981 the problem of a clear-cut, set curriculum has not been resolved at IPDR. In fact the publication in question does not seem to guide the reader in distinguishing between courses that were given at one time and those which still form part of the curriculum. Decisions as to relative importance of certain courses as opposed to others of lesser importance do not seem to have been taken. There is no apparent attempt to standardize the scope and duration of courses and to tie them to a clear-cut academic calendar. The fact that the staffing problems are real - both in the sense of quality and quantity, with particular reference to the part-time teaching staff (the "vacataires") - does have a bearing on academic curriculum planning and on scheduling from year to year and even within given years. But clearer, more concerted curriculum planning is a sine qua non of a well-run educational/training institution and no scheduling can be done rationally without solving the basic problem. It is recommended that a permanent curriculum planning committee (to be clearly distinguished from the cellule pédagogique, which should be confined to aspects of the reform concerning pedagogical methodology) be appointed by the Director of the school, to be under the chairmanship of the Director of Studies, and having as members either the chairmen of the various

departments or senior instructors from each department. This committee should be charged with developing a set curriculum for a period of at least several years. Such a committee (as all others suggested) must meet at regular intervals and should be given a deadline for basic curriculum development. It should, in addition, concern itself with the question of coefficients for grading.

As for academic performance criteria, this whole area must also be studied in serious fashion and in the light of Niger's needs and realities. The use of terms - in lieu of real grading - such as "capable" or "not capable" which seems to be a recent development at Kolo, may present a neat correspondence with the new methodology, but in the eyes of a number of informants it does not appear to correspond to the country's objective needs or psychological orientations. In any event, teachers at Kolo appear quite resistant to this type of innovation and are not likely to support it. On another level, despite Niger's evident need for greater numbers of trained rural development agents, it certainly does not need - nor can it afford - cadres whose academic performance during training has been less than adequate. Standards must be raised rather than lowered in any way. Perhaps more rigorous selection of candidates for entry into the school can assure higher performance standards of students. It is recommended that an academic standards committee be formed as soon as possible in order to attempt to find a solution to this problem.

Material Considerations and Problems at Kolo

The consensus of opinion of virtually all persons interviewed in the course of the present study mission, to which may be added the consultant's own observations in situ, is that a number of the academic problems, as well as those concerning quality and performance of teaching personnel, would be resolved if the physical conditions under which teachers must teach and students must learn were improved. Certainly, to this end, the school authorities have worked with perseverance and in close collaboration with some of the international donor organizations (most notably USAID) to bring about an improvement in the physical conditions and to enlarge and extend the facilities at Kolo. It is well known that there were long delays in the building program and the construction process and that certain donors have been particularly slow in honoring their commitments. At this writing substantial progress appears to have been made in that regard and buildings of several types (including an apparently completed women's dormitory facility) have either been completed, are well on the way to completion or are in the process of

being refurbished or repaired. Nevertheless, at this point, and perhaps still in the course of the next academic year, insufficient classroom space is a critical problem at Kolo. Given the delays in the building program, the Institute has requested that USAID make funds available for the construction of four additional classrooms which were to be provided some time ago by another donor country. It is to be noted that the most recent estimates regarding next academic year's enrollment indicate a student body of around 450. This past year some classrooms contained, for certain courses, 30 to 40 students. Given that type of overcrowding even the classic methods of teaching would encounter great difficulty; the new methodology, to be at all successful, would appear to require more optimal conditions. It is the opinion of one of the school officials that the promised assistance on the part of the donor country referred to above will not be forthcoming in the near future. Given USAID's commitment to the school and its development and its support for the building program over several years, the consultant recommends, to the extent that such action is possible along budgetary lines, that the request be granted.

In addition to the building/refurbishing program, there are a number of other material problems to be resolved. The water supply is at present non-existent; one of the generators furnishing electrical power at the school has broken down completely and the other one was not adequately functioning on several of the days during which the consultant was visiting the school. This of course means that in addition to lighting, the air conditioners which have been received due to AID's procurement efforts, cannot be used. It is to be noted in this connection that even if dependable power were to be provided, there would still remain the problem of the hook-up and installation of the air-conditioners - a responsibility of the school's maintenance department. An additional problem which will have to be solved sooner or later is the lack of telephone communications between the school and the capital and within the school as well. As for the latter, internal, communications, perhaps some form of inter-com system can be installed so that the various parts of the school, particularly the administrative offices and perhaps the departments, can be in rapid communication with each other.

Staffing Problems, Nigerienization and Scholarships for Teaching Staff

The staffing problems at Kolo are basically twofold: recruiting/assigning permanent teaching staff with professional and teaching competence and experience;

and upgrading the substantive and pedagogical skills of teachers already assigned to the school.

In regard to the first aspect of the problem, it is the feeling of a number of national and expatriate teachers that for many Nigerien cadres working in the various services of the MDR or elsewhere (Animation service of the Ministry of Plan, etc.), assignment to Kolo is a form of punishment and that few, if any, come to the school of their own volition. Most of them have little or no teaching experience or aptitude. Discussions with responsible officials of the Institute bring out the belief on their part that when the material conditions at Kolo are improved, a better quality of instructor will be attracted to the school. Another drawback to attracting more competent and committed instructors is said to be the unclear status of teaching personnel at the school and the fact that they, unlike teaching personnel of other technical schools, do not enjoy certain material incentives (bonuses, material perquisites, etc.) which are accorded functionaries assigned to certain development projects. The consultant has been informed by the Director of Studies and the Personnel Chief of the School that it has been decided to grant a 20% pay increase to teaching personnel from the beginning of the next fiscal year (October 1982). It is felt by those informants that such a measure should help to improve the staffing situation somewhat and should, at least partially, make coming to Kolo more attractive to better trained people.

Another serious facet of the present staffing situation is the necessity which the school has had, in order to dispense the minimum of instruction, and given the insufficient number of full-time trained instructors, to employ a number of part-time instructors, the so-called "vacataires". These are, in the main, practitioners possessing various skills and academic credentials and who work in the various government services and para-statal entities. It is among this category of instructor that frequent instances of absenteeism have occurred and this has played havoc with course scheduling; also, in the main, these instructors remain untouched by the new methodology.

The second aspect of the staffing problem is closely linked to the policy of the School and of the government (as well as the donor organizations involved in the School) to "Nigerienize" the teaching staff as rapidly as possible, particularly during the life of the project. Such Nigerienization entails the upgrading of the skills of present full-time teaching personnel, a number of whom lack sufficient training in their substantive fields, and

aboveall in pedagogical training. It has thus been a policy of the School to foster continued education of staff through training abroad by means of scholarships provided by the various donor countries. USAID in particular has responded favorably to this need and has provided scholarships to a number of Nigerien instructors from the school. It is to be noted that a number of the AID scholarships have been in the socio-economic sphere, linked to the AID staffing contribution in that department. Some of these are to return to Niger in 1983 or 1984. The School authorities have asked AID to consider providing scholarships in other, more technical fields and this proposal is under consideration at present. In as much as AID wishes to continue to support training efforts in the socio-economic field, and is called upon to grant scholarships for other fields of study, it has recently been proposed that the number of scholarships for the next several years be increased (from an earlier proposed 8 to 11) in order to satisfy both types of need. To the extent that this is financially feasible, the consultant would support such a proposal.

But an important facet of a scholarship/continuing education program, for it to be successful and to attain the ultimate goal of full Nigerienization, must be to ensure that those instructors who have undergone advanced training return to Kolo to serve for a minimum number of years - according to present regulations and statutes a minimum of 3 years post-scholarship service at the School - and to enable the Institute and the students to fully benefit from their newly acquired training. This point cannot be over-emphasized; without this firm assurance that scholarship beneficiaries will not only return to Kolo, but remain there for a minimum number of years, the whole policy of Nigerienization will be vitiated.

On another level, but equally linked to the acute staffing needs of the School, is an individual case, that of a U.N. volunteer, acknowledged generally to be of high competence and having contributed his skills and knowledge to the development of the socio-economic department. His U.N. volunteer status is drawing to a close, and as this cannot be renewed, some means of maintaining him at Kolo is thought to be worth exploring. The consultant has been informed that there is a possibility that he be offered a contract by USAID, and in the light of his contributions to the department and to the School, the consultant would recommend such action, if financially and otherwise feasible.

The USAID Team

While there are four instructors who have been provided to IPDR by USAID, three of them are in the socio-economic department, and the fourth teaches soil science. At this writing it is almost certain that the soil science instructor (who, incidentally, has also contributed significantly to the General Studies Department's offerings in Chemistry and is highly regarded by that department head) will not be returning to Kolo after the end of the present academic year. Therefore, the consultant will confine his remarks regarding the USAID team essentially to the three instructors in the socio-economic department.

Based on interviews with school officials, the relevant department head and other colleagues, what emerges is a rather uneven pattern of academic competence, adaptability, cooperation with school authorities, etc.

The person charged with teaching duties in the area of coopération and rural project management, and who is also the team leader, is regarded as technically competent, skillful in his relations with the authorities, and has done well in his tasks of liaison between AID and the School. He is apparently devoted to the school and to the students and is seen in that light by persons interviewed. He has been highly adaptable and, due to prior work experience in Niger, particularly linked to the U.N.C.C. cooperative organization, he is probably the most knowledgeable team member with regard to Nigerien realities. He desires to remain on at the school, despite a number of frustrations he experiences. While his personality enables him to work smoothly and well with Nigerien colleagues and others, he does not appear to enjoy the role of team leader and does not appear to exert the degree of authority over other team members that might be desired. This may be partially due to his own unclear status with regard to U.S. citizenship, or it may simply be part of his personality. He has an understanding of how Nigeriens think and react to problems and has the ability to make things work.

The agricultural economist of the team has a positive view of things in general, is highly articulate and is regarded as a competent teacher by departmental colleagues and others. The only negative aspect of his presence at IPDR - seen from the vantage point of some of his Nigerien colleagues perhaps - is due to his being African (from another Sahelian country), having studied in the U.S., and being paid by USAID (there is some slight evidence that this latter fact has evoked jealousy on the part of some Nigerien colleagues; but this is not necessarily so). By and large he is well regarded

at the school and is making an important contribution to the training of Nigeriens in a very important domain.

The third member of the team, an American sociologist, has evoked, among a number of informants, several negative reactions. He is thought to be overly aggressive, thoroughly non-conforming to the accepted rules of conduct at the School, insensitive to the feelings of Nigerien colleagues and school officials, and has not quite, in the time he has been in Niger, overcome difficulties of communicating in French. He is charged with teaching courses in the area of rural sociology and animation and in this latter regard it is perhaps significant that one highly responsible school official has remarked that at present "nothing is being done in animation". If this is so, this is a serious lacuna within the socio-economic department, especially in the light of the fact that one of the major utiliser services in terms of numbers of cadres trained at Kolo is the Animation service. This is a field that requires much more than theoretical constructs derived from written sources. It does require, in order to be taught well, considerable field experience in projects and programs which are encompassed by the notion of animation rurale. It requires first-hand knowledge and experience in overall community development, including non-formal education experience and practice. In the light of the above remarks, it would appear that the person in question is not making the kind of contribution to the School that is required.

In summary, it seems to this consultant that given the significant financial contribution that AID is making to the School and to its program of reform and extension, a strong team with highly competent and experienced persons in it is desired. The picture is uneven and does not bode well for the future. The consultant believes that AID should continue to support the School and most particularly on the level of contributions of teaching personnel.

A last note on this question: it is perhaps significant that to date the socio-economic department appears to be the only one which has not produced any comprehensive course material - so necessary for students in the context of a school at which library facilities are so limited and textbooks non-existent.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Throughout much of the above report the consultant has made a number of recommendations and suggestions to improve, as he sees it, the functioning of the School, the quality of teaching, the quality of internal communications, etc. The major recommendations may be recapitulated in explicit form as follows:

- The new methodology, "formation par les objectifs" can work, especially in the more technical fields. The problem of training trainers in its use and application must be of highest priority, must be seriously considered and a better and clearer understanding of the methodology on the part of trainers must be developed. Adequate planning of such training activities must be done and the instructors must be associated more in its development and use. The Pedagogical Unit should deploy even greater efforts than has been the case in the past to overcome the resistance of some instructors. It is suggested that deeper study of the fields of instruction, as well as more awareness of the psychocultural context and constraints operative at Kolo and in Niger in general, should assure greater receptivity to this methodology and more positive efforts on the part of instructors to see that it works.
- The curriculum needs to be seriously studied and developed and definitive solutions found to overcome the present floating, amorphous nature of the course program. A curriculum committee, having a clear-cut mandate and deadlines for action, must be set up and given authority to arrive at an adequate solution to this problem. Form, content, considerations of timing and scheduling of courses, their weighting and relative importance in the training of the future development agents who form the student body at Kolo must be decided on by this committee which should be chaired by the Director of Studies.
- The definitive structure and organization of the Institute, and linked to it, its internal communications network, must be the object of a concerted effort which associates instructors and school officials in the common endeavor. A clear organigramme accompanied by adequate explanations of posts and responsibilities must be worked out before the onset of the next academic year. To the extent possible, the assuming of multiple functions on the part of school officials, however

necessary it may be at the present moment, should be done away with as soon as it is feasible. (This is particularly true in the case of the person who at present occupies at one and the same time the functions of Director of Studies, head of a department, and Assistant Director of the Institutè. If some of the aforementioned responsibilities cannot be carried out by duly appointed officials assigned to the School by the Ministry, then it is suggested that at least one or several members of the faculty be coopted to relieve that person of some of his most onerous tasks.) It is recommended that a working committee be constituted to attempt to solve the basic problems of school organization and internal communications.

- Some of the outstanding material problems at Kolo are clearly in the process of being resolved. Others appear to involve recurrent insufficiencies. It is recommended in this connection (as well as for other matters of common interest, such as scholarships, international staffing, etc.) that the representatives of the international donor organizations and countries involved in the project meet at regularly scheduled intervals, mutually agreed upon, to discuss common problems and to attempt to bring about a greater degree of coordination of efforts. It is suggested that such a council or structure be chaired by a person nominated and elected by the representatives of all the donor organizations playing a role in the reform and extension of the Kolo School.
- The personnel/staffing problems of the School, closely linked to the progress of the Nigerienization program, appear to offer the hope of some solution with the eventual return of the scholarship-holders presently undergoing foreign training on the one hand, and the new incentives policy to be applied in the coming academic year on the other. But it is a necessity that those instructors trained abroad and due to return to Kolo remain at the School for a minimum of 3 years. Without this firm commitment, the Nigerienization policy will be vitiated and the School will remain dependent on expatriate and part-time instructors indefinitely.
- The USAID team needs strengthening in the areas of team leadership and in the substantive area of animation rurale programs and courses. It is recommended that the USAID mission to Niger take steps to assure

the strengthening of its contribution in personnel to the school.

- In order for the USAID contribution to the school, in both personnel and material support (the construction and equipping aspects), to continue to be fruitful and able to attain its objectives, it is recommended to the Mission that the present Human Resources/Training officer continue to supervise and follow the project closely.

Finally, it must be stated that it has clearly been impossible, in the time allocated to the present assessment mission of the consultant, to do justice to a number of areas of concern. Certain problems - notably those of coordination between and among donors, coordination between the School and its Ministry of Tutelage (particularly in respect to a proposed manpower planning unit at the MDR, a very positive step in the estimation of this consultant) - cannot be covered adequately in the limited time of a short mission. There are longer-term problems which require deeper study and sustained action over time. It is the feeling of the consultant that much progress in the implementation of the reform and extension of the Institute has been accomplished in the past year or so in particular. He is cognizant of many of the constraints and obstacles which have had to be overcome and those which still remain; he is also cognizant of the genuine and serious efforts that the Ministry, School officials, faculty and some donors have deployed to carry out the common enterprise: to equip, in every sense of the term, Niger with a modern, dynamic Institute to train, in both theoretical and practical knowledge and techniques, the middle-level cadres indispensable as agents of development in order to realize the country's objective, to wit, create the "development-oriented society". The consultant, finally, wishes to acknowledge the sincere and frank assistance which was given to him by all those he contacted at Kolo, at USAID/Niamey, etc. and to thank those persons who gave of their time and energy so that his mission might have a reasonable chance of success and that it might represent a modest contribution to the common effort.

Annex A

The following chart/table attempts to present in schematic fashion the bulk of the recommendations made by the Technical Committee at its last meeting (September-October 1981). It does not pretend to be exhaustive and it is likely that a number of errors of fact and interpretation have crept into it. It is provided to the reader in order to supplement the textual material in the main body of this report.

<u>Focus</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Action Planned</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Consultant's Observations</u>
<u>Instruction</u>	Human Resource Planning Unit at MDR, liaison with IPDR/Kolo	Request of FAO for 2 experts to organize unit	Request formulated	No apparent news, follow-up...
	Seminar of instructors and utilizers re reform/extension of IPDR	?	?	No information received re status
	Workshop on implementation of curriculum and methods of training for agriculture mid-level cadres	?	?	"
	Creation of 2nd school in Maradi to separate cycles at IPDR/Kolo. (Separate AT from T)	Planning mission envisaged	?	No further info. Financing possible from WB.
	Selection of instructors on basis of CV linked to specialty taught	?	?	Difficulty in recruiting/interesting qualified prospective instructors

<u>Focus</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Action Planned</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Consultant's Observations</u>
	<p>Scholarships: -Students who terminate one of cycles at IPDR</p>	<p>No apparent action taken to obtain scholarships</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Needs study and inquiry</p>
	<p>-Instructors at IPDR</p>	<p>Requests made of international donor community</p>	<p>USAID considering increasing number of scholarships from 8 to 11 and in additional specialties</p>	<p>Problem of keeping returned scholarship holder at IPDR for required minimum time</p>
	<p>Curriculum planning</p>	<p>Planning reported</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Department heads/instructors consulted?</p>
	<p>Establish teaching discipline</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Extremely difficult to establish teaching discipline given problem of "vacataires" and different levels of teaching experience...</p>
	<p>Establish a system of evaluation and self-evaluation of training process and integration of technicians into their future work places</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Seminar held to discuss problem</p>	<p>No documents seen, but important problem requiring follow-up</p>
	<p>Establish a follow-up mechanism to assure continued training of agents after leaving school</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Important point to explore in liaison with <u>formation permanente</u> directorate at MDR</p>
	<p>To study setting up of training in management in the various specialties and to promote a specialty of managers</p>	<p>Partially done</p>	<p>Action taken for 3rd year (conducteur cycle) and for TS cycle</p>	<p>Very important activity, needs emphasis, esp. for long cycle trainees</p>

<u>Focus</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Action Planned</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Consultant's Observations</u>
	Planning or instructors vacations as function of specialties taught and agricultural calendar	?	?	Possible need for sanctions in some cases; but need for better planning
	Stages and practical training: need for careful planning	Planned	Preparatory sessions organized and carried out for VOP	Material constraints affect planning
	Recommend "stages pré-professionnels"	Planned for next academic year	?	Consultant not clear as to content or exact purpose
	Granting of diplomas. Recommend associating utilizers with exams. Recommend more rigorous criteria.	?	Action taken	Problem: disagreement between instructors and peda. unit re grading method
	Teaching materials/manuals	"	Numerous manuals/texts produced	Lacking in soc-econ.dept.; also some manuals need updating
	New designation for a development agent - ambiguity between TS (Kolo) and TS of Rural Engineering	To change designation to "Technicien"	Appears to be accepted and done.	Note: instructors still tend to use "TS" designation verbally
Organisation	Recommend clarification and explanation of certain functions in organigram	?	?	General organigram appears to be too simple and lines of communication need to be re-studied. "Pedagogic" organigram links dept. heads indirectly to Peda. Unit and no explicit means of obtaining input from instructors Problem under study.

<u>Focus</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Action Planned</u>	<u>Action Taken</u>	<u>Consultant's Observations</u>
Infra-structure	Pedagogical Unit should develop an information brochure giving organization of IPDR functioning and training policy	?	?	Consultant has seen an earlier publication: its organization was not clear to him
Infra-structure	Recommend emergency procedures to financing sources in order to accelerate implementation of infra-structure	Planned	Request made to USAID for construction of additional classrooms	Construction seems to be moving along fairly well at present (esp. USAID-financed buildings) New women's dorm appears completed. More classrooms needed; one donor not meeting commitment.
General	Recommend measures be taken to assure water supply, electricity and telephones.	?	?	Situation very serious; very discouraging to staff and school officials
General	Work room for instructors and 2 workrooms for Peda. Unit and for "training of trainers"	?	?	Strongly recommend regular meetings
General	Recommend periodical coordination and information meetings between donor organizations and IPDR. FAO should take initiative to organize.	?	?	Strongly recommend regular meetings

Annex B

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Annex C

List of Persons Contacted and/or Interviewed

At IPDR/Kolo

YAYA ABDOU : Directeur, IPDR/Kolo
LARFAOUI, Omar : Principal Adviser/Coordinator of Project FAO,
IPDR/Kolo
ANADA TIEGA : Directeur Adjoint, p.i., Directeur des Etudes, Chef
Département d'Aménagement
DIALLO HAMA : Chef, Département de Socio-Economie
ABOUBAKAR HASSANE : Chef, Formation Pratique
YAYA ISSAKA : Chef, Département de Production Agricole
COUSIN, F : Coordonnateur Pédagogique
MONTESI, L : Coordonnateur Adjoint, Chargé de la Formation Pratique
et des Stages
LOMPO SOULEYMANE : Chef, Département Enseignement General

USAID Team/Kolo

CAO QUAN : Chief of Party, Instructor, Rural Development, Project
Management
DIONE, Josue : Instructor, Agricultural Economics
BRANDSTETTER, R. : Instructor, Rural Sociology
BUI, Elizabeth : Instructor, Soil Science and Chemistry

U.N, Volunteer

BUCUMI, J. : Instructor, Agricultural Economics

USAID MISSION/Niamey

LOVAAS, J. : AID Director
GOLDEN, M. : Program Officer
BARKER, T. : Program
DOGGETT, T. : PDE