

6970701
PO BOX 920
ISD 57612

AFRICAN AMERICAN SCHOLARS COUNCIL, INC.

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT TO USAID

-- January 1, 1978 - June 30, 1978 --

Submitted by:

Constance B. Hilliard, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Table of Contents

1. Research Grants Program - AID/AFR 800	1
2. Sahel Project AID/AFR 1162.	2
3. Program Development	6
4. Administration.	8
5. Communications.	9
6. Board of Directors.10

17

I. RESEARCH GRANTS PROGRAM (AID/AFR 800):

During the period from January to June, 1978, Dr. Kathleen Dunlop, Principal Investigator and Ms. Sharon Innes and Ms. Mary Lee Mayer, Co-Investigators were granted an award for research by the African American Scholars Council. All of the researchers are from the John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Education and Human Development, George Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, Tennessee.

The research project entitled, "An Examination of Infant Development as Related to Maternal Prenatal and Perinatal Variables in Tanzania", focuses on assessing the overall developmental status of infants as related to maternal prenatal and perinatal variables. The data gathered during this research is expected to have relevance for the development of national policy that impacts on such areas as family planning, maternal and child health and education. The project aims to provide a data base for governmental decisions concerning the most appropriate time for intervention into the developmental process, i.e., at what point will the government's allocation of scarce resources have maximally beneficial impact on individuals and the society as a whole?

In addition to the above award, the following grantees (seven) are currently conducting research under AASC grant awards:

Dr. Kofi S. Amuti, Ghanaian, "Improvement of Banbarra Groundnut (*Voandzeia Subterranea* L. Thouars) and *Geocarpa* Groundnut Seeds in Tropical Africa".

Mr. Emmanuel A. Atayi, Togolese, "Incentives and Disincentives as Related to the Adoption of Agricultural Innovations: The Case of Small Farmers in Anecho District, Togo".

Mr. John R. Campbell, American, "The Many Faces of Urban Politics: A Study of Urban Society and Economy in Ghana".

Dr. Tetteh Kofi, Ghanaian, "Commodity Futures Markets, Marketing Boards, Farmer Incomes and Development. (A Case Study)".

Ms. Ruvimbo Mabeza, Zimbabwean, "The Impact of Commercial Agriculture On Women in Rural Areas of Zambia".

Dr. O. Ohuma B. Okezie, Nigerian, "Chemical Nutrition and Food Application Studies on the Winged Bean (*Psophocarpa tetragynalobus*)".

Dr. Mukendi WaNsanga, Zairean, "Landsat Imagery and Geological Investigations of Iron Ore and Manganese Deposits in Upper Shaba, Zaire".

II. THE SAHEL PROJECT (AID/AFR 1162):

In 1975, AASC was the recipient of a grant from the Agency for International Development to conduct field research in the Sahel. The focus of the research was rural populations affected by the drought of 1968-1973 in the Sahel countries of Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta.

The basic hypothesis of the research to be conducted was that farming and herding populations in the drought-stricken areas of Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta adapted to and survived the highly stressful situation of drought by devising innovative strategies. The drought caused changes, not only in the environment, but in many economic and social habits of farmers and herders, thus forcing them to modify their traditional adaptive strategies.

Adaptive strategies to drought were the pivotal research issue. Drought was the background against which these adaptive

strategies would be identified and analyzed.

A. Methodology:

The methodology of the field research was based on a team effort. There were four teams of two people each; the American field researcher and the African counterpart. There were two teams in Senegal, one in Niger, and one in Upper Volta. Each team would work under the aegis of the rural development agency in their research region and set up an information and reporting system with this particular in-country agency. At the end of a specified period of time, tentative findings and recommendations would be reported to the Agency for International Development mission in the country, and finally reported to the Sahel office of AID in Washington.

Team composition and project implementation in each country assumed the structural realities of that country.

B. Senegal, the Diourbel Region:

This team felt that their most startling observation and general finding was that herders were undergoing a much more dramatic change in their economic system than were farmers. They also noted that in the research villages, the drought had pushed many members of compound families (especially younger brothers) permanently out of the village and into commercial centers in search of non-farm employment as a means of survival. There were several instances of entire families migrating to the commercial centers for all but the planting and harvesting months, thus creating a new situation of seasonal commitment to the village.

C. Senegal, the Delta Region:

This team felt that the most important observations and findings centered on the increased interest in irrigated farming by herders. This interest was accelerated by the drought.

They also noted migration from the villages to commercial centers in the search for non-farming income producing activities to supplement income from the yearly harvest. Migration into commercial centers in search of off-season work was not new. What was new was the attitude to extend the period of time away from the village or abandon the village except for specific farm activities in the hope that more money could be made at non-farm activities.

D. Niger, the Tanout Zone:

This team felt that strategies they observes in operation could have been the result of forced change to a highly stressful situation in contrast to planned or "deliberate" change.

They also noted that the recent drought seemed different from previous drought in that food was available in the main markets to those who could afford to purchase it. This meant that with the possible exception of a few rich villagers, farmers had to attempt all available means of obtaining money to purchase food.

These means of obtaining more disposable income centered around non-farm income producing activities and migration out of the villages to commercial centers as itinerant farm laborers or petty traders.

E. Upper Volta, the Gourmantche of Kouri:

One of the team's major observations was that international donor intervention was a greater vector of change than the drought itself. It was felt that adaptative responses to the drought have meant the operationalization of strategies which may mean restructuring of the entire society to fit a larger structure that may better insure against future ecological crisis.

It is pointed out, however, that although the impact of international donor intervention in the area seemed to be a positive one at its commencement because it expanded economic opportunities; further examination of initial impact indicated that social relations among members of the village was gradually being altered.

-- Comparative Observations and Summary --

Observations from each field site indicate that farmers and herders devised strategies for drought survival which modified their traditional production behavior.

The most dramatic change seems to have occurred among herders who have begun to actively participate in the agricultural economy by cultivating cash crops.

Another observation is that farmers and herders are extending their commitment to non-farm activities in commercial centers by engaging with greater intensity in the post drought situation in petty trade and wage labor.

The drought has clearly altered the economic and social landscape of many rural populations in the Sahel. There has been little or no hesitation to migrate out of villages in search of what is hoped to be a less risk-ridden livelihood.

Herding populations in many of the areas are in an incipient stage of sedentarization. The land cannot sustain pre-drought herds in competition with humans for water and food.

What seems clear is that farmers and herders will continue to devise and create ways of accommodating themselves to their environment.

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

A. Staff Orientation:

To insure that AASC would derive the greatest benefit from its own efforts to design new programs and to strengthen the administration of AASC programs, the Executive Director and the Administrative Assistant participated in AID's Program Design and Evaluation Seminar.

Also, AASC's Executive Director, Dr. Hilliard attended a "Management by Objectives" training session organized by the New TransCentury Foundation.

B. Southern Africa Conference:

As a follow-up to the "Southern Africa: Research for Development Conference" convened by AASC in December, 1977 meetings were held at the United Nations between the Executive Director Dr. Hilliard and Zimbabwe party leaders, Mesrs. Joshua

Nkomo, Robert Mugabe and Abel Muzorewa. There was a certain consensus of opinion among these men, though in separate discussions, that sector by sector analyses of their country's economy would be essential for the planning needs once full majority rule is achieved. Also reiterated was the need to reorient the training of Southern African professionals in exile so that their particular skills learned on the outside can be readily integrated into the special context of building a new country. The leaders likewise endorsed AASC's initiative of bringing together Southern African professionals and scholars to explore the most critical areas for which economic development research will be required. This includes such areas as: education (curriculum development and rural education), manpower training, needs assessment, urban development, mining and resources, public administration, and women.

C. Women in Development:

The role of women in development has been designated as one of AASC's priority areas for new programs. Contacts were established with the AID Women's office. A proposal entitled, "African Women & Societal Crises: Famine, War & Resettlement", has subsequently been submitted to that section.

This office also developed a proposal entitled: "Women's Vocational Training - Sudan & Somalia". It was submitted to the office of Sheldon Care and is still awaiting action.

The basic thrust of this project includes: an ongoing investigation of AID/Africa projects such as agricultural and technical training programs to assess the integration or possible

integration of women's training components into existing and proposed AID field projects. Emphasis would be placed on the training of women in order to build a resource for the various levels of managerial and lower level skill gaps. In addition, AASC, intends to establish communications and organize working conferences with active African women's groups in these two countries, as well as others, to assess the means for implementing vocational training for women and the attitudinal or social value limitations involved. Finally, the findings and recommendations would be disseminated in a series of interim reports, oral seminars and conferences both in U.S. and abroad and a final project document, to AID and other pertinent development assistance and women's vocational training agencies. As an added resource incentive in developing this project, the Executive Director attended the Women in Development Conference held in April, 1978 in Tucson, Arizona.

IV. ADMINISTRATION:

During this six month period special emphasis has been given to upgrading Administrative systems at AASC. The program files of the organization were reorganized by the Accounting firm of Arthur Young & Company to more efficiently represent the status of each sub-grantee. The filing system for this program was also integrated into the general accounting mechanism of the organization. AASC also, in following guidelines presented in the AID Auditor-General's report issued in January, 1978, succeeded in liquidating all outstanding advance balances for previous contracts and began

preparing quarterly financial statements. It was also decided during this time that yearly auditted statements would be prepared to maintain a clear perception of the state of the organization's financial status.

V. COMMUNICATIONS:

For applied research to have maximum utility it must be designed in an atmosphere of regular communication between the African and American components. AASC has developed links with a number of African research institutions as well as nurtured this with minority institutions with an interest in the development field.

Through its newsletter "The African American Scholar", this organization publicizes its own research efforts, and brings the extensive listing of African institutions on its mailing list in closer proximity to American facilities with like interest in the economic development realm.

AASC has increased its mailing constituency from 3,000 to 15,000 individuals and institutions with interests in the development realm. The organization has likewise comprised a bank of persons with technical background in development-related areas.

A major thrust has also been taken towards building a regular and supportive constituency for the organization of minority institutions and individuals.

VI. BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

To meet the requirements of moving AASC to self-sufficiency, three new persons have been added to the Board of Directors. Each of these new members were chosen with a view toward bringing more breadth and a new broader network of contacts to the organization outside the academic sphere: Mr. George L. T. Weaver, during the Kennedy Administration, was first appointed as Special Assistant to the Secretary of Labor. He is also a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and serves as President of the Friends of the Leopold Senghor Foundation.

Ms. Yvonne Williams is an attorney in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Frank Jones is a professor of business at M.I.T. in Cambridge, Mass. with extensive ties to the private sector and business world.