

O.I.C. INTERNATIONAL, INC.

Report to USAID
Field Visit of Department Director
Planning and Program Development
November 1 - December 12, 1978

OIC -

Cynthia D. Gilliam
Director, Planning & Program Development

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Part I: Introduction

This report is intended to relate the important task activities completed and major objectives attained during the course of the six week field visit of the Department Director to the six OICI country projects - Lesotho, Togo, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and The Gambia.

The modus operandi normally followed in each country was to:

- (1) meet with the OICI Technical Cooperation Team (TCT); the local Board of Directors, the local program staff and the local AID Mission;
- (2) tour the program's administrative offices and training facilities and talk with the students;
- (3) when necessary, hold discussions with local Government officials concerned with the operation of the local program.

Having received copies of the Department Director's proposed Scope of Work well in advance of her arrival, the local programs had in most cases, prepared a schedule of activities to facilitate the accomplishment of the objectives of the visit. (See Scope of Work for Field Visit of Cynthia D. Gilliam, Director of Planning and Program Development -- OICI - November 1 - December 12, 1978). As would be expected, the major issues to be dealt with differed significantly among programs depending upon its age and stage of development.

Finally, it is expected that this report will convey an objective assessment of the overall status of each field program at the onset of the 1979 fiscal year.

Part II. Report of Accomplishments and Findings

A. Lesotho

Consistent with the stated objectives of the visit the major activities completed were:

- (1) clarification and agreement to terms and effective dates of the OICI-GOL Memorandum of Agreement with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of Education, and the Central Planning and Development Office. Since new officials are now occupying positions of previous signatories to the Agreement, it was important that the original intent and spirit of the Agreement be conveyed by the OICI representatives in order to secure continued Government cooperation in its implementation;
- (2) preparation of the local program budget requirements for the second project year, i.e., February 15, 1979 to February 14, 1980; and
- (3) completion of a revised project performance tracking (PPT) system for the second twelve months of operation.

In addition to scheduled meetings on the prepared itinerary, numerous discussions were held with the TCT and local staff to acquire information on procurement and other technical backstopping concerns.

Program Concerns:

The major programmatic issues were discussed during meetings with the individual parties concerned. Following are summaries of the major meetings held.

Meeting with Mr. Simon Mokete - Director, Technical and Vocational Education - Ministry of Education and Principal of Lerotholi Technical Institute (LTI).

Mr. Mokete, a member of the Lesotho OIC Board of Directors, reported that in the interim period between the completion of the OICI project feasibility study (December 1975) and the arrival of the OICI Advisory Team (April 1978), he restructured the LTI Industrial Arts program to fit more easily into the OIC scheme of operations. The students presently enrolled in the program will become part of the Lesotho OIC's first group of trainees. Four technical instructors will be seconded to Lesotho OIC to work with the OICI Building Trades Specialist. (Note: only three were originally requested). Three classroom/workshops and additional spaces for feeder classrooms and instructor offices will be turned over to Lesotho OIC including existing equipment and furnishings. Finally, he requested that OICI consider constructing six (6) houses for the Government of Lesotho during the life of the project.

It was explained to Mr. Mokete that OICI does not fund housing construction, only manpower training programs and related business enterprises.

Meeting with Mr. O. M. Seheri - Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Education.

The focus of discussion during this meeting was the OICI - GOL Memorandum of Agreement and the support commitments expected from the Ministry of Education. It was agreed that the Ministry would provide Lesotho OIC with the following items:

- (1) the background and present status of the four LTI instructors being seconded to LOIC;
- (2) a detailed inventory listing of the shop equipment being turned over to LOIC; and
- (3) a specification of the physical facilities to be occupied by LOIC.

It was further agreed that the Ministry would prepare a letter ceding the indicated facilities, equipment and instructors to the LOIC project, as well as an agreement to assign 12 student interns from the National Teacher Training College (NTTC) to LOIC for counterpart training during the life of the project.

Meeting with Hon. Mooki Malapo - Minister of Commerce and
Industry, Labor, Mines and Tourism.

Initially, Mrs. M. Monyane, Deputy Permanent Secretary,

briefed the Minister on the problems and progress of the LOIC project. She emphasized (with apologies) the inability of the GOL to honor its prior commitment to provide six (6) houses for TCT and sixteen (16) local counterparts from NTTC. (Actually, GOL has now provided three (3) houses for TCT at R38 per month each). The problem with NTTC occurred because GOL mistakenly believed that the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was referring to the donation of 16 part-time instructors. It was explained that the proposal called for the training of twelve (12) student intake from NTTC not part-time instructors and that problem was resolved forthwith.

Minister Malapo noted that the Prime Minister (H. E. Leabua Jonathan) was especially interested in having this program succeed and for this reason had placed the LOIC project under Commerce and Industry.

Some unique aspects of the program design were clarified for the Minister, after which he expressed his full and sincere support for the program.

It was finally agreed that Mr. Monyane would have a follow-up meeting with the Department Director, Program Advisor, and Program Director to draft an updated version of the MOA.

In the course of the follow-up meeting with Mrs. Monyane, the following items were resolved:

- (1) Status of Work Permits for all TCT. (All the paperwork has been completed and the permits will be issued, however, we were informed that work permits are not actually required of expatriates working for a legally sponsored agency of GOL.)
- (2) Status of residence and multiple entry visas for TCT. (All have been granted except for Bondi who has only a single entry visa.)
- (3) Status of tax and duty-free privileges. (This matter was still on request but we were assured that it would be received shortly as all these amenities are granted automatically to a "legally sponsored" project such as LOIC.)
- (4) Status of housing for six (6) TCT. (GOL provided three (3) houses and three (3) are being rented from private owners. Maintenance of all GOL houses are the sole responsibility of GOL, however, utility costs are to be borne by the occupant.)
- (5) Status of counterparts to be seconded by GOL. (Briefly, all Government counterparts mentioned in the project proposal will be provided except the two (2) requested from the Ministry of Works due to the closing of its Technician Training School. The assignment of counterparts is to begin in the second project year, starting February 15, 1979.)

- (6) Status of local salaries to be paid by OICI. (Mrs. Monyane reported that since 1975 civil service salaries have been increased twice thus rendering the salaries quoted in the proposal document obsolete.)
- (7) Status of local Board of Directors. (The present Board has only six (6) members. It is planned to expand the Board to include representatives from various Ministries or Departments concerned with the project; i.e., Central Planning Office; National Manpower Development Office; Ministry of Rural Development, etc.)
- (8) Status of financial contributions of GOL. The Government was not required to make a cash contribution during the first year; however, the in-kind contributions will be quantified to show the cash value of the facilities, equipment and services provided to the project. Lesotho OIC will be included in the GOL budget for the second year contribution amounting to 10% of local operating costs only.

Meeting with Mr. T. E. Khechane, Mr. C. L. Doggett and Mrs. M. Makhakhe of Central Planning Office (CPO).

Other attendees:

Mrs. M. Monyane, Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Mr. S. Mokete - Lerotholi Technical Institute. (LTI).

This final meeting of the week was chaired by Mrs. Monyane who reiterated the issues pertaining to clarification of the terms and intent of the original Memorandum of Agreement and expressed her view that now Commerce and Industry fully appreciates the responsibility of the project and is committed to carrying it out.

Mr. Mokete reported that the situation had appeared quite stagnant a few weeks earlier, but in the period since, office space has been made available to the program and staff development was proceeding apace. He allowed that although new students had been admitted in August, (a matter of no little concern to the Program Advisor) when LOIC takes over the designated LTI facilities in January, these students can then be accommodated in any manner that LOIC deems appropriate.

The CPO representatives, it seems, were charged only to settle the issue of the effective dates of the Memorandum of Agreement. It was agreed that the Memorandum of Agreement between OICI and GOL be effective from February 15, 1978 to February 14, 1983 to coincide with the period of the Grant Agreement.

Summary

Due to the high caliber and efficiency of the officials in the Government of Lesotho, as well as local program staff, it would appear that as long as the present atmosphere of cooperation continues, the Lesotho OIC project has a high probability of success based on its present design. There is at present no anticipated program changes although the Minister of Commerce and Industry did informally request that OICI explore the possibility of adding a course in sheet metal to the LOIC vocational training program. The budget appears sufficient for the five year period barring any unforeseen changes in the local economy or the currency values.

B. Togo

The major issues dealt with during the week in Togo included;

- (1) adequacy of the FY 79 Budget;
- (2) expansion and reactivation of the local Board of Directors;
- (3) various program-related procurement problems; and
- (4) the project's relationship with the local community.

Budget Issues:

The major portion of time was spent in delineating the basic and most crucial budgetary needs for this fiscal year and reviewing the amount and purpose of funds expended. The farm is presently not producing enough crops to be self-sufficient in food for both trainees and animals, due largely to the shortness of the rainy season.

In addition, the program is anticipating revenues of only \$34,080 compared to the \$80,333 included in our April 1978 budget submission to AID, thus bringing about an automatic shortfall of \$46,253.

At my request, the TCT staff (mainly the Program Advisor and Finance Officer, with inputs from the Farm Manager and Animal Specialist) revised their budget projections downward to include the basic minimum funds required to operate the project and to meet the program objectives of the Grant Agreement. The revised budget does not include the costs of a D-6 type bulldozer or a Feeder Counseling Specialist, both essential to the achievement of our overall program goals.

The bottom line showed that the program would be facing a minimum deficit of approximately \$30,000. If other needed items, such as the bulldozer are included, the deficit amount increases proportionately. Additional funds required would then be in the area of \$200,000.

The staff was advised that their inputs would be seriously considered at Central Office, and a strategy developed to resolve the current fiscal difficulty.

TCT - Local Staff Concerns:

According to the new (two months at post) Program Advisor, there was an observable lack of cooperation between the OICI Advisory Staff and the local counterparts. Lines of communication and authority were obscured, ineffective, and in places, nonexistent. Morale was low and there was a strong division between the "Lome staff" and the "Notse staff". The local Board of Directors had just been restructured and expanded but was still to be tested in terms of commitment and action. Definitely this was a classic situation for intervention by a change agent, and I was reassured by the report of the Program Advisor that one of his managerial strengths was in the implementation of change. During the week's meetings, the following changes were discussed and agreed upon:

- (1) the temporary assumption of line authority by the TCT Advisors;
- (2) the reduction and simultaneous restructuring of local staff slots;
- (3) the initiation of a system for detailed data collection;
- (4) the institution of an accountability system regarding performance objectives.

The above initiatives were discussed with the local Board Chairman who expressed unconditional support for, and commitment to, enforcement of these changes. To give further evidence of his endorsement, the Board Chairman met jointly with the Program Advisor, Program

Director and Fiscal/Administrative Officer to announce and set in motion the process for change.

Program Concerns:

The programmatic issues discussed included:

- (1) delayed training and production activities resulting from nine (9) to twelve (12) month delays in shipment of commodities ordered. Recommendations for expediting procurement area ranged from the granting of more flexibility locally in the selection of shipping agents to increased follow-up by Central Office to update the program at various stages of the procurement process. (A case in point, shipments which come into Lome port do not always go to SOEM but may go to any shipping agent, thus requiring weeks to locate and claim, especially if improperly addressed.)
- (2) the present constraint to training and production caused by the lack of adequately cleared land. There are 120 acres of cleared farm land of the original 300 acres donated to the project. Of the remaining 180 acres, 60 are partially cleared and could be used for pasture.
- (3) the initiation of placement and follow-up services for the first group of program graduates. As typical OIC data collecting processes were not followed during the screening and intake of the initial group of students,

the present staff have little idea of the expectations of the trainees regarding preferred placements. It was assumed that all but a few of the trainees would return to their home district to set up small farms with guaranteed credit from the Agricultural Bank and OICI assistance in land clearing, if needed. But currently, there is no mechanism in place to channel loans to OIC Togo graduates, (though promises have been made by the Bank Director) and there is no bulldozer at the project site to clear land. Surely, the purchase of a bulldozer would ease the problems addressed here and in Item #2.

- (4) assignment of Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV's). Currently, there is an Agricultural Engineer to assist the Farm Manager with mechanics work while freeing the Farm Manager to concentrate more fully on overall daily operation of the farm. Two other PCV's, a Farm Business Manager and an Agricultural Extension Worker were in language training at the time and were expected to report in December. It was intended that the former would set up an accounting system and financial records for the production farm, and that the latter would be utilized to follow-up on program graduates. The program had to provide furnished housing and refrigerators for the PCV's who would be living in Notse. The concern here is keeping

the image of OIC in Togo separate from that of Peace Corps, which has become increasingly politicized both abroad and in the United States.

- (5) continuing maintenance of residential program. The current budget level has aroused concern about the availability of funds to pay for food for the trainees. One recommendation is that the project set aside acreage for the cultivation of rice if the water requirements can be met. The staple diet of the trainees is rice, all of which is presently being purchased on the local market.
- (6) need to increase efficiency of farm operations. Use and maintenance of vehicles and other farm commodities have to be carefully scrutinized and controlled until the true cost of operating the farm can be ascertained. This will be accomplished through increased documentation and greater staff accountability.
- (7) TCT need to receive periodic updated catalogs and brochures of farm equipment in order to be more knowledgeable when preparing requisitions.

Farm Visit:

Two trips were made to the project farm at Notse during which the focus of attention was on the following related questions:

- what has to be done and what does it cost?
- what items have to be replaced or added for the training unit? ... the production unit?
- what are the most efficient means of doing what has to be done?

In discussion with the program staff at the farm, these inputs were gathered:

- (1) there is no need to replace any farm equipment, but replacement parts (mostly Ford Motor Company) will be required for the majority of items.
- (2) a rotary tiller attachment is needed for each of ten (10) motorized cultivators. Due to underground roots, this equipment cannot be used until attachments are received. The status of the requisition could not be determined at the time.
- (3) new fencing has to be installed to replace temporary fencing of local materials. Local materials do not hold up more than 1 or 2 seasons due to the climate and wear and tear of the animals.
- (4) an additional water storage facility is needed for the bathhouse.
- (5) an equipment storage shed will be built with an enclosed section for farm mechanic workshop.
- (6) another feed storage building is needed, though the possibility of getting storage bins donated from SOTEX is being explored. Only costs for transporting the storage bins.

- (7) two (2) disc plows are needed - (have been ordered), but status of purchase or shipment was not available. Up to the present, the program has been relying on SORAD to lend disc plows on an as needed basis.
- (8) the services of a bulldozer will be required for several days to excavate the lagoons planned to enhance the water supply for animals.
- (9) there is a need to purchase an additional 25 goats. No sheep have been bought as of yet, but will be purchased in FY 79 providing funds are available.
- (10) a \$10,000 investment could result in a doubling of the present hog population within one (1) year. Present projections are for 600 hogs by December 1979.
- (11) a water tank in the swine area would provide the pressure needed to clean the pigs and prevent casual infections.
- (12) potable water facilities are needed for hogs in each of four pastures presently being set up.
- (13) there is an area of approximately 75 acres that could be made useable for pasture by having the trees pushed down and burned.
- (14) the production of rabbits as a source of food for the trainees and for sale on the local market should be investigated and if feasible, approved for action.
- (15) a videotape system would be quite useful in all areas of training and would enable more productive use of time spent indoors during the rainy season and in the evening.

The above items were deemed crucial to the successful implementation of the project at this stage, however, the budgetary implications posed by most items have not been allowed for in the funding for this project year. This is an area which will require careful and prompt follow-up by Central Office.

Board of Directors:

- (1) The local Board has given full support to the new Program Advisor to carry out recommended actions necessary to the achievement of program objectives.
- (2) Appropriate members of the Board will be increasingly utilized to assist in customs clearances, immigration matters and other administrative liaison with GOT officials.
- (3) The Board plans to arrange a loan from the bank for the purchase of a \$6,000 replacement auto. Funds from the local production revenue will be utilized for a down payment, and installment payments over a period of eighteen (18) months.

Meeting with Ms. Irene Petty, Consultant, National Council of Negro Women - NCNW (International Division).

Ms. Petty and Ms. Stephanie Dailey were, at the time of my visit, gathering data and negotiating with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to "nail down" the specifics of the proposed NCNW project to benefit family life in Togo. Based on their results, they were convinced of the soundness of locating their project at the OIC Togo - Notse farm site. It was planned that they would complete their proposal (for training of women in vegetable growing and canning) during January 1979 and submit to AID/W by February 1979. It is intended that project implementation begin as early as July 1979.

Summary

My overall impression of OIC Togo was of a project at a very crucial stage of transition. A number of misjudgments have been made in this project which the program planners and project administrators can and should learn from. One of the most important is the need for constant and meaningful follow-up and oversight. The revised project design with the built-in pilot phase was a sound design, only it was either adhered to very strictly in some cases, or not at all in others. We should also remember that timing is very important in agricultural projects and we must make every effort to coordinate our program and financial planning with the actual operational needs of the project. Since the major problem affecting the project now is the inadequate budget, I advised the Program Advisor of three options which would be explored after my return to the Central Office:

Option A: request additional funds from AID to meet program needs.

Options B: request that the present 15-month budget be reduced to 12-month period with no additional obligation of funds.

Option C: raise funds (OICI and local program) from private sources to cover projected deficit, if feasible within the designated time frame.

Finally, we must make some critical decisions about where we are going with the project and we should closely consider one aspect that, as a result of continuous upheavals, has slipped to a very low priority, i.e., the needs of the trainees. If we continue to focus on the most effective means of delivering needed services to them, I believe the correct actions will be taken regarding project development.

C. Ghana

The main objectives accomplished during the visit to the Ghana project were:

- (1) the presentation of the FY 79 budget;
- (2) gathering of local input to determine the needs for a third TCT slot;
- (3) a review of the local program PPT's;
- (4) tours of the Takoradi and Kumasi OICs; and
- (5) review of procurement concerns.

A schedule of activities for the visit had been scheduled prior to arrival to include separate visits to the Accra, Kumasi and Takoradi centers as well as the National Office Headquarters in Accra. Meetings were held with all program staffs at each of the sites, except Accra OIC where a discussion was held with the Programme Manager only.

Meeting with National Office Staff:

The FY 79 budget was discussed with the Programme Advisor and National Executive Director, who agreed that there were sufficient allocations for the project year. Though the cedi had been recently devalued, the expenditures had been projected in terms of dollars and therefore, more cedis would be available for spending.

However, the following requests were made at an all-staff meeting:

- (1) that a memo be sent from Central spelling out the present policy on reporting procedures especially regarding combined financial/program reports;
- (2) that a Foundation Resource list be sent to National Office to facilitate fund-raising efforts;
- (3) that Central reconsider their request for additional MIS forms. Problem - there is presently no paper in Ghana upon which to print their own forms;
- (4) that Procurement try to identify U. S. companies who manufacture equipment and parts for the export market; and
- (5) that the continued problem with vendors who do not send bills of lading be investigated. Suggestion - if the pertinent information from the bill of lading were cabled from Central at least two weeks ahead, the clearing process can be initiated before the equipment arrives.

Kumasi:

There were ongoing training activities in secretarial science, and the building trades in spite of several staff vacancies and a lack of consumable materials for demonstration purposes. The facilities were clean and well kept, though somewhat still incomplete. The fact that student motivation and morale were high can be attributed to the dedication of the local instructors and management. At all all-staff meeting, several of the instructors complained about long hours, lack of training materials, and poor pay. However, it was discovered that one of the most dissatisfied instructors was a new employee (3 weeks) who had not yet received any pre-service or in-service training in OIC philosophy, methods or techniques.

Takoradi:

This program offered training in auto body and auto mechanics as well as building trades, and secretarial science. Although sharing quarters with firemen and fire engines, the trainees were very busy working on projects or participating in classroom drills.

The National Executive Director presided over a meeting with the Takoradi staff at which numerous issues were discussed regarding support from the National Office. They needed supplies from the local market as well as financial reimbursements for programme operations. Since the original Programme Manager had recently resigned, the Training Manager was serving as Acting Programme Manager.

The Board Chairman hosted an evening dinner at which several founding members of the community board were introduced. Regarding the status of the program's permanent facilities, the Board Chairman reported that the firemen would be moving into their new stationhouse by the end of January 1979, thus finally allowing the program to take over the entire existing structure and make appropriate renovations for additional classroom space.

Meeting with the National Board Chairman:

The major topic of discussion was the failure of the National Office to forward the required monthly reports to OICI Central on a regular basis. At the time of the meeting, Ghana OIC had

not sent any reports to the Central Office since June 1978. Since the program had been warned that failure to submit reports might result in the suspension of reimbursements, the Board Chairman treated the matter quite seriously, and promised immediate compliance.

The other area of discussion focused on recruitment for a third TCT member for OIC Ghana. The Board Chairman argued very cogently that an "economic developer" would better fit the present technical assistance needs of the program than any other expert. The Chairman additionally forwarded a letter to the Executive Director requesting the assistance of a business development expert.

Concerning the status of plans for the permanent training center in Accra, the Board Chairman allowed that matters were proceeding quite slowly due perhaps to the means utilized by the Board to get the architectural plans completed. He further reported that the initial set of building plans submitted to the local AID Mission was returned with a request for more structural specifications and a simpler design.

The Board Chairman finally expressed a desire for OICI to consider funding a Phase III for OIC Ghana because of their anticipated inability to become completely self-supporting by September 1980, due to the depressed state of the Ghanaian economy.

Summary

Although a number of small problems were ascertained, each of the training centers seem to be operating fairly smoothly and in fact the demand for OIC Ghana graduates seems undiminished from earlier years. There has occurred, however, a loosening of the planned Ghana OIC "network". The National Office goals can be more closely linked to those of the local programs.

The National Office presently has limited personnel resources to serve the growing needs of the Kumasi and Takoradi Centers, yet is planning to start a new program in Kpandu in the near future. The venture seems not well conceived when one considers the problems that have to be resolved at the existing centers; the present staff vacancies with the concomitant need to train replacements; and the present difficulties of meeting local fund-raising goals.

The Ghana project has had an admirable record over the past six (6) years and will continue to offer quality training if expansion goals are balanced with available and expected resources, both human and financial.

D. Liberia

The major activities completed during the visit to this project include:

- (1) presentation and interpretation of the FY 79 budget;
- (2) preparation of a PPT for FY 79;
- (3) inspection of the Klay and Monrovia facilities;
- (4) reviews of program concerns; and
- (5) meetings with USAID.

Budget:

The FY 79 budget was formally presented at a meeting of the Board of Directors' Finance Committee, though prior to the meeting it had been submitted to the Program Advisor, Program Director and Finance Specialist. Of uppermost concern to the Finance Committee was:

- (1) the need for the local program to comply with the terms of the OICI-LOIC Memorandum of Agreement; and
- (2) the need to secure a matching Government contribution from the Ministry of Finance.

It is not expected that the project will experience any budgetary shortfall this year. However, it was pointed out to the Board that the present high staffing level (47) was able to be funded this year only because of substantial residual amounts from the first year and they should expect to have to absorb some of these salaries before the end of the project. The cost reimbursement system of

funding was explained to the Board so they could be aware of some constraints faced by the Central Office. The Board members were very quick to grasp the information and seemed satisfied with the budget review process.

Program Concerns:

Several meetings were held with local and TCT staff to review pertinent programmatic issues. Some of the most salient concerns were in the area of personnel recruitment and selection and interpretation of the OICI-GOL Memorandum of Agreement. Although several weeks behind schedule in training due to the relocation from Providence Baptist Church to the Sinkor facility, the program had actually accomplished nearly all of its first year objectives. At the final meeting with all of the TCT; these items were discussed:

- (1) Monthly Report Submissions. The Program Advisor was directed to cease the preparation of quarterly reports and to begin from the month of October to submit reports on a regular monthly basis.
- (2) MIS Forms. The Finance Officer was requested to do a comparative cost analysis to determine the desirableness of local printing of MIS forms vs. shipment of forms from the U. S. to Liberia.
- (3) Procurement Policy and Procedures. The TCT were advised that the Planning Department will provide greater assistance in the processing of purchase requisitions at Central in order to build-in a high level of quality

control; and to provide more intensive follow-up on the status of outstanding requisitions and delayed shipments.

- (4) Critical Program Documents. The TCT were advised that OICI required on file at Central Office a copy of each of the following:
- (a) Incorporation Papers of LOIC, inclusive of By-Laws.
 - (b) Memorandum of Agreement with Government of Liberia.
 - (c) Memorandum of Agreement with the LOIC Board.
 - (d) LOIC-Approved Personnel Policies and Procedures as well as Job Descriptions for local positions.
 - (e) Local Finance/Administration Guidelines and Procedures.
 - (f) Curricula for Feeder, ET/MD, Automotive Skills, Air Conditioning/Refrigeration, and Building Trades.
(The Program Advisor was directed to submit all curricula by January 31, 1979.)
- (5) MIS Implementation. The Program Advisor agreed to divide responsibility for MIS record keeping between the fiscal office and student services. Up to now, the finance office had analyzed and maintained program as well as fiscal records.
- (6) ET/MD Target Group. The ET/MD Advisor was directed to adhere to the Program Design in trainee selection and recruitment. After ascertaining that many of the first group of ET/MD trainees did not meet the precise specifications of the proposal, i.e., high school leavers, currently employed or in business, or prospective entrepreneur with access to capital, it was agreed that the ET/MD Advisor would utilize resources of various cooperating Ministries to identify the desirable target group for enrollment into the program, and to assist in eventual placement efforts.

- (7) Vocational Training. Completed curricula were not yet available for any of the courses offered at Klay. (See Item #4). The appropriate target group had been identified and all courses had capacity enrollment.
- (8) Role of TCT. The TCT staff were advised that their roles should bear a direct relationship to their job descriptions. Accordingly, individual job expectations or roles should be consistent with the contractual agreement between the individual concerned and OICI. Any questions on OICI policy were to be directed to the Central Office.

Klay:

A half-day tour of the Klay campus gave tangible evidence of the amount of work accomplished by the trainees during the preceding two months. The grounds were clean; lawns cut; buildings white-washed; and in process of being equipped with new tools and machinery. Meetings were convened with the students as well as the local program staff to ascertain their level of morale and motivation as well as their needs. Some issues discussed:

- (1) the logistical difficulties that occurred during the entire rainy season when the road between Klay and Monrovia becomes entirely impassable. Increased funds are needed prior to that time to enable stocking of necessary food and medical supplies for trainees.

- (2) adequate housing for local staff in Klay. There are presently an insufficient number of units for staff to be housed at Klay, although there are plans to transform single dwellings into double units. Alternative locations must be secured in and around Klay. However, a housing shortage in the entire area has prevented exercising this option.
- (3) need for more oversight of project's central administration. The Klay staff felt that more visits should be made by Monrovia staff to the campus, especially those involved in the screening and intake for Feeder. It was also requested that at least one TCT member be housed at Klay.

One Board member accompanied us on the trip to Klay and her intense interest in and enthusiastic support for the project activities was representative of the dedication and commitment exhibited by all Board members (about 12) who attended the November meeting.

Meeting with USAID:

Two meetings were held with the Deputy Director of the local Mission, Mr. Edward Anderson, and the Program Officer, Noel Marsh. The Mission officials expressed a high regard for the progress of the project so far. Though neither had visited the Klay campus, Mr. Anderson had attended the graduation of the first Feeder class. They expressed an interest in being kept informed on the progress of the project and offered to assist in any way feasible when the occasion required.

Summary

With regard to expected accomplishments, this project has had a very good first year. They are only one month behind the original PPT schedule and will have caught up by the end of the year, once OJT and placements for the first group of trainees begin.

The local staff seems well qualified and in some cases, this may allow for the early phase-out of TCT positions such as Building Trades or Feeder/Counseling Specialist. Finally, it should be noted that there is presently a careful balance between Government and community control of the project, which is benefitting from the generous support provided by both.

E. Sierra Leone

Consistent with the objectives stated in the Scope of Work, the following major tasks were completed during the week in Sierra Leone:

- (1) review of the FY 79 budget;
- (2) review of the PPT for FY 79;
- (3) review of the economic development venture;
- (4) inspection of Bo and Freetown offices and training center; and
- (5) explanation of revised Personnel Policies.

Budget:

The approved budget for this project was presented to the entire local Board of Directors during their regular quarterly meeting held in Bo. It was necessary first to clear up a misconception of the local Director that TCT, Central and local program funds could be intermingled at will. What was required then, was a lengthy explanation of the funding and grant administration process followed by OICI. It was pointed out to the Board that the current Memorandum of Agreement stipulated the need to comply with all regulations germane to the funding of the project. They were further advised to become more involved in the review of the local program budget before it is submitted to OICI, in order to project local fund-raising requirements. This entire episode proved very educational to both new and old Board members who were very attentive, asked relevant questions, and finally expressed

satisfaction with the manner in which this complicated financial scenario had been presented to them.

Another area of discussion concerned the ability of the local program to provide salary increases recently mandated by the Government. They were assured that to the extent possible, mandated salary increases would be paid out of funds available, however, if any excess expenditures are authorized during the course of the year, they will have to be borne by the local Board itself. It was also explained that though the authority to set policy for the program is vested in the local Board of Directors, it is the ultimate responsibility of the Program Advisor to insure that program funds are properly managed and that adequate documentation is provided in all areas of grant agreement compliance.

Facilities:

The Bo training facility can be rated among the best of the local programs. An immense amount of construction has occurred to provide for staff offices, additional classrooms, toilet facilities and a complete automotive workshop/classroom.

In Freetown, the "space" allotted by the Civil Service Training College has been renovated to include a large office/conference room, two classrooms and a smaller office; is freshly painted, and furnished. The amount of funds for renovations expended were below budget estimates, due to the resourcefulness of the TCT staff.

Economic Development Venture:

The ET/MD Advisor in Freetown presented a discussion paper on a proposed economic venture in the "Gara" industry. It was explained that since 1976, USAID had funded a project to promote the Gara industry in Sierra Leone, resulting in the formation of the Sierra Leone Gara Women's Association. OIC Sierra Leone would like to contract with the Association to manufacture Gara items and utilize interested American OIC affiliates in the distribution of Gara household items. This venture would produce income for OICSL, as a broker, for the American OIC's, as the distributor, as well as for the producers themselves. The ET/MD Advisor is awaiting the review and concurrence of OICI before commencing a feasibility study. Meanwhile, alternative ventures are being investigated. It is hoped that revenue from an economic venture will reduce the dependence of the local Board on Government and community fund-raising efforts.

Personnel Policies:

The Sierra Leone project staff had received the new Personnel Policies Manual prior to my arrival in the country. Thus they had prepared some questions for discussion during an informal meeting. The primary concerns were in the following areas:

- (1) loss of air freight allowances after home leave for staff who recontract to the same post.
- (2) prohibition of travel away from post without three weeks notice and approval from Central Office; and

- (3) restriction of education allowance to pay for tuition and educational materials only.

There were other minor issues, however, most of these concerns would have been lessened if an explanatory summary sheet and covering letter had been received with the Manual. The TCT were advised to put any concerns in writing, to be addressed on an individual basis.

Summary

The OIC Program in Sierra Leone, though strongly linked to the Ministry of Education, has been firmly established in the innovative OIC mode. All of the basic features of an OIC, i.e., "open-entry, open-exit", on-the-job training and motivational uplift are present in the program design. The TCT have proved very capable and are engaging in transfer of technology to the local counterparts who will have to assume full operational responsibility within a few years.

There has been no noticeable diversion from the attainment of overall program objectives. The new Board Chairman seems quite supportive and should be an asset to the project.

F. The Gambia

The major activities completed during the five day visit to The Gambia included:

- (1) review of the FY 79 budget;
- (2) review of the revised implementation schedule;
- (3) securing of signed Memorandum of Agreement with local Board of Directors; and
- (4) review of procurement/shipping issues.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to travel to Farafenni (the project farm site), due to a restriction on travel up-country imposed by the American Embassy. At the time of our visit, an unidentified fever had broken out in the area of the project site resulting in many casualties. We were, however, able to meet with both local staff and the Board in Banjul to discuss the status of the program.

Budget:

As a result of the following revisions, it seems that the approved project budget will be sufficient for this fiscal year:

- (1) deletion of one TCT staff position;
- (2) location of four (4) TCT in Farafenni rather than in Banjul.

The above changes made it possible to have funds available to finance the development of a borehole on the project site to ensure an adequate water supply.

In regard to the overall project budget for the remaining years of the project, the local Program Director made the following inputs:

- (1) to conform with local standards, local employees are entitled to 35 percent fringe benefits; therefore, some adjustment in the budget will be necessary to accommodate the anticipated increase in the line item figure.
- (2) the allocation for commodities and equipment is short by approximately \$75,000 as a result of a change in program design and the resulting need to rent a bulldozer for land clearing; to purchase additional farm machinery; equipment and spare parts.
- (3) the infrastructure costs are also underestimated as a result of the need to construct more buildings than previously anticipated. The structures that were to be donated by the Government of The Gambia (GOTG) are no longer available due to the delay in project start-up.
- (4) it is expected that The Gambian Government will only subsidize 33 percent (33%) of the project costs at the end of five years, thus the production revenue and local fund raising will have to equal 67 percent (67%) of local operation costs.

Implementation Plan:

In order to minimize the effect of the long delay in project start-up it will be necessary to:

- (1) accelerate the training schedule;
- (2) revise the infrastructure development schedule; and
- (3) intensify the production schedule.

The training design can be altered to offer a one year instead of a two year residential program of agricultural studies directed toward the same target group. Trainees from outside Farafenni can be boarded out to village homes. This change will enable the attainment of the original projected training goals of 200 graduates.

The infrastructure can be developed over three years rather than in just one year, beginning with land clearance, provision of water supply, and construction of office/classroom facilities and ending with the building of the dormitories and other ancillary farm structures.

Utilizing the irrigation potential made possible by the boreholes, crops can be grown on a year-round basis rather than just one season as originally projected. The initial investment in animal purchases can be doubled in order to increase the production population available for sale at the end of the year.

Memorandum of Agreement:

After a brief discussion at the regular Board meeting, the Memorandum of Agreement was approved and signed. The following issues, however, remain to be resolved:

- (1) selection of a sponsoring Ministry. Up to now, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Industrial Development has coordinated the assistance to the local group, yet the Board must soon select a technical Ministry for sponsorship as a conduit for the receipt of Government funds. The present choices are: the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; and the Department of Youth, Sports and Culture. It was deemed probable that the Ministry of Agriculture would be selected as it has the largest budget and thus perhaps would be more generous in development expenditures.
- (2) query on effective terminal date of project. Central is being asked to reply if the terminal date of the project is negotiable. Members of the Board already feel that OICI assistance will be required after 1982.
- (3) the status of agricultural assistants or instructors to be seconded to the project by GOTG. The Board must insure that the Ministry of Agriculture fulfills its agreement to assign two employees to the OIC The Gambia project.

Procurement and Shipping:

According to the project staff, enormous problems and costs have occurred in receiving and transport of goods shipped to the project under the present arrangement. The current system is to ship commodities to the port of Dakar and then transport by land from Dakar to Farafenni, which involves crossing of international borders and the incurring of trucking costs almost equal to those of shipping. To ameliorate this problem, it has been recommended that OICI Procurement follow procedures similar to those followed by USAID and other development agencies in The Gambia, i.e., to ship the commodities on a U. S. flagship to England (Liverpool) or Belgium for transshipment direct to Banjul, The Gambia. The local AID representative endorsed this recommendation and cited the immense savings in time and money realized while eliminating the need to either wait for U. S. flagships or to request waivers for the use of non-U. S. flagships.

Summary

Although unable to visit Farafenni on this trip, the detailed discussions held with the staff and Board members allowed for a close assessment of the current status of the program. All activities were currently taking place in Banjul with the exception of the borehole development. Since the new Program Advisor was not expected on-site for several months, it was not possible to finalize any revisions in the current plan, however, recommendations were gathered for future implementation.

In spite of the long delay and initial turmoil associated with this project, there still seems to exist every possibility of success as a result of the planned revisions and the commitment and concern shown by the local Board of Directors.

Part III: General Summary and Conclusions

This six-week long visit to the currently OICI-assisted operating programs in Africa was particularly enlightening and helpful to this writer as the new Director of Planning and Program Development. The trip was well-timed as it coincided with the beginning of a new fiscal year for most of the projects and I was able to:

- (1) gather useful insight into the issues that will be most prominent in each program during the year; and
- (2) offer needed interpretations and guidance on the present policies and procedures of OIC International.

The most glaring concern was with the perceived lack of response by Central Office to many of the problems in the Field. As a result of continuous interaction with staff members during the week-long visits, a great deal of progress was made in narrowing the communication gap.

In the area of general recommendations I feel that it is extremely important that Central makes every effort to acknowledge all communications received from the field even if a full response is not possible immediately.

It is also apparent that Program Advisors should be made much more accountable in regard to compliance with program and fiscal reporting requirements; overall project supervision and liaison with the local Board of Directors; and actions of subordinate staff which impact upon the program,