

PD AAP-506
ISN 25472

Atb 11/79

CLASSIFICATION
PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART I

Report Symbol U-

PROJECT TITLE AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT	2. PROJECT NUMBER 669-0127 <u>900123</u>	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE LIBERIA
	4. EVALUATION NUMBER (Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No. beginning with No. 1 each FY) <u>79-2</u>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> REGULAR EVALUATION <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVALUATION		

5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES			6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING		7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION	
A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent FY <u>77</u>	B. Final Obligation Expected FY <u>77</u>	C. Final Input Delivery FY <u>81</u>	A. Total	\$ <u>1,892,000</u>	From (month/yr.)	<u>MAY 1978</u>
			B. U.S.	\$ <u>1,400,000</u>	To (month/yr.)	<u>APRIL 1979</u>
					Date of Evaluation Review	<u>APRIL 9-20, 1979</u>

B. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR

A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mission decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., airmgram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED
<p>This evaluation was made one year after the beginning of the project and is the first of three evaluations scheduled. Two major findings include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The assumption that MOA would increase the budget of the Cooperative Division (CD) necessary for adequate personnel and transportation has not taken place. - An unresolved issue is the possibility that 8 major agricultural land clearings and settlement projects will be turned over by GOL to CD for further development and supervision. These projects have generally been failures due to a lack of provision for adequate funding and personnel. To turn these projects over to CD would so greatly increase CD's workload that minimal CD services could not be maintained for existing cooperatives presently being serviced. 	Richard Simunek	July 1979
	" "	" "

9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS

<input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper	<input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P	_____

10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT

A. Continue Project Without Change

B. Change Project Design and/or Change Implementation Plan

C. Discontinue Project

11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Names and Titles)

Richard Simunek, Project Officer/USAID/Liberia *RS*

Job Savage *JAS*, Volunteer Development Corporation

in H. Simonson, Chief of Party, ACDI *MHS*

Norman, Deputy Director, CD, Min. of Agri. *CD*

John C. McLeod, Deputy Prog. Officer, USAID/Liberia *CMC*

12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval

Edward E. Anderson

Edward E. Anderson
Acting Director, USAID/Liberia

Date
June 5, 1979

13. SUMMARY:

The Agricultural Cooperatives Development Project is designed to increase Liberian small farmers' productivity and income through the development and functioning cooperative system. The Project, initiated in FY 77, is the first phase of A.I.D. support to agricultural cooperative development in Liberia. It includes:

- (1) analysis of issues basic to expansion and evolution of the cooperative system in Liberia;
 - (2) planning and design of future cooperative development efforts;
 - (3) provision of technical advisory assistance to cooperatives;
 - (4) the development of training courses for Ministry of Agriculture personnel, cooperative officers and members in cooperative theory, organization, management, finance, accounting and bookkeeping.
- The project is being implemented through a host country contract with the Agricultural Cooperative Development International, a U.S. consultant firm. The total estimated cost is \$1.4 million for three years, FY 77 through FY 80.

The major achievements to date include:

- Good working relationships established with key host country institutions, e.g. Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), the Agricultural Cooperatives Development Bank, (ACDB), and Liberia Produce & Marketing Corporation (LPMC).
- Office facilities and equipment and transportation situation of the Cooperative Division (CD) of the Ministry of Agriculture improved.

- CD Field Support Unit organized.
- Training program for auditors, cooperative field staff, and counterparts held.
- Financial management services provided to cooperative managers and to ACDB.
- Three marketing surveys conducted.
- Assistance provided in the planning of the plunkett Foundation training course.
- Funds and vehicle given to the Liberian Credit Union National Association (LCUNA) and also back-up training support that has enabled it to become an effective organization.
- An audit made of LCUNA.

The achievements are in some instances greater and more important those planned (see section No. 17 for explanation).

On the assumption that suggestions contained in this report relating to improvements required (primarily inputs) are implemented, this project should achieve its ultimate purpose.

The USAID/Liberia Agricultural program has as its goal increasing agricultural productivity and economic benefits for rural households engaged in small scale Agricultural production. This project should have a favorable impact on that goal.

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The project was drafted so as to provide considerable flexibility in its implementation. Therefore such changes as have occurred are not considered unplanned.

The current plan is based on training Ministry of Agriculture employees to provide most of the technical services required by cooperatives to make them successful. An alternative approach would be to encourage and help existing cooperatives to form a viable apex society federation of cooperatives, and then have it provide its member cooperatives many of the services now provided by the Government. An apex society would have flexibility that is not present in the Government. For example, it is most difficult for Government to rid itself of inefficient workers. This is not so with an apex society. There are, of course, disadvantages such as cost to cooperatives and before embarking on this alternative, there should be an appraisal of the pros and the cons.

There is no data at this time that provides a meaningful answer to the question of whether the same purpose could be achieved more efficiently by other means.

Changes that would improve the project include the following:

1. Provide CD with additional personnel.
2. Upgrade the quality of personnel.
3. Additional CD funds for transportation.
4. Develop and put into practice a more workable system to pay MOA employess per diem and travel funds.

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5. More time in the field by expatriate advisors in the future (mentioned elsewhere in report and has already been recognized as a necessity by project leader).
6. Adding two or more Peace Corps Volunteers to the expatriate team.
7. Officially appointing a registrar for cooperatives.

14. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY:

This evaluation focused on the progress to date, project methodology and implementation, and the inputs relative to feasibility and preparation of Phase II of this project. Attention was also given to the output level, efficiency and effectiveness of the Management Systems, training at all levels, the delivery of services to small farmer cooperatives, changes in Government of Liberia policies and practices relating to this project, and the timeliness and adequacy of inputs.

Individuals participating in the evaluation were:

Ministry of Agriculture:

Hon. Charles T.C. King III, (Deputy Minister, also incharge
of cooperative development)

Mr. Joseph H.G. Campbell (Director, Cooperative Division)

Mr. Eric Norman (Deputy Director, Cooperative Division)

Mr. Gabriel F. McCarthy (counterpart to the expatriate
advisors for Financial Management and Training)

Mr. Joseph F. Kamara (counterpart to the expatriate advisors
for Financial Management and Training)

Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation:

Mr. Charles A. Minor (Secretary and Assistant General Manager)

LCUNA

Mr. Henry Lavala (Manager of LCUNA)

Agricultural Cooperative International, Inc.

Contract Team:

Mr. Marlin H. Simonson (Chief of Party and Administration and Planning Advisor)

Mr. John G. Kreag (Financial Management Advisor)

Dr. Paul Wrobel (Training Advisor)

Volunteer Development Corporation

Mr. Job Savage (Volunteer Specialist - Cooperatives, also reporter and drafter of final draft of Project Evaluation Summary - PES)

USAID/Liberia:

Mr. Jack Cornelius (Food and Agricultural Officer)

Mr. Richard Simunek (Agricultural Economist)

Ms. Evelyn C. McLeod (Deputy Program Officer)

In addition, two cooperative managers whose societies have been assisted by the Financial Management Section of the Cooperative Division were interviewed. Information was also obtained from the files of the advisors, various reports in the Cooperative Division, and reports of the Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation. Another source of data was the latest Progress Report and plan of work prepared by the Cooperative Division and the A.C.D.I. team, dated April 1979. This report was carefully reviewed and is included as attachment "A" in the addendum to this document. It should be noted that during the course of the evaluation a serious civil disturbance occurred in the City of Monrovia that made it difficult to visit cooperatives outside the capital. However, we feel that the lack of contact with rural societies does not affect the findings presented in this report.

15. EXTERNAL FACTORS:

The Government of Liberia is considering turning over to the Cooperatives eight agricultural development projects (known as Agricultural Mechanical Corporation, AGRIMECO, projects. At the present time these projects are being operated by the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). In brief, MOA has cleared the land and planted cocoa, coffee and palm trees in these eight AGRIMECO project areas located throughout the country. Rice production has begun, both in the swamps and upland areas. Some farmers have been moved in, but many problems remain, e.g. Who is to pay for the clearing of land? How much it will cost? Who is to own the land? How are farmers to exist until trees come into bearing? (At present, Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation pays farmers \$30 a month to care for trees, and some rice is produced in project areas). It should be noted that in the early stages of the project cooperatives were organized and registered, but the members had little understanding or appreciation of the role they were expected to play. The concept was new, and MOA probably underestimated the amount of work and money that were required. Since there were inadequate means to support these projects, they were allowed to run down. It should be understood that the cooperatives now being proposed to take over the eight projects have been in existence for some time; these failures of the past will serve as examples of what not to do in the future. In one of the eight areas being considered (Fagunda), there is one of the most successful and financially sound cooperatives in Liberia. The success and profits result mainly from the trading activities of this cooperative. Some members are reluctant to work this land because the original irrigation

work was not completed before the Israelis had to leave the country for political reasons. Fagunda was intended to serve as a model for the farmers regarding improved yields from paddy rice. In the end, the reverse was true. This is why this most successful cooperative in the list of eight is hesitant to take over this project. However, the business manager of that cooperative has agreed to cooperate with the Ministry of Agriculture and become actively engaged in the support of the project by year-end 1979. With this background, attention is now directed to the impact this may have on the implementation and success of the Agricultural Cooperative Development Project.

First, the size and scope of the Fagunda project will place a greatly increased workload on the Ministry of Agriculture, Division of Cooperative (MOA/DC), and a task that will require technical skills not now in the Division including those of the expatriate advisors. Furthermore, at this stage the detailed planning for execution of a project of this nature has not been done. These problems are understood by Deputy Minister King and Director Campbell. There is agreement that additional personnel will be needed in the Cooperative Division and that the Agricultural Cooperative Development Project (ACDP) is not responsible for those aspects of AGRIMECO projects not considered cooperative in nature, for example, farm management, land surveys and land tenure. Deputy Minister King does indicate that it would be desirable that some of the Agricultural Cooperative Development Project funds be used to obtain the services of one or more consultants to help plan this project. This seems a reasonable request in view of the many purely cooperative functions that are likely to be involved.

Another external factor is the comprehensive Agricultural development Project slated to get underway in Nimba County in 1981. The project will be funded by West Germany and include expatriate Technicians. The Agricultural Cooperative Development Project can strengthen cooperatives in this county and thereby provide a sounder basis for the German project to build upon. This is a very similar project to that underway in Lofa County with World Bank, USAID and Ministry of Agriculture funds and expatriate technical inputs. Cooperative development is a major component of the German project. Nimba County is reported to produce one half or more of the agricultural produce in the country and already has several large cooperatives in operation. The Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperative Division, will need to examine its work plans in this county and develop a good working relationship with the personnel of the new project.

Important assumptions as listed in the logical framework of this project were examined and changes that have occurred are discussed. Otherwise they may be assumed to be as previously listed.

- a. The assumption that Ministry of Agriculture would increase the budget of the Cooperative Division has not taken place as of this date. The general feeling in government is to maintain vital services with no budget increases.
- b. The Government of Liberia appears to have strengthened its belief that cooperatives can help farmers to improve the marketing of their produce and to obtain higher returns.

Two important indicators are;

- Cooperatives in Lofa County have been designated as sole buying agents for the Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation.
- Two new major agricultural development projects (Bong and Nimba Counties) will have major cooperative components.
- The AGRIMECO projects are likely to be turned over to Cooperatives.
- See also the article titled, "AGRARIAN REVOLUTION (Attachment 'B') in the magazine African Affairs, which discusses cooperatives in Liberia.

C. The inability of the Ministry to offer attractive salaries creates some problems in the recruitment of able Liberian staff for the Cooperative Division. It may well be that some employees of the Cooperative Division are not at present working in the section that suits their talents and skills. Thus the Cooperative Division should consider evaluating each employee and placing him or her in a job slot where training and supervision will have a positive effect on their performance. The goal here is to utilize the potential of each employee based on a thorough knowledge of his or her skills. Assurances were received from Deputy Minister King and Acting Director Campbell that they would do everything possible towards solving this problem. In this connection, it should be noted that Mr. Campbell was appointed Acting Director of the Cooperative Division January 2, 1979. He has been in the Ministry of Agriculture for 17 years and has an overall knowledge of the

operations of the Cooperative Division. He is reported to be a capable administrator who works well with Deputy Minister King.

16. Inputs:

The contract between Ministry of Agriculture and ACDI in Article v, 5.1. (c) provided that in-country training costs were to be provided by the Government of Liberia, specifically from funds allocated to the Cooperative Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. There appears to have been some breakdown in communication on this clause and it has now been amended (1979) to allow these costs to be paid out of project commodities and local costs, Article VI, 6.1.

The problem with quality and quantity of personnel in Cooperative Division has been discussed in Section 15.

A shortage of motor bikes for field staff is frequently mentioned by Cooperative Division personnel, including the director and deputy director, and by the ACDI training advisor. At this immediate time the shortage does not appear to be a limiting factor because the field staff is in the beginning stages of training. After their initial training is completed this problem of transportation requires a solution; more bikes or, funds for travel will be required. It will be useless to train field staff and then not have them in constant contact with those they are to serve i.e., cooperative employees, boards of directors, and members.

It is expected that the three expatriate advisors will spend more of their time in the field with the cooperatives. Field contacts to date have proven highly useful in developing and carrying out the training programs. The expatriate financial advisor has devoted around 25 percent of his time to field contact work. It is expected that the other expatriate advisors will equal or exceed this percentage from here on.

Host country funds to maintain vehicles, Cooperative Division offices, and to provide office space and supplies need to be increased in future budgets.

Four Peace Corps Volunteers PCVs were called for in the project. Due to some coordination problems between USAID and Peace Corps, these PCVs were in the country one year ahead of project team's arrival and were reassigned to other projects. Some efforts are underway to renegotiate with Peace Corps for these PCVs. The original idea was to have two PCVs assigned to work with the Financial Management Unit in the Accounting Section. One Peace Corps Volunteer with a degree in communications would work with the Training Unit, and one with a degree in agricultural economics (marketing operation) with special training in produce grading and handling to assist the project leader in improving cooperatives in grading and handling.

It is suggested that the need for these Peace Corps Volunteers be re-examined and if still needed, efforts to obtain them be initiated.

17. OUTPUTS:

Each of the outputs listed in the logical framework are discussed here in terms of:

- a. progress
- b. future plans and
- c. observations as to the adequacy of progress and plans. Summary form is used and readers are encouraged to look for more detail in Attachment

A:

PROGRESS REPORT AND PLAN OF WORK, APRIL 1979

Progress

- "Establishment of a uniform system of bookkeeping, accounting, and audit"

The Financial Section of the Cooperative Division has completed the following preliminary activities necessary to the establishment of this system:

- a. Developed a work plan for the Audit Section.
- b. Begun the development of a Code of ethics for the Audit Section.
- c. Begun the development of a formal and detailed audit program and standardized audit work papers.
- d. Begun development of uniform method of presenting financial statements and audit comments to cooperative societies.
- e. Begun development and implementation of a simplified and standardized accounting system for cooperatives.

Future Plans

According to the project plan of work a standardized (uniform) accounting system for cooperatives and credit unions will be completed and implementation begun by end of October 1979. Work will continue on development and implementation of a uniform system of auditing and bookkeeping.

Observations

The activities of this section are broader in scope than outlined in the logical framework. The activities relate to the day-to-day activities of the Cooperative Division's Financial Section, such as making liquidity checks

on cooperatives who have received loans from the Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank (ACDB) (11 at this time), making annual audits & complete audits of the more active cooperatives and balance sheet audits of the smaller less active cooperatives, and making loan reviews and assisting in feasibility studies for capital loans requested from the Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank. Because the work of the Financial Section is broader in scope than record and bookkeeping and auditing, it is necessary for the expatriate advisor to engage in these activities. The performance of these tasks constitutes learning by doing - "on-the-job training". The size of the staff is not adequate to perform all these tasks in addition to the development and training on record and bookkeeping and accounting. Also, Deputy King and Mr. Campbell expressed concern that all members of this section were not being trained. This has been discussed with the expatriate advisor and the necessary steps taken to correct the present situation.

PROGRESS

- "Development and use of coops extension tools package"

The duties and responsibilities of the expatriate training advisor have undergone some changes. As is, the situation with the Financial Advisor the scope of work of the training advisor has been expanded because of the work priorities of the Cooperative Division. It has been necessary for this advisor to develop and institute an operational program for cooperative field officers. Training and supervision are major components of this program. His counterpart and other Monrovia based Cooperative Division employees are being trained to develop and supervise this program. The field officers are the trainers for

cooperative managers, key employees such as the buyers of produce, boards of directors and members. Because of the key role of cooperative field staff, it has been judged necessary to place their development and training ahead of the development of the "extension tools" packages. These audio visual aids programs will be produced during the course of the project. According to the training advisor, some preliminary work has been done on these programs with major attention planned after the training of field officers is further advanced. See page 36 of Attachment A for more details on the training plans for the next 8 months.

FUTURE PLANS

The training advisor and project leader are giving consideration to obtaining the services of one or more marketing technicians to develop and institute training for cooperative field officers on ways to improve the quality of produce delivered by members to the cooperatives, particularly cocoa, coffee, rice, and palm kernels. Attention will also be given to cooperative purchasing, handling and storage methods. This also relates to output, "Produce and marketing standards observed and understood by coop members.

OBSERVATIONS

An important way cooperatives can serve their members is to obtain higher returns for their produce. In Liberia, prices for cocoa, coffee and rice are set by the government. However, 50 percent or more of the farmers' produce is purchased at prices below the official price. Cooperatives can help their members by paying them the official price. Also, they

can help them to improve the quality of the produce they deliver to their cooperatives. The effort here is to teach the farmers how to improve their handling and marketing of produce, i.e. better methods to ferment and dry cocoa beans, and the importance of properly drying rice, improving harvesting and farm storage of produce prior to delivery to cooperatives.

A properly organized and operated cooperative should enable members to receive a higher percentage of the official LPMC prices than when they deliver their produce to private dealers. If this is to take place cooperatives have to provide superior services to members. One of these services is to show farmers how to improve the preparation of their produce for market. Field officers will be trained to help the cooperatives perform this service.

PROGRESS

- "Appraisal and Reform of Government of Liberia co-op laws and by-laws"

The Project Leader has made a preliminary study of the National Cooperative Act and concluded that more intensive study is required. If changes result from this, the by-laws of the Association will also require changes. See further comment on this in observation paragraph.

FUTURE PLANS

The Project Leader plans to select a service committee composed of key Cooperative Division personnel, representatives from the operating cooperatives, credit unions, and the Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank to work with him on this problem. It is expected that drafting assistance will be provided by the legal staff of the Government of Liberia.

OBSERVATIONS

At the present time there is no official registrar of cooperatives in Liberia. Such a person has to be appointed by the President. Also, the by-laws of the Associations are based on the ACT of 1930 and this ACT was revised in 1970 and 1976.

PROGRESS

- "Staffing pattern and job descriptions developed for Cooperatives and Cooperative Division:

This has not been accomplished as of this time. An organization chart has been drawn up and basic plans discussed with the Executive staff of the Cooperative Division.

FUTURE PLANS

Job descriptions for all Cooperative Division personnel will be prepared with target date of July 1, 1979.

OBSERVATIONS

Consideration should be given to the establishment of a marketing unit in the Cooperative Division. Such work is now being performed on an ad hoc basis in the Financial Management section.

PROGRESS

- "Cooperative Staffs, Boards of Directors and members begin training"

The trainees (cooperative field staff) are being trained now. When they have received sufficient training, they will require back-up support. The training section will provide this output.

FUTURE PLANS

It is expected that at least four cooperatives, approximately 40 directors (10 per cooperative) and 200 farmers, will begin receiving training during the next year with a rapid build up during the third year of the project.

OBSERVATIONS

This output is most vital to the success of the project. Much thought and care should go into the preparation and execution of this training. The output magnitude should be easily achieved, but a favorable impact is what is desired.

PROGRESS

- "Produced and marketing standards observed and understood by cooperative members."

The responsibility for establishing the standards is with the Government of Liberia Bureau of Standards in collaboration with Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation. The role of the cooperatives is to acquaint members with these standards and to get them to accept them. The Cooperative Division will work with Liberia Produce Marketing Corporation to get some rudimentary standards established and to acquaint the cooperatives with them. This idea has been discussed in some detail in output, "Development and use of coops extension tools package," and will not be repeated here.

PROGRESS

- "Establishment of a cooperative information network"

This is not yet under way.

FUTURE PLANS

During the coming months the Training unit will work towards producing a newsletter and pamphlet for the Cooperative Division.

OBSERVATIONS

The network as outlined in the logical framework is intended to serve all cooperatives, including the credit unions. In view of this, it is suggested that in preparing the newsletter this objective be observed. The pamphlet is to be prepared primarily for the use of Cooperative Division staff. Consideration might be given to the inclusion of radio broadcast as a part of the network.

PROGRESS

- "Establishment of a Ministry of Agriculture non-audit cooperative visitation program"

This is being done by the field staff of the Cooperative Division.

In addition the Financial Management unit is conducting unannounced visits to some of the cooperatives to examine their financial operations. Ten visits have occurred. Approximately 50 visits are scheduled for 1980.

FUTURE PLANS

These are expected to continue indefinitely.

OBSERVATIONS

There is a need to strengthen the field staff in order that they can effectively serve the cooperatives and members.

PROGRESS

- "Establishment and use of cooperatives capital expenditures and financial management advisory service"

FUTURE PLANS

The project leader should examine this output and decide how it can best be provided by the Cooperative Division. At the same time, consideration should be given to how the Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank will supply its need for this type of service relative to its capital loans. There should be a close working relationship between the Cooperative Division and Agricultural Cooperative Development Bank on this output.

OBSERVATIONS

There is already a need for this output as evidence by the fact that the Financial Management Unit is providing this service, though on an ad hoc basis. As cooperatives grow their needs for facilities, equipment, machinery and other items requiring capital will surely increase. They will need help to make the analysis that should precede the decisions to make the expenditures.

PROGRESS

"Improvement of the LCUNA management's capacity to service small farmer and cooperatives' needs."

LCUNA appears to be making considerable progress in training its staff and in its objective to establish an increased number of credit unions to serve urban and rural members. Three major training programs have been conducted by LCUNA since September of 1978. Back-up support in terms of funds, a vehicle, and technical assistance have been provided to LCUNA by ACDI. An audit was conducted of LCUNA funds by the Financial Management unit of the Cooperative Division. LCUNA reports significant progress on establishing 10 - 12 credit unions in various locations throughout Liberia.

FUTURE PLANS

The Cooperative Division will continue to work with LCUNA.

OBSERVATIONS

Credit unions are often helpful in training farmers as to what cooperatives are about. They can be stepping stones to full scale agricultural cooperatives.

PROGRESS

- "Prepare an analysis of issues related to achieving small farmer participation in an expanded Liberian cooperative system and of its financial and managerial aspects. This Assessment will consider needs and reactions of present and

potential cooperative members, and experiences gained during early efforts to provide Ministry of Agriculture services to the currently operational cooperatives!"

This output is quoted from the contract rather than from the unclear wording in the Logical Framework. This study is not yet underway.

FUTURE PLANS

Considerable thought has been given to this output by the expatriate team. Based on this the Project leader will ask the training advisor to prepare a request for a qualified consultant to make this study with such assistance as may be required from the Cooperative Division.

OBSERVATIONS

Emphasis in this study will be on examining the motivation of the small farmer to belong to cooperatives and to whether he can actively participate in these organizations in a meaningful and effective way. The tribal customs and their effect on cooperative members will need to be examined. As a result of this study more of what can be logically expected of cooperatives in serving small farmers should result. On the assumption that the study will show that cooperatives can effectively serve small farmers, the results should also provide some guidelines as to how cooperatives can most effectively perform this task. Considerable thought and care should go into drafting the specification for this study. It is also hoped that this study would provide the Training unit with information and ideas related to its activities.

OTHER OUTPUTS

The project has produced other outputs not specified in the logical framework.

The most significant of these are outlined here:

- a. Assisted a group of pig farmers to develop by-laws and organize a pig breeder cooperative in Bong County.
- b. Made arrangement for a training course run by the Plunkett Foundation and sponsored by the Overseas Development Ministry (UK). This course will be held from mid-August to mid- September. This is a follow-up to a course conducted by this Foundation last year shortly after the project started.
- c. Assisted in three surveys:
 - (1) the Fagunda Rice Project,
 - (2) the Maryland Rubber Farmers Society, and
 - (3) a produce marketing survey in Nimba County.

FUTURE PLANS

- A. Help with organization and development of the newly formed Liberian National Federation of Cooperative Societies.
- B. Develop a section within the Cooperative Division capable of organizing and supervising the Cooperative Group Farm Mechanization Project. See further explanation in section 15 External Factors of this report.

PURPOSE:

The purpose is "to foster development of an effectively structure and functioning agricultural cooperative system in Liberia,

- a) by installing adequate MOA services to currently operational cooperatives of small farmers,
- b) by concurrently analyzing issues basic to expansion and evolution of the Cooperative System, and
- c) by using the conclusions in planning for the projects' second (Co-op expansion) phase".

It is too early (project in operation one year) to evaluate the impact of this project on conditions that can be verified as having achieved project purpose. The thrust of this first year's evaluation has been on determining if inputs and outputs are occurring as planned, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. Some measurable achievement should be expected at the end of second year, with more expected after 3 years (end of project). The EOP conditions are still considered adequate. No shortfalls with respect to casual linkage between outputs purpose or external factors are noted here.

19. GOAL/SUB GOAL:

"Increasing agricultural productivity and economic benefit for rural households engaged in smallscale agricultural production."

It is too early to make an impact on goal achievement evaluation of this project. Also it should be noted that there are two additional major cooperative development projects presently underway in Liberia, the Lofa

and Bong County projects with two others due to get underway this year (see Section 15 of this report for details). These developments will greatly complicate the evaluation of goal achievement due to this project. Coordination of the cooperative projects is being done.

20. Beneficiaries:

The initial (direct) beneficiaries will be the staff of Cooperative Division, employees and members of existing cooperatives including boards of directors. The training received by these initial beneficiaries will improve existing cooperatives and farmer members will receive a greater return on his marketed produce, access to modern inputs and improved farm support services. As this happens cooperatives will increase their influence in local, intermediate, and central markets. More cooperatives will come into existence and an increased number of farmers will be helped as members. This development will impact of proprietary buyers and traders and they will be forced to provide better prices and services to small farmers. Thus, either through replication of cooperative societies or competitive impact all Liberian farmers will be benefitted.

It should be noted that in Liberia many women are farmers and members of cooperatives. As such they are deemed beneficiaries. Cooperatives also offer the promise of speeding up the use of machinery to relieve women of some of the drudgery they are accustomed to. Small rice mills eliminate one such arduous task - beating rice. Women work in the fields, particularly in swamp rice cultivation with hand hoes. Power tillers will relieve them of some of their backbreaking labors. Improved farm incomes will help women as members of households.

Liberia's credit union movement is also a beneficiary of this project.

Initial beneficiaries are the staff of the credit Union federation (referred to as LCUNA) and the membership (over 6,189 persons) of the existing 22 credit unions (as of date project was planned in 1976).

Through training staff and members credit unions will become more effective and more savings will occur. More funds will be available for loans. As credit unions improve, more will be organized.

Including members of cooperatives and of credit unions, the project was projected to impact on close to 70,000 persons on basis of each member being a head of household consisting of five members.

The results of this project, be they favorable or unfavorable, should be useful in designing, and evaluating cooperative development projects for other LDCS.

21. UNPLANNED EFFECTS:

No unplanned effects have been noted that can be shown to have resulted from this project.

22. LESSONS LEARNED:

It is early to make other than some general comments about development strategy based on the operation of this project. One such comment is that in a project such as this, one where the major impact is to be on farmers, it is most advisable to spend considerable time in the field early on in the project in order to learn first hand problems.

Another suggestion, don't be hesitant to propose changes in the project provided you are convinced some of the inputs, outputs, purpose, etc are not likely to happen as planned. The earlier these matters are worked out the better the prospects for a successful project. Careful planning and targeting of day to day operations is time well spent. Decide early the institutions in a country that are most important to successful execution of project and develop good working relationships with them.

On evaluation methodology begin early to establish base line data. Advisors should become familiar with the evaluation process at the outset of the project. Project leader should develop his own plan to evaluate progress. Collect and keep information that will be useful when time comes for evaluation of project by USAID.

23. SPECIAL COMMENTS OR REMARKS:

See Attachments A and B