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EVALUATION REPORT OF GHANA'S

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF TRAINING PROJECT

(USAID Project No. 641-0095)

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Summary

This report is an evaluative study of Ghana's Community Development Staff Training (CDST) Project, a non-formal-education project financed by USAID ($397,000) and implemented by World Education, Inc., through Ghana's Department of Community Development and Social Welfare (DSWCD). The project essentially seeks to institutionalize within DSWCD a capability to deliver non-formal education services, including literacy, to rural adults.

The CDST Project has been evaluated at this time in order to determine the feasibility of extending the project for one year at an approximate cost of $138,000. Methodologically, the project was evaluated within the context of the original grant objectives. Thereafter, document and survey analyses were used to ascertain the actual impact of the project.

The evaluators found that the project has performed poorly in terms of accomplishing the original grant objectives, this performance being mainly attributable to a lack of printed literacy materials. Despite this factor, however, the evaluators found that the grass-roots impact of CDST has been favorable. Moreover, the needed literacy materials should finally be forthcoming within a very short period of time (a week or two), thus resolving the major constraint to goal accomplishment and allowing, at least, the field implementation of what the evaluators consider to be a project of potential.

On a net basis, therefore, and in spite of the project's poor performance to date, the evaluators recommend approval of the proposed one-year extension.

Introduction

This report is an evaluative study of Ghana's Community Development Staff Training (CDST) Project (#641-0095), a two-year, non-formal-education project financed by USAID ($397,000) and implemented by World Education, Inc., (WEI) of New York (grant agreement # AID/AFr-G-1374) in conjunction with Ghana's Department of Community Welfare and Social Development (DSWCD). The reader is referred to Tables 1-4 which summarize the salient features of this report.

The CDST Project seeks to impart both adult education (i.e., instruction in such areas as hygiene and civics) and literacy (basic reading and writing) to rural adults in Ghana through the medium of their own particular vernacular languages. The project was conceived in 1973 by DSWCD and developed more fully in 1975 by WEI. By the time the present contract being evaluated was signed (February 1978), literacy materials in three vernacular languages had been developed and 28 DSWCD "facilitators" had been trained to implement the program in three districts (Saltpond, Akim-Oda, and Asamankese), where the project is referred to and known as the Family Life Education Project (FLEP).

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At the beginning of the current phase (Phase II) of the project, approximately 450 rural adults organized into 40 FLEP groups were being reached by the FLEP program. Phase II (February, 1978, to February, 1980) essentially seeks to expand upon the framework of Phase I, (see Table 2).

Evaluation Methodology

The basic tool employed in this evaluation was a comparative analysis in which actual project results were compared to original project objectives and, thereafter, project constraints were identified in order to explain any differences. The reader is again referred to Table 2 which enumerates the targetted outputs, the actual outputs as of this date, and the primary reason(s) for the serious shortfalls entailed.

Problem Identification

In general, the dominant constraint in CDST implementation has been the lack of printed literacy materials for the various FLEP groups. In February, 1978, orders for these materials were placed with an independent printer in Cape Coast. In July, 1978, after these orders had not been filled, the project advisor was able to airfreight into Ghana a limited number of literacy materials and, in order to eschew this problem recurring again, orders were placed with WEI for chemicals, plates, and other printing material so that DSWCD would have the in-house capacity to develop and print these materials by itself. However, due to a series of inadvertent delays (finding appropriate printing materials for DSWCD needs, placing the various orders, required shipment by sea only for commodities containing chemicals, etc.), these materials are on the high seas but have not yet arrived in Ghana, although they are expected by the end of this calendar year. As yet another means of circumventing this problem, the project advisor was able to obtain a $40,000 FAO grant for crucial printing equipment and materials. As a result, the project advisor expects that DSWCD should be producing the literacy materials by the end of November, 1979. Nevertheless, it is this lack of printed literacy materials which has effectively constrained the achievement of the first five expansion goals of this project.

Other problems have similarly constrained the implementation of the CDST Project, although not to the degree as has the lack of literacy materials. These problems are listed below in what we consider a decreasing order of influence:

1. Lack of literacy materials: Discussed above.

2. Inflation: Although signed in February, 1978, the contract was originally drafted in late 1976, and the project budget was predicated upon a 20% inflation factor. Given Ghana's inflation rates for 1977, 1978, and 1979 respectively, 116%, 73%, and (estimated) 79%, the purchasing power of this budget is roughly a third of what has been expected.

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3. Lack of transportation and communication: The project advisor, the project manager, and the DSWCD audio-visual specialist (who is also the de facto facilitator trainer) had one vehicle among them to service roughly 3,400 square miles of project territory. In addition, each facilitator lives an average of eight miles from his FLEP group.

   Since February, 1979, ten of the 22 current facilitators have obtained motor-cycles from DSWCD with which to service their groups. The other 12 facilitators remain without transportation. Ghana's public transport and fuel shortages and ineffective phone and postal systems exacerbated these project transportation problems. (Note: Although not part of the original contract, the ten motor-cycles were supplied by DSWCD as a good-faith sign of project commitment.)

4. Ineffective Disbursement of Funds: The grantee money released by WEI to DSWCD is placed into the general account of DSWCD at the Bank of Ghana. Obtaining funds for project purposes requires an exceedingly slow bureaucratic process of estimated budgets, voucher submission, check preparation, etc., so that average delays of two months are encountered in obtaining needed project funds.

5. Lack of Management Expertise and Coordination: We found that officers and facilitators involved in CDST implementation suffered from internal mis-communication and poor work planning.

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Findings and Recommendations

A review of CDST performance data in Table 2 shows that the project was able to meet one third of its original objectives. FLEP staff were given training in Accra and in their districts regarding literacy and community development (Objectives 4 and 5). Facilitators feel their training was adequate for their needs and built up prior training received before 1977. Moreover, revolving funds for small-scale community projects have been disbursed to an impressive set of community groups (Objectives 6 and 7).

The self-help fund ($38,000) has been added to the revolving funds ($7,000) and 62% ($28,000) of the $45,000 combined fund have been expended to rural groups. Ten groups have received loans of either ₵1,000 to ₵2,000, five of which are now prepared to begin paybacks.

The careful support of village-level organization by DSWCD staff in an environment of acute scarcities and factionalism has been impressive. Unfortunately, this process has had some unintended negative consequences for the adult-education work of the department. FLEP facilitators are being perceived by their target groups as being viable alternative sources for factory and farm inputs rather than as facilitators for such procurements. Given such expectations, groups have developed associations with some FLEP staff in which short-run, one-shot project work has overshadowed the process of continuous skill development (i.e., literacy and problem-solving) in adult education. With a different administration of the revolving funds coupled with an easing up of acute commodity shortages, FLEP staff could more easily play facilitator/educator roles with their respective groups.

Fully, two-thirds of the CDST work objectives have not been met. In our estimation, the most serious shortfall is the lack of dissemination of the introductory literacy materials to additional adults (Objective #1). The effort to quickly develop adult literacy in a few districts using an improved, functional methodology therefore has not been tested yet. While we observed three facilitators who were able to lead the majority of their group members to read within a year's time, some facilitators had nearly abandoned the literacy component of their adult-education sessions. Lack of training materials was cited, but facilitators seemed dependent upon a materials approach to adult-literacy training. They argued that the alternative educational techniques they had learned in training were not put into practice because of the present organizational climate within DSWCD. However, given the intense commitment of most facilitators to their work, we believe that the execution of a regular in-service CDST training to renew training skills and to improve vertical as well as horizontal communications would lead to improved facilitator effectiveness. Of course, this improvement assumes the production and dissemination of the core introductory literacy materials expected by November, 1979.

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Needless to say, with bottlenecks unresolved in the procurement and production of basic literacy and materials, the development of follow-up materials (rural newspapers, FLEP newsletters) has been impossible (Objective #2). Work on the development of literacy materials in a fourth vernacular remains incomplete (Objective #3).

Adult education workshops have been conducted for various levels of the national community development staff in order to prepare the way for the extension of the pilot program to additional regions (Objective #8). This expensive and time-consuming training effort (4 months required) has had a limited and questionable impact. There have been no follow-up seminars or communications with the 35 participants. Given the lack of progress with the introductory literacy lessons, further community development staff training should be restricted to the present two regions and possibly one region using the planned fourth literacy language.

The CDST project has not been able to establish the expected number of new FLEP groups over and above the base-line number of 40 (Objective #9). For a number of reasons the DSWCD suggested that there would be normally one FLEP group served by any one facilitator. Over the past two years we found that at least 4 community groups have withdrawn from the literacy classes while eight facilitators have left the CDST project. The DSWCD has been able to replace the loss of FLEP groups but not the staff. As a result, the on-going number of literacy groups is ten less that in 1977.

It should be added that a number of facilitators have casually identified additional adult groups (approximately five) who want literacy classes. They have not accepted these classes, however, because of the lack of materials.

Summary of Recommendations

1) That the CDST Project be extended for an additional $138,000 until February, 1981.

2) That the extension include the continued services of the World Educational specialist attached to the DSWCD.

3) That the DSWCD formally schedule one senior officer to be an additional counterpart (at least 50% time) to the World Education specialist by 30 November, 1979.

4) That the DSWCD fully staff the FLEP project with 30 facilitators by 30 April, 1980.

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5) That the CDST provide one additional project vehicle and 18 100 cc motorcycles to DSWCD by 30 June, 1980.

6) That the CDST Project provide additional materials support to the Communication Unit of DSWCD (chemicals, metal plates, paper) by 30 May, 1980.

7) That the CDST Project provide for 10 days of professional training and three 2-day follow-up sessions for all levels of FLEP staff in the three pilot districts by 30 June, 1980.

8) That additional literacy ~~lessons~~ materials or equivalent ? be designed and tested for use by the FLEP facilitators by 31 October, 1980.

9) That for Ghana's FY 1980, the DSWCD estimate for and fund quarterly staff training programs for FLEP members by 30 September, 1980.

rationale

10) That the community development and small enterprise revolving funds be handed over to the FAAD Project and that the 30 FLEP associations become part of the target population to be served by Technoserve, GOVA, and APPLE. (Coop, joint Administration)

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11) That semi-annual management training be a part of the CDST project in the three districts by 31 January, 1980.

12) That the DSWCD consider requesting for headquarters management training by the ERDM unit of the Ministry of Economic Planning to facilitate the communication of various program objectives to the Accountant-Generals Department, the divisions of the DSWCD, and representatives from the Ghana Education Service and the Ministry of Local Government.

rationale

13) That the Peace Corps Volunteers act as liasions between the FAAD supported community organization activities of the DSWCD and the adult literacy/adult education activities of the DSWCD in the three pilot districts.

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Table 1

CDST Fact Sheet

1. Project Purpose: To establish within Ghana's Department of Social Welfare and Community Development (DSWCD), a capability for delivering non-formal educational services (including the teaching of literacy) to rural adults.

2. Grantee: World Education, Inc. (WEI).

3. Life of Project: February, 1978 to February, 1980.

4. Life of Project Funding: $397,000 (of which approximately $250,000 have been expended).

5. Project Personnel:

USAID Project ~~Supervisor~~ Coordinator	:	William Fuller
GOG Project Manager	:	Jack Arthur (DSWCD)
WEI Project Advisor	:	Russ Mahan

6. Project Locale: Central Region (Saltpond District) and Eastern Region (Akim-Oda and Asamankese Districts).

7. Beneficiaries: 25 staff trainers and approximately 450 rural adults.

8. Issue at Hand: Whether to extend the WEI contract for one year at an approximate cost of $150,000.

Table 2

CDST Performance Criteria

PROJECT OBJECTIVES	TARGET NUMBER	NUMBER NOW	DIFFERENCE	PRIMARY REASON
1) To extend the existing introductory Functional Literacy Materials (FLM) to an additional 1,100 rural adults.	1100	100	1000	Lack of materials
2) To develop follow-up FLM so that at least 60% of adults in introductory program use them.	270	0	270	Lack of materials
3) To develop introductory FLM in a fourth vernacular language for 300 adults.	300	0	300	Lack of materials
4) To provide training in materials development, evaluation, planning, and implementation for the FLEP community development staff.	-	-	-	Okay
5) To train 30 new facilitators in the use of introductory and follow-up vernacular language program.	30	0	30	Lack of materials; lack of DSWCD commitment.
6) To establish a self-help fund ($38,000 equivalent).	-	-	-	Okay
7) To establish a revolving fund ($7,000 equivalent).	-	-	-	Okay
8) To conduct 12 workshops for the FLEP community development staff.	12	7	5	Lack of transport, of commitment, and of management coordination.
9) To establish 25 new FLEP groups	25	12	13	Lack of materials and facilitators.

Table 3

FLEP Facilitators Questionnaire (Facilitators Interviewed 18; Total facilitators 22).

1) Number of years with FLEP?: Average - 2.7 years
Range - 0.5 year to 5 years.

2) Average Age: 33 years
Range: 25 to 49 years.

3) Sex: 13 Male
5 Female

4) Education: 72% Middle School
28% Secondary School

5) Has the FLEP Program given you proper training to teach adult education?
No - 11%
Yes - 89%

6) Each week, what part of your time do you give to adult education vs. income-generating or community-development activities?

Average: 50/50 split of time.
Range: [illegible] to 70% devoted to adult education.

7) As a FLEP facilitator, what have been your major achievements during the last year?

Overwhelmingly, facilitators mentioned the process of organizing the community-development and income-generating activities. A few mentioned satisfaction from teaching their group members to read.

8) How do you teach adult education to your group?

Model facilitators often start with early morning visits to compounds of group members. Observations during these visits allow for individual follow-up discussions on previous group topics (i.e. child care, hygiene, kitchen management, animal care). After conducting a half-dozen such visits, group members assemble for an hour of literacy class. Sometimes demonstration lessons at homes, workplaces, and farms are also used, e.g. how to use cocoa spraying machines, repair lamps, prepare baby food at a participants' homes, etc.

Classes may also include topical discussion. The facilitator presents a 20-minute introduction to a controversial issue, i.e. "Who shall inherit - your nephews or your children," which can be followed by an hour discussion. By 3:30 pm the facilitator departs for his/her home town. Moreover, the male facilitators were more involved in organizing actual work activities on farms and in the community in addition to the discussion and literacy work.

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Table 4

FLEP Member Questionnaire
(8 Groups Surveyed Representing 152 people)

1) When was your FLEP group established? Average: 2.8 years.

2) What are the ages of the people in your group? Overall average: 36 years.

3) How many men/women are in your group? Men - 71, Women - 81.

4) What formal education do people in your group have?

The majority had no formal education at all; roughly a fourth had attended (but not necessarily finished) primary school; two had attended middle school.

5) Which FLEP lesson have you reached? (Note: there are 50 lessons)

On average, Lesson 28 had been reached.

6) How often does your FLEP group meet?

Twice a week for two hours each day.

7) What do you do during your FLEP meetings?

Average breakdown: 1.5 hours on Literacy
2.0 hours on Adult Education (lectures, discussions, etc.)
0.5 hours miscellaneous activities.

8) How many of your members have learned to read and write through the FLEP Program?

Between one half and two thirds of the members became literate via the FLEP Program.

9) What have been the major problems experienced by your FLEP group during the last year?

The majority of the problems cited related to the economic projects of the group (e.g., need for working capital, need for certain equipment, etc.). Roughly a fourth cited the need for literacy materials; a few cited the need for lanterns in order to read and study at night; and the rest of the problems were without any systematic pattern.

10) How have the FLEP weekly meetings helped you?

The benefits cited here were quite impressive. From having been taught to read and write, members enthusiastically cited being able to read signs, to read the Bible, to write letters to friends and relatives, etc. From the adult-education component, members reported practicing better hygiene, understanding their government better, participating in local development, etc. From their income-generating activities, members cited various economic benefits.