

PDAAR-227

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Intrah

Trip Report

#0-38

Travelers: Dr. Ben Major, IHP Consultant

Country Visited: SIERRA LEONE

Date of Trip: February 10 - March 3, 1985

Purpose: To provide technical assistance to Ministry of Health Core Training Team during clinical skills workshop and to conduct 3 one-day seminars in contraception and STD update for physicians.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
SCHEDULE DURING VISIT	ii
I. PURPOSE OF TRIP	1
II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS	1
III. BACKGROUND	2
IV. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES	2
V. FINDINGS	2
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS	4

APPENDIX A

Persons Contacted

APPENDIX B

Daily Schedule for First Three Weeks of Workshop

* APPENDIX C (On file with INTRAH Program Management Office)

Copies of handouts given to physician trainees on Contraceptive Complications in Management, and on Sexually Transmissible Diseases

* APPENDIX D (On file with INTRAH Program Management Office)

Some handouts given by Core Training Team to trainees

** APPENDIX E (on file with INTRAH Data Management Section)

Bio-data forms and Participant Reaction forms of physicians attending seminars at the three locations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first three weeks (February 10-March 3, 1985) of a six-week workshop conducted in Freetown for 14 district health sisters and staff midwives from various parts of Sierra Leone, Dr. Ben Major was in Freetown to provide technical assistance to the Core Training Team (CTT) and the Ministry of Health. This was part of Phase II of the MOH/INTRAH workplan developed in Chapel Hill in 1984.

Dr. Major also conducted three one-day seminars for physicians, in Freetown on February 16, in Bo on February 23, and in Makeni on February 25. These workshops were conducted for physicians who had agreed to accept referrals of family planning clients who required physician consultation. They consisted of morning and afternoon sessions, with the morning being devoted to family planning problems and complications, and the afternoons being devoted to discussions of sexually transmissible diseases along with an audiovisual presentation.

It had been suggested, following a previous three-week visit to Sierra Leone in July/August 1984 for the purpose of developing the curriculum for this workshop, that it would be inappropriate to ask local physicians to backstop family planning clinicians, if these physicians themselves did not have some updating on information relating to family planning, and on management of family planning problems and complications. In addition to the seminars, copies of the paperback book, Family Planning Methods and Practice: Africa, were given to each physician participant at each location.

Several problems became obvious during this visit, not the least of which was the incredibly poor communications between Freetown and the outlying districts. This was made apparent by the fact that although notices of this one-day seminar were typed for distribution to physicians in Freetown, Bo and Makeni regions had not received these notices by the weekend of February 23rd. It could not be determined with certainty the date on which these notices were actually posted. A second problem which became apparent during the weekend of travel up-country was the incredibly poor state of repair of some of the currently used Ministry of Health vehicles and the lack of spare parts for them.

SCHEDULE DURING VISIT

Sunday, February 10	Departed San Francisco International Airport at 09:00.
Monday, February 11	Arrived Freetown at 19:30 and checked in at the Brookfield's Hotel.
Tuesday, February 12	Met Dr. Gba-Kamara, Director of MCH Services, MOH and the Core Training Team, and the 14 trainees who were in the second day of the workshop. Served as a resource person during this day and gave a presentation to the trainees in the afternoon.
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Wednesday, February 13	Continued as back-up and resource person and made additional presentations to the trainees.
Thursday, February 14	Met with Mr. Edmund Cole, Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone. Continued to serve as resource person and back-up and made a presentation to workshop trainees.
Friday, February 15	Met with Dr. Belmont Williams, Chief Medical Officer, MOH and Mr. A.R. Konte, Permanent Secretary, MOH. Continued to provide back-up and act as a resource person to the Core Training Team. Also met with Mr. William Lefes, AID Affairs Officer and Ms. Yomi Decker, Program Officer at the USAID Office.
Saturday, February 16	Conducted a one-day seminar in Freetown.
Monday, February 18	Assisted Core Training Team and gave a presentation to the workshop trainees.
Tuesday, February 19	Met with Sister Louis Marie O'Connor and attended a Fertility Awareness class.

Friday, February 22 Continued to serve as back-up and resource person to Core Training Team and made preparations for midafternoon departure to Bo.

Saturday, February 23 Met Regional Medical Officer in Bo and conducted one-day seminar in conference hall at government hospital in Bo.

Sunday, February 24 Travel from Bo to Makeni.

Monday, February 25 Conducted a one-day seminar in Makeni and returned to Freetown.

Tuesday, February 26 Met with Dr. Moira Brown, Deputy Chief Nursing Officer, MOH. Continued to serve as resource person and back-up to Core Training Team.

Wednesday, February 27 Continued to act as resource person and back-up to Core Training Team. Met with Dr. Effie Gooding, former assistant to Dr. Gba-Kamara.

Thursday, February 28 Continued role as resource person and back-up to Core Training Team.

Friday, March 1 Had telephone debriefing with Mr. William Lefes and personal debriefing with Ms. Yomi Decker. Made farewell presentation to Core Training Team and workshop trainees. Had final debriefing with Dr. Gba-Kamara and Mr. John Kamara en route to airport.

Saturday, March 2 Arrived in London 08:30 and checked in at Grosvenor Hotel.

Sunday, March 3 Departed London 11:30.

I. PURPOSE OF VISIT

The purpose of the visit was to serve as technical assistance backup and resource person to the Core Training Team (CTT) during the first three weeks of a six-week clinical skills workshop. Assistance during the IUD insertion practicum was not given because the first three weeks were devoted to didactic material and the last three weeks to practicum and training which were not observed by this traveler. Plans for the seminars seemed to be well laid out with cooperation and assistance from the Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL). Allegedly adequate numbers of clinical cases, including live models, were included in the plans. During the visit, three one-day contraceptive update seminars for physicians, which included discussions and audiovisual presentations on sexually transmissible diseases, were also conducted by the traveler. These were held in Freetown, Bo, and Makeni, respectively.

II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- A. The consultant served on many occasions as resource person, backup, and presenter, and occasionally took the place of a presenter (Dr. Tom Kargbo) who was absent at the time.
- B. The three one-day seminars for physicians were carried out as scheduled, the one in Freetown being the best attended, where 19 of an anticipated 20 physician participants were present at the workshop. The sessions in Bo and Makeni were less well attended and this was undoubtedly due to poor communications through the mail and otherwise.
- C. The strengthening of relations between the MOH and PPASL seemed evident, and this type of relationship was encouraged and praised by the consultant, AID personnel, and other relevant Ministry of Health personnel.
- D. A gasoline-powered generator promised by the consultant was in fact delivered in person during this trip, and the consultant encountered no difficulty in carrying this portable generator through Customs, because of previous communication by mail between himself and Mr. Lefes of USAID. Copies of this communication were shown to Customs officials upon entry into Sierra Leone. This generator, however, is unique in that it provides only 110 volt current and is therefore suitable for use only with a 110 volt slide projector and/or movie projector. The only 110 volt slide projector in the possession of the Ministry of Health was found to be malfunctioning. It is hoped that a used replacement projector can be delivered to the Ministry of Health along with teaching slides in the near future.

III. BACKGROUND

Significant background information concerning Phase I of the INTRAH/MOH Project is supplied in Lynn Knauff's trip report of her visit to Sierra Leone January 13-18, 1985. The members of the CTT were observed by the traveler on several occasions during their stay in Santa Cruz. One full day of didactic sessions was carried out by this traveler at the training site in Santa Cruz. This trip report concerns the earlier stages of Phase II of the workplan.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

The bulk of the activities during this visit centered on providing technical assistance to the CTT during the first three weeks of a six-week clinical skills workshop for district health sisters and midwives. This technical assistance consisted of acting as a resource person for the CTT trainers which included giving short presentations to the trainees. Family planning clinical content was the focus of the presentations and of the assistance given to the trainers.

Secondarily, the traveler was scheduled to conduct three one-day seminars for physicians. The content of these seminars was the identification and treatment of family planning complications and of sexually transmissible diseases. These seminars were held in Bo, Makeni and Freetown. A total of thirty-four physicians participated in the seminars. This was somewhat fewer than the 50 participants expected. Communication problems encountered in announcing the seminars undoubtedly account for the reduced numbers of participants.

Discussions were also held with various persons central to the provision of family planning services in Sierra Leone. These persons represented Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL), Ministry of Health (the Chief Medical Officer and the Permanent Secretary were both visited), USAID, and the Ministry of Health-Bo Regional Health Office. Additionally, the natural family planning resource person for the workshop was also visited. Prior to departure, debriefing sessions were held with both USAID and MOH representatives.

V. FINDINGS

A. The CTT seems to be comfortable in its role. All of its members seemed adequately informed on the subjects which they presented and it seemed that excellent rapport was established early on between the trainers and trainees. Although Sisters Gilpin, Massaly and Dumbuya seemed to be most at ease, the others, including the two newest additions to the CTT, Spain-Cole and Siddiqui, also performed well. Alghali, as usual, commanded the respect of all relevant persons and exhibited considerable

expertise in the presentation of methods for running a successful family planning clinic. Her presentation also included clinic management and administrative functions.

- B. It seems that the MCH Director, Dr. Gba-Kamara, is too overwhelmed with meetings and other responsibilities to oversee all of the duties which he has accepted. It is obvious that he is in need of a competent administrative assistant. Although the Chief Medical Officer believes this assistant should be a physician, this traveler believes that a nurse or even an especially skilled lay person could carry out administrative functions, allowing Dr. Gba-Kamara to concentrate on performance of his clinical responsibilities. Dr. Effie Gooding formerly held this position and is now a private practitioner. Mr. William Lefes, USAID Affairs Officer, who oversees USAID's funding of the Family Health Initiative project, seems particularly keen to have the MOH provide Dr. Gba-Kamara with an assistant.

- C. Sister Louis Marie O'Connor, natural family planning trainer, is eminently qualified to teach a fertility awareness course and has beautifully supplemented the trainees' basic understanding of the physiology of menstruation, ovulation and fertilization. She is quick to point out that awareness of the fertile period can enable couples not only to limit their family size but can also assist infertile couples in achieving pregnancy. This traveler strongly supports her program as an addition to the family planning methodology currently included in the MOH clinical curriculum.

- D. The trip up-country strongly reinforced this consultant's conviction that logistics and supplies will be two of the biggest hurdles to overcome in ensuring the success of any family planning program. One episode during this trip underscored the logistics/supplies problem: The site at which the breakdown of our vehicle occurred was near a very small village consisting of no more than 10-12 domiciles. The health personnel in this area consisted of a visiting health assistant who was knowledgeable about family planning and who spoke about family planning in several of the villages. She was quick to point out, however, that none of the women in need of family planning was willing to pay 10 leones to travel to Bo or Makeni, or an additional 10 leones for a month's supply of contraceptive pills. She emphasized that despite the highest possible motivation, unless contraceptive supplies were readily available locally and inexpensively, any family planning program was doomed to failure; the traveler heartily concurs. The condition of the roads

leading to both of these relatively nearby communities was so poor that it is impossible to visualize a continued supply of contraceptive materials without the provision of more reliable vehicles. The anticipated arrival of two vehicles and 50 bicycles will be a welcome addition.

There may also be some way to tie in with Dr. Tom Karbgo, who was recently in receipt of a land cruiser vehicle from UNFPA for carrying out family planning training activities. Perhaps he can be utilized to augment the logistic and supply arrangements envisioned.

- E. As far as didactic training is concerned, the CTT seems admirably suited for carrying out its functions. This consultant would like to see the skills of the group continue to be sharpened by having them carry out more, rather than fewer, training sessions. Their training skills in the upcoming practicum remain to be seen and judged, but this traveler is sure that assistance from Ms. Beresford-Cole of PPASL and her staff will make this portion of the CTT's job less difficult.
- F. In general the economic climate in Sierra Leone seems to be deteriorating. This fact was made more apparent by the recent devaluation of the leone from 2½ to 6 leones per 1 U.S. dollar. The change was implemented approximately three days prior to this traveler's departure from Sierra Leone. Already the price of petrol, which had risen from six to eight leones in the six months previous, was rumored to be rising to ten leons per gallon within the next few weeks. These factors must be taken into consideration when continuing program support is discussed.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. All efforts should be made to procure an administrative assistant for Dr. Gba-Kamara as soon as possible.
- 2. Strengthening the bonds of communication between PPASL and the MOH should be a constant endeavor, and the mechanism by which PPASL can be compensated for its assistance should be clearly spelled out. This could be in the form of money or in-kind assistance services. Inclusion of PPASL staff in training sessions is one method of repayment of services.
- 3. Family planning update handouts and copies of Family Planning Methods and Practice: Africa, should be made available to those physicians who were unable to attend the one-day seminars in Bo and Makeni.

4. The only solution to the problem of poor communication seems to be to give one person the responsibility of traveling to the areas where these physicians are and hand-carrying any future communications, rather than depending on the postal service.
5. The MOH needs to ensure that adequate supplies and information get into the rural areas of Sierra Leone, where family planning acceptance is most critical.
6. The provision of more audiovisual materials including slides as well as a projector should be made available to the CTT. This traveler will be happy to provide slides for reproduction if no other source of slides can be made available.

APPENDIX A

Persons Contacted

1. USAID/Freetown

Mr. William S. Lefes, USAID Affairs Officer
Ms. Yomi Decker, Program Officer

2. Ministry of Health

Dr. Belmont Williams, Chief Medical Officer
Dr. Moira Browne, Deputy Chief Medical Officer
Dr. Am. M. Gba-Kamara, Director MCH Services
Mr. A.R. Konte, Permanent Secretary to Ministry of Health
Chief Nursing Officer
Deputy Chief Nursing Officer

3. Core Training Team

Matron F. Aghali
Sister Val Gilpin
Sister Angela Massally
Sister Margaret Dumbuya
Sister Cecilia Spain-Cole
Sister Emma Siddique

4. Planned Parenthood Association of Sierra Leone

Mrs. Edmond Cole, Executive Director
Sister Eileen Beresford-Cole, Clinical Services Administrator

5. Regional Medical Officers in Bo and Makeni

6. Family Life Education and Fertility Awareness Center

Sister Louis Marie O'Connor

APPENDIX B

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR
FIRST THREE WEEKS OF WORKSHOP

1ST WEEK					
	MONDAY 11TH FEBRUARY	TUESDAY 12TH FEBRUARY	WEDNESDAY 13TH FEBRUARY	THURSDAY 14TH FEBRUARY	FRIDAY 15TH FEBRUARY
8.30-9.00am	Registration	Anatomy + Physiology	Misconception of	INTRA Uterine	Condoms Diaphragm
9.00-9.30am	Pre-test -Core Group	of the Male	Family Planning	Contraceptive	9.00-10.00 a.m
9.30-11.00am	Opening Ceremony	Val Gilpin	Traditional Methods	Device	Demonstration of
			of Family Planning	Margaret Dumbuya	Diaphragm
			9.45-10.30 a.m		Emma Sidique
10.30-11.00am	COFFEE		BREAK		
11.00-12.00am	Introduction-A. Massally	Anatomy + Physiology	Oral Contraceptives	I U C D	Surgical Contraceptive
	11.00-11.45 a.m	Female Reproductive	E. Beresford-Cole	Continued	Methods
	Overview + Logistics	Val Gilpin		Margaret Dumbuya	Vasectomy - Dr T.K.
	11.45-12.00 a.m				Kargbo
	P.F. Alghali	Anatomy of the Female	Oral Contraceptives	I U C D	Tubal Ligation
	Needs + Expectations	Reproductive System	Continued	Demonstration	Dr.T.K. Kargbo
	Course Objectives	Continued		E. Beresford-	
12.00-1.00pm	Margaret Dumbuya	Val Gilpin	E. Beresford-Cole		
1.00-2.00 P.m	LUNCH		BREAK		
2.00-3.00 P.m	History of Family	Menstrual Cycle	Oral Contraceptives	Injectables	Identification of
	Planning	Dr Ben Major	Continued	Dr Ben Major	High Risk Women
	A. Massally	Val Gilpin	Dr Ben Major		for Family Planning
					P.B. Alghali
3.00-3.15 P.m	TEA		BREAK		
3.15-4.15 P.m	History of Family	Menopausal Syndrome	Discussion on Oral	Foam, Foaming	Evaluation of 1st
	Planning in S.L	Dr Ben Major	Contraceptives	Tablets Jellies	Week
	A. Massally		E. Beresford-Cole	& Cream	Val Gilpin
				C. Spaine-Cole	
	REFLECTIONS		REFLECTIONS		

2ND WEEK					
MONDAY 18TH FEBRUARY 6	TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY	WEDNESDAY 20TH FEBRUARY	THURSDAY 21ST FEBRUARY	FRIDAY 22ND FEBRUARY	
8.30-9.00					
9.00-10.30	Sexually Transmitted Diseases + Infertility Dr Ben Major	Fertility	Awareness		Case Studies on F.2 Topics -e.g STD's Infertility, Teenage Pregnancy Emma Sidique A. Massally
10.30-11.00	COFFEE	BREAK	COFFEE	BREAK	
11.00-12.00	STD's & Infertility Continued Dr Ben Major				Case Studies continued Group Work (Core Group)
12.00-1.00	STD + Infertility Continued Dr Ben Major				Communication in Family Planning C. Spaine-Cole
1.00-2.00	LUNCH	BREAK	LUNCH	BREAK	
2.00-3.00	Human Sexuality Dr Ben Major				Communication Skills Applied to Interviewing and Counselling Margaret Dumbuya
3.00-3.15	TEA	BREAK	TEA	BREAK	
3.15-4.45	Human Sexuality Dr Ben Major	SISTER LOUIS MARIK			Motivational aspects of Family Planning Margaret Dumbuya 3.15 - 4.00 p.m Review of 2nd Week P.B. Alghali Assignment Interviewing
	REFLECTION		REFLECTION		REFLECTION

9

3RD WEEK					
	MONDAY 25TH FEBRUARY	TUESDAY 26TH FEBRUARY	WEDNESDAY 27TH FEBRUARY	THURSDAY 28TH FEBRUARY	FRIDAY 1ST MARCH
8.30-9.00					
9.00-10.30	Report on Assignment 9.00-9.45 am Interviewing Continued	Setting up of Family Planning Clinic Family Planning Clinic Procedures E. Baresford-Cole	Choice of Method & Prescription C. Spaine-Cole	Target Setting Monthly & quarterly Reporte- Dr Gba- Kamara	Observation at Family Planning Clinic Group I Lunley Health Centre Group II PPASL Core Group Members
10.30-11.15	COFFEE		BREAK		COFFEE
11.00-12.00	Role Play on Interview- ing & Counselling	Client Management E. Baresford-Cole	Follow-up Appointments Home visiting Emma Sidique	Monthly + quarterly Reports continued Dr A.M. Gba-Kamara	Observation at Clinic continued Core Group Members
12.00-1.00	Role Play on Interview- ing & Counselling continued	Physical Assessment History taking Physical examination Dr Ben Major E. Baresford-Cole	Clinic Management Ordering of Supplies and Equipment P.B. Alghali	Films or Slides	Observation at Clinic continued Core Group Members
1.00-1.30	LUNCH		BREAK		LUNCH
2.00-3.00	Home Visiting E. Sidique	Physical examination Demonstration Dr Ben Major E. Baresford-Cole	Inventory Care of Supplies & Equipment P.B. Alghali	Preparation for Practicum C. Spaine-Cole	Discussion on Field Visit Core Group Members
3.00-3.15	TEA		BREAK		TEA
3.15-4.15	Review Components of Family Planning Integration of Family Planning into MCH Dr A.M. Gba-Kamara	Physical Examination Demonstration Dr Ben Major E. Baresford-Cole	Record Keeping Filing of Records C. Spaine-Cole	Preparation for Field Visit A. Maseally	Review of the First Three Weeks Val Gilpin
4.15-4.45	REFLECTION		REFLECTION		REFLECTION