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NORTH CAMEROON

LIVESTOCK AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT 631-0004

END OF TOUR REPORT

By:

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**EXPERIENCE, INCORPORATED**

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## I. BRIEF PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The search for a solution to existing inefficient livestock production practices, uncoordinated efforts of those involved in development of the livestock and agricultural industries, and the accelerating degradation processes negatively affecting the natural resource base of the north has been continuing for 10 years and 10 months as of PACD (April 30, 1985). Between June, 1974 and November, 1977, the present project was identified, studied, designed, and authorized to proceed to solve these and other problems with an A.I.D. funding grant of \$6.2 million which was estimated to be adequate to cover a six year development period. By May of 1978, a project grant agreement had been signed placing the project implementation under the administrative management of CPLS\*, a semi-autonomous appendage of the Ministry of Economy and Planning.

In August of 1978, an advance USAID contract project administrator was assigned to the project and, during his one year tenure, he assisted CPLS to: select the project center site; establish liaison between its own organization, USAID, the project, and the ministries concerned; expedite construction designs and contracts and; initiate construction of project center facilities at Mindif. He also identified and specified basic PIO/C procured commodities for the project, some of which were later found to be inappropriate. CPLS was also assisted in its project center construction efforts by a U.S. national, host country contract, construction supervisor who appeared on the scene in March of 1979 about the same time as the first assigned Cameroonian counterpart for livestock activities. Theoretically, these efforts were to have resulted in an operational project center capable of serving as a base for a U.S. technical assistance team due to arrive in late 1979. In actuality, nothing was ready when the team arrived. The construction supervisor, Mike Orban, departed in June of 1980 with the center still far from being completed.

\*CPLS - Comite Provincial de Lutte contre le Secheresse

## II. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM:

As a result of the signing of a contract to provide technical assistance specialists (July 27, 1979), an Experience, Incorporated team of specialists began to arrive in September, 1979. The team arrived sporadically and over an extended period of time due to the fact that housing and transportation facilities were not available. Since the development was to be a balanced US/Cameroonian project team effort, the straggling arrival of both US and Cameroonian technicians resulted in a rather shaky, delayed start for the project.

The first of the Experience, Incorporated team members to arrive were: Peter Daniells, Chief of Party (September 9, 1979); C.E. Burgett, Jr., Agronomist (November 2, 1979); and TDY Range Management Specialist, Frank Abercrombie (November 3, 1979). Following shortly after was H. Schar, Agricultural Economist (November 15, 1979). Already in place and functioning at the time of arrival of this small element of the team were Mike Orban, construction supervisor (not a team member) and team member Etienne Pamo, the first GRC assigned livestock counterpart.

At that time, the project could boast of one rented house in Maroua and two vehicles, a Peugeot 504 sedan and a Peugeot 404 pickup, the latter being assigned to the construction supervisor who lived in Mindif. Until the arrival of the technical assistance team Chief of Party, the house and the Peugeot 504 (which had formerly served the advance administrator) were being used by the first counterpart, Mr. Pamo - turned over to him by the advance administrator upon his departure. Mr. James Jackson, USAID Project Officer, belatedly corrected the error and took possession of the house and sedan. Some strained relations resulted from this abrupt switch; however, Mr. Pamo rose to the occasion and, a week later, was established in a modern Maroua home and driving an identical Peugeot 504.

III. THE AGRONOMIST: C.E. Burgett, Jr. (November 3, 1979 to June 1, 1980)

Arriving some months after the Chief of Party, Frank Abercrombie and I had our first taste of the new assignment at the Novotel in Maroua. Frank was the first to leave and move in with Daniells and I followed a week or so later as accommodations at the house expanded under the demands. For a short time, until Daniells could locate another house and negotiate a rental contract, we were just one big happy family with one car. Schar, the agricultural economist, was headquartered at CPLS, Garoua where he was provided with a vehicle. The solving of the transport problem became first priority. A partial solution was seized upon when an old discarded USAID Land Cruiser was discovered at Garoua and repaired. This gave Abercrombie, Pamo (whose 504 could not cope with Mindif roads), and me a vehicle with which to look into the situation in the field.

It is important to note at this point that project activities per se could not be launched by the project team (including the Agronomist) until after a first year plan of work and projected budget had been developed. Said plan was to be presented to USAID/Yaounde for approval within 90 days after the arrival of the Team Leader in Yaounde. Having nothing upon which to base such a plan, Pamo and I coordinated with local officials, technical services chiefs, and local traditional leaders to plan and conduct a reconnaissance survey of the situation in 25 village areas throughout the project zone. The survey was conducted from December 5, 1979 to January 24, 1980. Frank, of course, made his field assessments en route to and at the various village areas where we met with agricultural and livestock producers and examined their individual area situations.

The reconnaissance survey proved quite revealing besides providing the project team with an opportunity to brief leaders/producers concerning project objectives and to get a first hand orientation of the livestock and agricultural situation in the countryside. Noted were:

- A traditional system of integrated agriculture/livestock was being practiced. It was inefficiently managed, yet its existence provided the basis for planning closely related project interventions involving improved management which might hold promise of receiving acceptance by producers.
- The only technical problem of great impact identified by both agricultural and livestock producers was that of insufficient numbers of permanent waterpoints.

Lack of wet and dry season forage for grazing was not voluntarily advanced as a problem though 25% acknowledged the problem when it was suggested. Erosion was not volunteered as a problem although its negative impact was observed extensively by the project team.

- Leadership in agricultural and livestock development activities was practically nonexistent except in occasional village areas which had Sarki Sanous representing local producers in matters of animal health.
- Neither livestock nor agricultural producers worked together in groups toward achievement of common objectives. Noted exceptions to this were those few in almost every area who banded together to choose fields for rainy season planting. Also some limited group marketing occurred.
- Group training meetings conducted by agents of technical ministries' services had not been experienced by the producers.
- Agents (monitors and service chiefs) of SODECOTON were those who were the most often seen in the various village areas followed by MINEPIA veterinarians and assistants, with MINAGRI representatives being less often seen. Activities of these agents were service and data collection oriented.
- Those contacted recognized that there were improved agricultural and livestock production techniques, wanted them, and expressed willingness to the project to make an effort to get them.
- Lack of credit was a universally expressed constraint to production.

The successful completion of the reconnaissance survey was the Agronomist's first action toward initiating fulfillment of contracted responsibilities outlined in the E.I. contract which were specifically:

- a. Advise operational level agricultural officials, extension workers and farmers on all agronomic aspects of the agriculture and livestock development project in the Mindif - Moulvoudaye area.
- b. Assist project leader in developing data and judgments for determination of assistance requirements and formulation of annual work plans.

Revelations brought about by the reconnaissance survey, coupled with a more thorough understanding of service-to-farmer functioning capabilities of the technical agencies/organizations serving the pilot project zone, indicated that a closer scrutiny of research available to the project was in order. Basically, it was determined that the existing research was required if the scope of work outlined for the agronomic section of the project was to be covered. It was also determined that the existing research base consisted of: the Livestock and Forage Research Station at WAKWA, Ngaoundere; the IRA crops research station at Maroua; and livestock feeding research at Yagoua. WAKWA research was limited to rice by-product feeding of livestock. IRA Maroua research, with crops only, did not include the rotation or integrated livestock/agriculture research elements. In addition, looking into research being carried out in other countries, it was found that at Zaria, Nigeria, Australia, and Kenya, research was being carried out under conditions somewhat similar to those found in the project zone. Also, the Office of Agriculture, Technical Assistance Bureau, AID/Washington offered a series of technical bulletins supposedly based on considerable research and containing recommendations for crops/ forages, systems, etc. which looked promising at the time on paper. Unfortunately, none of this promising research had been proven (or even tried) in the project zone. Considering this general lack of applicable research, it was decided at that time that an adaptive research capability had to be built into the project before extension could even be considered. This approach to carrying out the responsibilities of the project agronomist was consistent with the description of the required scope of work, the gist of which read as follows:

"The incumbent (Agronomy Specialist) will be concerned with and will advise the project team, the CPLS, and the project area farmers in regard to":

- Increased and improved field crop production through introduction of new varieties.
- Improved soil and water management.
- Improved cultural practices for native and newly introduced crops.
- Crop protection techniques.
- Experimentation at farm and research station level.
- Improved harvesting and processing methods.

A prerequisite for realizing any part of the scope of work noted above is that any promising research has to be tested and found to be adapted to the project zone prior to extending it to farmers. At any rate, planning for the projects 1980 rainy season adaptive research/trials and steps taken toward implementation of these plans resulted in the project obtaining forage and field crops seed from in-country and external sources, establishing a cowpea variety trial in cooperation with SAFGRAD, and completing preparations for establishing over 100 forage and leguminous crops trial plots. In addition, plans and preparations were completed for establishing the peanut and sorghum sections of a 5 ha, 5 year rotation at the project center. This crop rotation was directed toward soil fertility/soil structure improvements, recycling of unused crop by-products and animal wastes back to the soil, grain production for human consumption (the incentive), and by products for livestock feeding trials to be planned in detail with the Range Management Specialist after his arrival.

A suggested nursery, based upon irrigation, was found to be impractical (considering the water shortage) and an unnecessary activity after much time was spent on examining its input and output requirements. In later years, this was found to be a correct decision since Project Center Nord assumed responsibility for field crops production increases, and the reorganization of the project put more stress on pasture forage and leguminous grain and fallow crops associated with livestock production. Also, it was found that nurseries for specific purposes could be established on a case by case basis and watered by hand as needed.

During this first growing season, and until June of 1983 in fact, agronomic activities were implemented catch-as-catch--can with borrowed and makeshift machinery and operational funding uncertainties along with inadequate management and administrative support. To approach a solution to the machinery shortage, I attempted to expedite the availability of project machinery by projecting specifications for project requirements. In connection with project center trials, basic soil testing was carried out with results revealing that the center's soils were among the poorest in the project zone. My attitude toward this was that if crop/forage improvement interventions could be successfully accomplished here, they should be capable of being adapted to other, more productive areas of the zone.

Some detailed surveys within each discipline were to be the responsibility of each technician and as a result, I developed survey requirements for the agronomic and extension elements of the project. These were later coordinated with Schar (Economist) who was delegated the overall responsibility for conducting all studies by the T.A. Team Leader.

IV. THE EXTENSION SPECIALIST: C.E. Burgett, Jr. (June 1, 1980 to April 4, 1985)

As of June 1, 1980, I officially became the project's Extension Specialist, being replaced as agronomist by T.M. Cahalan. It was a gradual phase-over. While keeping up active interest and support in field trials activities, I also spent much time orienting Gipe, our newly arrived range management specialist, in assessing the attitudes of the people/leaders of Moulvoudaye toward a project impact activity to improve their market water supply, and looking closely into the possibilities for developing an extension element of the project.

As explained previously, the project was faced with a requirement to launch an extension activity in support of the major technical activities (eg: range management/conservation and integrated agriculture/livestock) with no existing, cohesive research base from which to operate. In addition, earlier and subsequent observations revealed the nonexistence of any cohesive or effective institutional structure to support a continuing extension activity. A review of organizational support potential existing at the time disclosed the existence of Regional, Departmental, Arrondissement, District, and some Canton based agricultural and livestock services. Upon closer examination it was learned that these services were poorly funded, had inadequate facilities, and lacked personnel in numbers and quality. In the case of the Livestock Services, there appeared to be no attempt made or personnel available to extend improved animal health practices through local participation. Activities of these services were Ministry directed and provided a means of implementing GRC service oriented activities, statistics gathering, observing that producers conformed to government policy and regulations, and functioning as FONEDER (credit) representatives.

In addition, the SODECOTON cotton program was supported by 40 field monitors (functioning basically as production supervisors) in the project zone which at that time encompassed the entire Arrondissement of Mindif. SODECOTON was interested in the project's approach to small farm systems management/-improvement but wanted undeniably proven evidence that the systems were profitable before committing active support to the project in its efforts. Obtaining such proof meant years of testing (pre-extension trials) under local producer management. At Moulvoudaye, a Young Farmers Training Center was training young farm couples (about 25 - 30 per year) in improved farm and home practices. Upon checking with neighbors of returned graduates of the course, I found that the neighbors liked the new approach employed by the returnees and envied their draft animals and equipment, but expressed opinions that the returnees produced no more than they who were

using traditional systems. In short, the Young Farmers Training Center System gave very little promise of turning out the quality of graduates needed for extension work. In Maroua, an agricultural technical school was turning out about 30 mid-level graduates per cycle after having given them a bare minimum of exposure to extension. Also in Maroua, a veterinary school was graduating about the same number of veterinary assistants (animal health nurses). Extension enjoyed a very low priority on its curriculum. Budgets of all these educational facilities were very low with the exception of SODECOTON. Discussions with and observations of the operational approach and attitudes of those associated with these facilities disclosed that they neither had the capability nor the inclination to consolidate their resources and efforts and work together with the project toward a common objective. This is not to say that the potential to do this was not there. The same is true of the many small, seemingly unrelated research efforts scattered throughout the north of Cameroon. It is not difficult to visualize these types of consolidations and the further coordination, expansion, and inputs that would link these scattered efforts (Mindif is an example) to the higher research and educational institutions on the one hand and to the producers and agro-related industries on the other. One does not have to have a vivid imagination to see that there are already institutional frameworks in place to serve to channel vocational research and related agricultural education into rural Cameroon. One could ask the question; Why hasn't vocational research and agricultural education been incorporated into the secondary school system? It is not unthinkable that a technical ministry could have its own educational and research divisions and, with these as foundations, further develop effective and adequate systems of adult and rural youth extension field arms. But they do not. Such an approach is expensive for the tax payers; but, so is the loss of production and marketing potential to the producer land to consumers because it is not done.

So, it was with this existing situation (eg: no appropriate or coordinated research base - no capable, coordinated institutional base to support extension) that a solution to problems impeding the realization of project objectives and the accomplishment of the extension scope of work had to be found. The scope of work projected encompassed:

1. Conducting result and method demonstrations involving new practices.
2. Planning and conducting training activities for farmers and livestock producers.
3. Selection and adaptation of information and skills consistent with other technicians' findings.

4. Study social factors affecting producers' acceptance of change together with sociologist.
5. Apply use of audio visual materials.
6. Establish/improvement of functioning of groups to reach project objectives.

Duties of the Extension Specialist included:

1. Conducting with other field agency representatives an operational and evaluation aspect of extension including motivational factors.
2. Identify in-service training needs and coordinate with other technicians to plan and conduct such training.
3. Participate in annual work plans.
4. With other US and Cameroonian technicians, identify technical practices to be extended.
5. Focus on integrated livestock/agriculture activity extension requirements.

While the above scope of work and required duties of the extension specialist are commendable and not to be ignored, they, in themselves do not lead to achievement of specific objectives but are examples of a limited number of necessary guidelines which must be (and have been) followed in order to reach targeted objectives.

Early on, since none existed, it was apparent that an effective pilot demonstration skills and information delivery system had to be developed if improved technical practices were to be channeled to the producer. The principles of the Land Grant College system (not a replica) had to be involved if a successful extension approach was to be demonstrated. This meant that the entire project approach had to be focused on: (1) establishing an adaptive research base; (2) training U.S. and Cameroonian project technicians through on-the-job experience to function as both adaptive research technicians and extension specialists and; (3) establish a field network of agricultural/ livestock monitors along with a congruous network of traditional leaders in order to form the final links between the producers and research findings.. While it was realized that this information/skills delivery system would be temporary in nature, it was also realized that it would be necessary to

demonstrate the requirements and operation of such a system if technical ministry and institutional research and agricultural education follow-up (project 2nd or 3rd phase) were to be identified and brought to the attention of such institutions.

With the arrival of Gipe (Range Management Specialist) and Leatham (Agricultural Engineer) in May, 1980, and Kulibaba (Sociologist) and Cahalan (Agronomist) in June, 1980, the US component of the project team was completed nine months after the arrival of the Chief of Party. Three months later (September, 1980), five additional Cameroonian counterparts reported to the project. They included: Nuza (Livestock); Engoulou (Extension); Tsamo (Agronomy); Djalla (Animal Health); and Djitik (Agricultural Engineering). Djitik worked with the project two weeks only (then was recalled to Garoua, CPLS headquarters, where he remained on the project roles until 1982). So, by September, 1980, one year after the arrival of the Project Leader Daniells, he finally had a joint team of Cameroonian and US technicians with which he could work. It follows then that this was the first time that all technicians could coordinate with one another.

Completion of staffing of the project team also gave the green light to joint planning and implementation of complementary activities related to specialists and technicians of the various disciplines represented. This does not mean that first year planned activities were not moving ahead in one manner or another. Field crops trials were underway. Schar (Economist) moved from Garoua to Maroua and began planning a baseline socio-economic study. Kulibaba (Sociologist) began making contacts with nomads. Cahalan, Leatham and Burgett worked at getting the project center ready for occupancy, setting up temporary water systems, assisting Gipe with enclosure installations and establishing local support for his grazing block surveys, and assisting Leatham with road layouts, supporting center installations, and hauling water.

By June, 1980, it had become apparent to team members studying the pilot zone development requirements/possibilities that the input/output expectations as originally planned were inconsistent. Action initiated by Daniells culminated in a request from the Minister, MINEPIA, to the Director of USAID (December 4, 1980) to redesign the project. Complying with that request, the USAID Director (Levin) requested the project T.A.\* team to assist the USAID staff with a revision of the Project Paper, a request which was later changed to developing a major amendment to the original project agreement.

The period that followed this request consumed a major part of the technical assistance team's efforts; however, certain other activities continued. Team members worked

together to assist Gipe by initiating surveys, expediting contacts with traditional, technical and official leaders, developing a design and grazing schedule for initiation of the development of grazing Block I. A seed drying floor was designed and constructed to meet agronomic specifications. The original, and, at that time, useless generator shed was renovated to serve as a temporary seed storage facility. Guard-post shelters were constructed. Compost making trials were established. Eight hectares of land were secured at Moulvoudaye and a trials center established there in cooperation with MINAGRI technical personnel and traditional leaders in that area. A project center road system was laid out and established. Water hauling became an everyday tasks for the extension and agronomy specialists. These are a few of the activities requiring the time of the extension specialist. Not extension? Perhaps not directly, but it was recognised that all efforts had to be directed toward facilitating operational effectiveness of project technicians in order to expedite establishment of trials and generation of information applicable to the project zone without which extension efforts are useless.

Since the strategy was to develop the existing traditional system of organization and authority into an effective extension skills and information delivery system, the extension effort in development of the first grazing block and its component interventions was focused upon working with the existing village organizations and leaders in planning the interventions, explaining responsibilities and benefits, and encouraging active participation. Response was positive, if somewhat wary. In this same way, by the latter part of April, 1981, six pre-extension trial cooperators (demonstration farmers) were actively participating after having been chosen by their fellow producers and leaders. It is interesting to note that by the first week of June, 1981, 60% of pasture demarcation lines (firebreak lines) in Block No. 1 had been rough-cut by hand. By July 8th cooperating village chiefs and producers were informed that they could initiate controlled grazing in their first sections of pasture in Block I. Orientation/training meetings concerning controlled grazing principles, techniques and procedures were held for all producers in the grazing block during the week of June 15, 1981. This approach of involving producers/leaders in planning and decision making related to recommended interventions continued throughout the life of the project. It was a new experience for them. Initiative came slowly.

\* T.A. - Technical Assistance

During the period between June 1, 1980 and July 15, 1982, the date of approval of the much buffeted, much revised amendment No. 5 to the Project Agreement, the project was, in fact, not "marking time" as was reported in some of the Yaounde media. True, there was a moratorium of 16 months on new funding imposed by USAID which was in effect until there was reasonable assurance that positive action by the GRC on reorganization of the project was imminent. This moratorium was extended to 19 months since the AID/W authorization to the mission was contingent on the successful culmination of a satisfactory project agreement amendment which was realized 3 months after the AID authorization. There were, of course, additional delays in getting the funds into action such as the time required for preparation and processing fund earmarking documentation and the time required to secure such funds from Paris and their subsequent transfer to the project.

In actual fact, the new project design and implementation plan outlined in the project reorganization proposal was being implemented as fast as available personnel and funding would allow with the Experience, Incorporated contract being utilized as the authorized vehicle for providing operational funds as a stop-gap measure. Some selected examples of "marking time" activities included:

- Demonstration grazing Block I was functionally completed and was entering into its second operational growing season. It lacked only livestock water and physical conservation development.
- Two years of cattle feeding trials were completed.
- Local traditional village leaders and producers in the grazing Block I area were receiving rotational grazing and integrated agriculture/livestock technical management training and experience.
- Fourteen pre-extension trials (to evolve into result demonstrations) were established and operating under local cooperating farmer management.
- Support by traditional leaders for project interventions was successfully being developed.
- The project economist completed data collection for a base-line socio-economic study and produced four excerpt reports related to the surveys.

- Coordination was established with FONADER, SODECOTON, Projet Centre Nord, IRA, and IRZ although initiatives to establish such coordination predominately originated from the project. SODECOTON was the exception and actively sought project cooperation until a change in Maroua SODECOTON Division Directors occurred and the project's political, administrative and technical channels were switched from the Department of Maroua to the newly created Department of Kaele.
- A tour for nomad and sedentary leaders of project center crops and forage trials was held and several meetings held with these leaders to resolve differences between them concerning their different styles of livestock production management.
- Surveys of two additional grazing block and integrated agriculture/livestock farming systems demonstration areas were accomplished with voluntary involvement of traditional leaders and producers. As a result of these surveys, two additional grazing block complexes (II and III) were designed by 90 day TDY range management specialist Rasmussen with the assistance of traditional leaders, Cameroonian livestock counterpart Nuza, and sociologist Kulibaba who discussed the socio/physical aspects of grazing block establishment with involved peoples of the areas.
- The self-help element of the project was better understood when cooperating groups of Block I and in the completed section of Block II turned out en masse to clean their completed firebreaks as a precaution against dry season (1981-82) forage losses from uncontrolled fires.
- A project activity identification campaign was conducted (is still continuing) to erect signs identifying the project, its interventions, and its cooperating villages and demonstrators. Psychologically, this activity also added a prestige factor immeasurable, but definitely of value and subtly rewarding to communities and individual producers cooperating.
- Another effort of the project to gain further understanding of the principles and techniques of their application employed by the project was the distribution of copies of the project's quarterly status reports to all agencies, offices, and organizations related to project objectives. This rather successful extension method of creating an awareness of what

the project was all about was brought to an abrupt halt when USAID changed the report format "because no one ever read the one produced by the project". Feedback from other recipients of the reports contradicted this opinion.

- A monthly project newsletter was established by the project and distributed to all related agencies and organizations and to 500 french reading school children each month with the objective that the children would discuss with their family in the evenings the gist of what they had read. Unfortunately, the project's personnel shortage situation has precluded to-date making a quantitative evaluation of the value of this trial activity.
- Two project counterparts (extension - livestock) and two Sub Sector Service Chiefs (agriculture - livestock) together with the T.A. team agronomist and extension specialist toured Ahmadou Bello University and the National Animal Production Research INstitute at Zaria, Nigeria. The University had little to offer but contacts made at the Institute were worth the trip.
- Tours of cooperating "demonstrators'" farm systems and the grazing block system were held for cooperating producers who were also treated to tours of the project center trials along with interested agency/-organizations representatives. The project's transportation capacity was always taxed to the limit on these occasions (about 300 could ride).
- Two agency/organization/project coordination meetings were held at the initiative of the project with good attendance, much discussion, and inconclusive results.
- A survey of the animal health situation as it related to the project zone was conducted by Dr. Antroinen, TDY veterinarian, and Dr. Dairou Djalla, project animal health technician.
- The project was visited by Claude M'Pouma, Technical Council for the President as well as by the Minister of Agriculture, Director of Agriculture, Governor of the North Province, Prefet of Maroua, and members of the National Assembly. These visits were always accompanied by from 300 to 400 traditional leaders and producers from the project zone. Each visiting group received a project team briefing and tour of the center's adaptive research trials. More often than not, when time permitted, Block I activities were toured.

- The windmill, providing water to the Moulvoudaye livestock market, was repaired and later made functional as a project impact project. Unfortunately, the well went dry sometime later and before the special interest group responsible for its maintenance could go into action.
- At the project's initiative, SODECOTON cooperated with the project on obtaining credit through FONADER for project farm systems cooperators, a noble effort which was blocked by the Prefet of Maroua at the time. Reason given was that there was a quota of loans available and he could not give priority to project cooperators.
- Five series of meetings were held at cooperating villages in the Block I and II areas and two series in the projected Block III area. These meetings with producer-cooperators involved: the concept of the project; controlled grazing management techniques; integrated small farms management techniques (as far as was known); producer/leader/project technical and social coordination; and grazing block system development benefits and responsibilities of involved parties.
- Coordination with the Service of Water and Forests (MINAGRI) was effected and gully erosion control trials were established. Unfortunately, the four species of shrubs and trees recommended by the GRC service of Eau et Forets to serve as natural erosion barriers failed to become established.
- Seeds for continued establishment of adaptive trials of food and forage crops were procured from world--wide sources and incorporated into trials at the project center.
- Two counterpart houses were built by CPLS at the project center.

In addition to the above, the project met all of its reporting requirements, kept all of its vehicles running, successfully (at times) juggled the logistic, program and commodity support requirement from Garoua, Maroua, and occasionally Yaounde, and assisted USAID in its reorganization efforts to the best of its capability to do so. As extension specialist and since September, 1981, team leader as well, I could not get out of any of it ... was in on all of it.

V. THE EXTENSION SPECIALIST/TEAM LEADER: C.E. Burgett, Jr.  
(September 1, 1981 to April 30, 1985)

After the signing of the Project Agreement Amendment No. 5, the successful realization of which consumed an enormous amount of time of the extension specialist (as well as the other members of the team) both at the project and Yaounde levels, the project could legally work toward objectives set forth in that document (toward which activities noted in section IV above were, in fact, directed). However, by July 15, 1982 the only members of the original technical assistance team remaining (the others having completed their tours of duty or having had their positions eliminated by the reorganization) were the extension specialist, the agronomist, and for a short time, the sociologist. We were not quite back to square one, but close. The project Cameroonian administrative management support and program support staffing was incomplete. Insufficient data for extending livestock practices had been generated (though the application of universally accepted crop and rotational grazing principles continued to be sound enough to continue working with leaders/producers on demonstration grazing block interventions). Water development and adequate firebreak systems had not been established since the project had no heavy equipment (until May of 1983). Agriculture/livestock feeding/-forage trials were progressing (painfully) with a farm tractor borrowed from CPLS and modified animal drawn implements scrounged from the Agricultural Technical School, Maroua.

At this point we can look at the reorganization document and compare what we were doing in extension (noted in section IV above) with what we were supposed to be doing and what was being achieved from those efforts:

Extension

1. "The project will provide extension support to agencies and organizations serving the project zone. It will plan and execute, in coordination with official and local leadership, training programs, tours, demonstrations, seminars and field days designed to establish an information and skills delivery system from the project to the livestock and agricultural producers.
2. "The project will also provide training and material requirements necessary to establish, execute, and evaluate controlled grazing and integrated livestock-/agriculture demonstrations. Coordination will be effected with concerned agencies (MINEPIA,

MINAGRI), organizations (SODECOTON), local leaders, and producers thorough methods outlined in 1. above to realize maximum adoption of the demonstrated improved practices."

3. "An extension information sub-activity will be supported by the project to maximize coordination and dissemination of applicable research originating from the project and other agencies. This will facilitate training of agents and leaders and further understanding and adoption of improved agricultural practices by producers."
4. "Training at the Mindif center facility will be provided for local leaders and extension agents."

Duties of the Extension Specialist/Team Leader:

1. Coordinate technical assistance team inputs/outputs in planning, implementation, and evaluation with respect to project objectives and management requirements.
2. Represent the technical team in coordinating project activities with related activities of other agencies, organizations, and USAID.
3. Assume leadership in implementing project activities involving participation of producers, leaders, organizations, and agencies.
4. Jointly plan, implement, and evaluate training programs (utilizing various extension methods) for project grazing block and integrated agriculture/-livestock activities to include: postes veterinaires, postes agricoles, SODECOTON personnel, local traditional leaders, and producer innovators.
5. Develop training material utilizing proven adaptable research results and apply through a train-the-trainer approach.
6. Provide leadership and coordinate with project management in planning of all project activities in order to assure their continuity and expansion.
7. Evaluate and report problems/progress in extension and related project activities.
8. Provide on-the-job training for cameroonian counterparts.

Since I do not want to make a shaggy dog story out of this report, I will let the reader draw his own conclusions as to what was or was not being done by the extension component of the project up to this time.

I have already explained the extension component and its related progress up to this point, July 15, 1982. I will now regress and explain my approach toward realization of the project purpose in my capacity as technical assistance team leader/extension specialist. To better understand the reasons for this approach, a review of the project purpose is in order. The purpose is ... "To demonstrate in a pilot zone the feasibility of implementing through local organizations a series of technical practices for integrating and intensifying livestock and agricultural production while reversing the natural resource degradation process and improving the resource base".

Looking at this stated purpose closely, you will see underlined "to demonstrate". This presupposes that you are establishing a result demonstration and ... that you have or are going to have some proven practices or systems to demonstrate. A demonstration is an extension method, a way of creating interest in, involvement with, satisfaction because of involvement, and adoption of a particular intervention or series of technical practices by those who extension is trying to reach to produce desired change. The next underlined word is "feasibility". This word slipped in means that there are some doubts as to whether or not what you are going to attempt to demonstrate will work or not. In other words, if you are going to "demonstrate a series of technical practices", YOU WILL NECESSARILY HAVE TO PROVE BEFOREHAND THAT SUCH PRACTICES ARE ADAPTED to conditions found locally and that they are superior to traditional practices in overcoming constraints impeding achievement of project objectives. One does not "demonstrate" a failure or an unknown. You do, however, test the adaptability of that unknown to perform under a given set of constant and variable conditions. Also underlined, we see that this "series of technical practices" is to be implemented "through local organizations". This,, in turn, presupposes that you have a framework of local organizations that can serve or be developed to serve as an effective skills and knowledge/-information delivery system through which this "series of technical practices" can be channeled.

So, from the above, it is apparent that we had a problem to solve if we were to arrive at the farmers' fields or the livestock producers pastures with a "series of technical practices for integrating and intensifying livestock and agricultural production" while at the same time ... etc.

My reasoning as team leader/extension specialist from September 1, 1981 and in fact, since my entry into the project scene, was that in order to establish this pilot "demonstration" with all of its individual component interventions, the project had to first establish a sound adaptive research base related to project objectives. In other words, unless the project could generate some proven practices, nothing could be demonstrated and there would not be any need for a skills and information delivery system. This of course is taking the extreme viewpoint of the concept. One could always demonstrate application of the principles of crop rotation and rest-rotation grazing with information and proven techniques which are applicable throughout much of the world's semi-arid regions. However, this would simply mean that there would be new management approaches to traditional crops and pastures with no assurances that the optimum level of technical and social inputs was being applied. Therefore, to supplement traditional management practices, a series of improved technical practices had to be identified and then applied in a manner that would ensure maximum levels of adoption of these practices. It's the manner in which the various ethnic cultures respond to incentives to change that requires intensive study before a full scale extension campaign can be launched to introduce the improved practices. And who is going to identify which are the most effective incentives? To the project, it seemed fairly obvious that unless various incentives to change were offered to producers, it would be next to impossible to study their reactions to the changes. I do not want to belabor this point; but, I feel confident that the project learned invaluable lessons concerning identifying effective incentives and then applying those incentives or modifying less effective ones while, at the same time, involving these same producers in a realistic, dynamic development (change) situation (eg: the grazing blocks and the integrated agriculture/livestock farm systems).

Therefore, development of an adaptive research base had top priority if there was to be any chance of developing a delivery system for demonstrating (extending) proven practices which would have reasonable chance of success of gaining producer acceptance in the pilot zone. Coupled with this need for a sound adaptive research base was the need to establish an unbroken chain (delivery system) to the producers, who in the end, are the resource whose capabilities, understanding, and sound attitudes toward acceptance of interventions will determine whether the objectives of increased production and reversed degradation processes negatively affecting the resource base are to be realized. The strategy here was to develop a research/extension specialist capability within our project team and its individual members. Nine mid-level technicians were also programmed to form another of the vital links in the chain. Grazing block pasture and agricultural

monitors were to form the final link between the project and the traditional leaders/producer innovators. The final grass roots link, of course, was to be that which was formed between leaders/producer innovators and the masses of producers per se operating within the project activity zones. This strategy/concept was sound under conditions existing at that time and the same holds true today (April 30, 1985). It is a workable, if not a permanent solution, but workable enough to provide the pilot demonstration of improved self-disciplined systems which is necessary in order to demonstrate the application of development principles for any GRC follow-up program. The functional concept expressed here might be better visualized by Diagram 1.

The arrangements noted in Diagram 1 would allow technicians maximum time for both research and extension planning, execution, training, and evaluation. During the implementation processes, the GRC continued to support the project fund-wise but did not fill the required positions calling for mid-level technicians. This left project technicians in a situation of having to carry out all training, contacts, and surveillance at the level of the grazing block monitors. In a large percentage of the cases, this meant that technicians were obliged to reduce planning and research activities in order to assure adequate time for realization of satisfactory monitor performance and leader/innovator-producer understanding and acceptance of interventions.

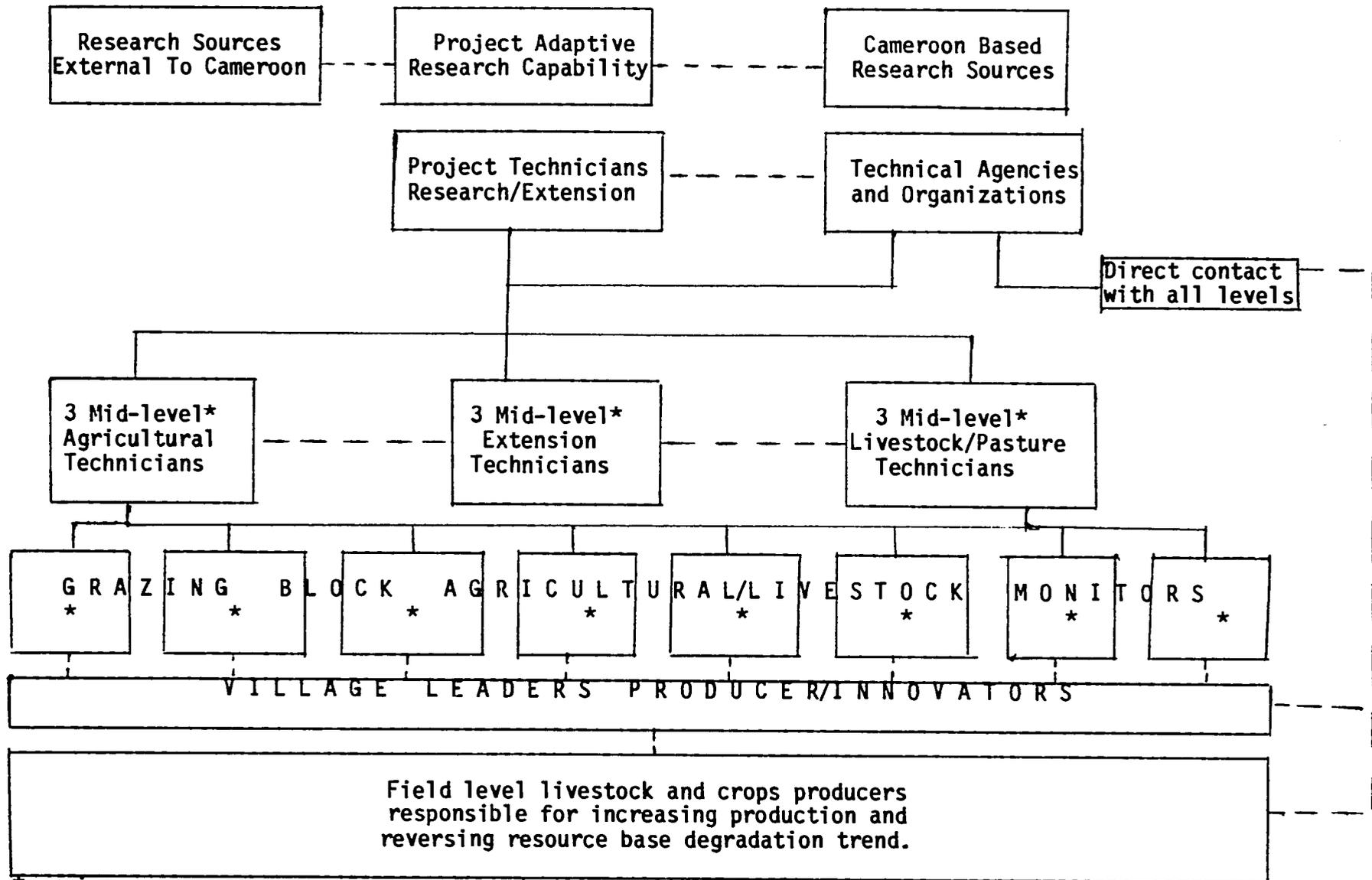
The conceptual strategy illustrated by Diagram 1 also presupposes that technicians and management would have adequate administrative management and program support (eg: Deputy director, bilingual administrative assistant, qualified commodity control personnel, timely infusions of operating funds, functional vehicles, and the necessary farm and heavy equipment) on a timely basis. It also presupposes that personnel non-supportive of the project's interests would be removed and replaced as required for efficiency of application of project resources. Everyone knows that this did not happen and that the hard-pressed project team had to struggle to prove that the project purpose could be achieved using this approach while, at the same time, it had to overcome the shortfalls of support which was properly the joint responsibility (clearly spelled out in the Project Agreement) of GRC and USAID.

The success of this approach was also predicated on the assumption that there would be formed a technical coordination committee to provide technical and planning guidance to the project. Within the context of the Project agreement, a proposal of a functional concept of such a committee was presented for consideration to the Minister (MINEPIA) who reserved the right to determine the purpose, functioning, membership, and objective of such a council. No official response or action

DIAGRAM I

FUNCTIONAL CONCEPT OF DEVELOPING

A PROJECT COORDINATED SKILLS/KNOWLEDGE DELIVERY SYSTEM



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\*serving

was received concerning this proposal which was advanced to the Ministry in early 1984. Unofficial word filtered back to the project team via the Project Director that the Minister had requested his staff to prepare a "text" of the proposed council --- and that the technical council had somehow, in his mind, become an administrative council. Further clouding the issue, were processes going on within the ministry (since April of 1983) to change the status of the project to that of a mission presumably with the intention of providing more autonomy and permanence to the effort. While many ministerial responses to the project support requirements (specifically to the filling of unfilled authorized positions) were, according to the project director, held up pending the realization of this change, the change never came to fruition. This indecisive inaction on the part of the ministry which, according to the project director, was blocking the project's capability to build up the required staff, was brought to USAID's attention many times yet, I am unaware of any attempt made by USAID to attempt to intercede with the ministry to move the ministry off dead-center on this point. One needs not have a very vivid imagination to realize that, if the project approach were to succeed, project technicians already on board would have to fill the functional requirements of the vacant positions and those of the inactive filled positions (see chart 1).

The strategy also pre-supposed that, with all required positions filled, incumbents would receive in-service and on-the-job training which, by PACD or entry of the project into the second phase, would provide them with sufficient experience to carry on the project program activities with or without external assistance. Unfilled positions, then, precluded realization of the full training potential offered by the U.S. technicians available to the project.

Finally, the approach projected that certain numbers of Cameroonian technicians would be trained in the United States and return to assume the development responsibilities of their American counterparts. It is interesting to recall that the original project reorganization proposal anticipated a requirement for a minimum of 15 long term participants and 7 U.S. technicians. The compromise amendment to the Pro Ag reflected the strongly negative position assumed by the ministries at that time toward continued T.A. assistance which included an economist or a sociologist and towards long term participant training. The compromise, as everyone knows who has read the reorganization document, provided for 5 T.A. technicians and 4 long term participants.

Of the 5 U.S. technicians approved to assist GRC to implement the reorganized project, two were already on board and two were not needed until arrival of the project's heavy equipment. The remaining Key long term Range Management position remained unfilled from June 1981 (after the departure of Gipe) to November 1982 or 16 months due to precrastination over the Experience Incorporated nominee first by USAID and then by GRC. One finds it difficult to justify criticism of the project's "demonstrational approach" towards realizing the project purpose when resource support of this caliber to the project was involved.

Of the 4 long term U.S. participants agreed upon in the reorganization document, one departed on time and has returned. One participant's departure for training was delayed more than 3 months due to inability of U.S. educational institutions to find a place for him. One spent 3 years obtaining a Ph.D. in Range Management and then, because he stayed against his minister's wishes to complete his Ph.D. (with encouragement from USAID), he was transferred from MINEPIA upon his return and punished by not being reassigned to the project. One wonders who was punished. The participant? The project (which needed his services)? MINEPIA's livestock program in the North? USAID (who financed the 3 years of training)? Or the livestock producers of northern Cameroon? The fourth agreed upon participant (an Agricultural engineer) was never nominated by the GRC as of PACD April 30, 1985. One could ask the question: where in the chain of project administration/-management does the blame for these types of implementation slippages belong? Can one logically assign the blame to the project approach and progress toward establishing the pilot zone demonstration or are there other higher level management deficiencies that must be corrected if projects of this nature and complexity are to be successful?

The project director is responsible for providing the ministry and USAID with progress, and annual financial reports. The annual report was to contain the next years budget and implementation plan as well as reports covering significant achievements or problems related to project activities. As the only non-director-status project manager available between September 1, 1981 and February 17, 1983, I met these requirements in what I considered to be a satisfactory manner with the exception of getting the first GRC (82/83) budget submission in late (CPLS informed the project only days before submission was due that the project, not they, would be responsible (even though they did not turn over the responsibility for administrative management of the Project until February 17, 1983). Another exception was that a cohesive project annual report was never published. Quarterly progress reports indicating project status were, however, regularly written and widely distributed to project related agencies and

organizations. Worth mentioning for the truly interested, discerning analyst is the project team's review of the Project Evaluation Report. The review covers questions/ criticisms leveled at the project design and project level implementation approach from conception up to December 12, 1983. I'll spare the reader of this report any repetition of the contents of the team's review; but, I will say that no one who is a realist about and seriously interested in reaching livestock production, integration of agriculture and livestock, and reversing the trends of resources degradation should fail to read this review. It should be attached to the Evaluation Report (January 1984) and be required reading. I fear this is not and will not be the case however, as when on a recent visit to USAID, I requested a copy of both reports. Only the Evaluation team's report was available for distribution.

After the appointment of a Cameroonian comptable (accountant) in February, 1982 and a project director in February 1983, the reporting requirements levied on the project team, and particularly the technical team leader, were managed with some what more discipline. Here is basically how it worked after the appointment of the project director in february 1981. For USAID quarterly progress and financial reports: the US team leader drafted the progress report with inputs from other team members, usually U.S. members, and the project Director approved and often extracted much of his own GRC reports directly from the final version of the report. This "joint" report, conforming in part to reorganization document requirements, was then sent to USAID. The project director sent his version to MINEPIA. I received a copy of the GRC version if I thought to ask for it. A copy of the english version (while we had translators, they were in English and French) went to the Project Director. I am unaware of what interchange of these reports occurred at the Yaounde level between USAID and MINEPA.

For financial reports, the comptable processed receipts and prepared financial summaries for all project accounts (USAID/GRC). For USAID Grant funds, the team leader controlled cash on hand and disbursements were covered by receipts or estimated expenditure advance receipts (later adjusted when actual expenditure receipts or statements were received). Checks concerning USAID accounts were signed jointly by the Project Director and the team leader. Checks and cash related to the GRC accounts are rarely seen or heard of by the T.A. team leader as most GRC purchases came as a surprise after the fact. This practice, of course, is not expressly ruled out or discouraged by the reorganizational document.

One word about quarterly implementation plans, annual reports with annual implementation plans, and budgets: quarterly progress reports were no problem and were helpful in

reviewing activities. The annual implementation plan served the purpose very well and could be changed during quarterly reviews so the project felt there was no need for going through the exercise of developing/preparing quarterly implementation plans. In connection with the annual report which covers a calendar year, I found that, with the work load of technicians (double and triple duty filling in for unfilled positions), these were difficult to produce and require enormous amounts of time and administrative support. Quarterly reports should have sufficed until such time as improved project administration and program support relieved technicians of some of their extra curricula field and clerical duties. Some technicians managed to produce a 1984 annual report. Two produced a 1983 report. In no case were the reports completed on a deadline basis where they could be organized, edited and summarized. It is not practical for USAID to require budget projections in connection with annual report submissions. By April, some technicians had completed their portion of the annual report. Others had not. With GRC FY starting in July, the budget preparation and submissions usually proceeded this date by roughly a month or 6 weeks in practice.

Administration Management responsibilities of the Project Director for expanding project activities was usually effected as follows: Project Team Leader or individual technicians pointed out an action requirement requiring the Director's attention. Sometimes the Director noted action requirement observed during his inspection trips to field activities. The project team leader followed up with the director to assure that technical team recommendations were considered and appropriate action taken. Actions noted by the director were usually, not always, taken independently without prior coordination with team leader or U.S. technicians. All R.C. funded construction contracts were negotiated behind closed doors or at least, without an invitation to the T.A. team leader or concerned U.S. technicians to enter into contract negotiations. On other matters, technical advice offered by team leader/technicians was usually followed and recommended actions expedited by the director. Lack of a project deputy director and administrative assistant significantly reduced the project director's capacity to respond effectively to all recommended or required actions. Under such conditions not all recommended actions received adequate follow-up although a concerted effort was made by the T.A. team leader to expedite required actions needing the director's attention.

Program wise, since July 15, 1982 and through PACD considerable progress in project implementation has been made, although it is recognized by the project team that planned first phase activities and objectives will not have been met. In view of this fact, the project team has, throughout this period, been signaling USAID that due to slippages in project

support which precluded reaching planned outputs in the allotted time, an extension of the first phase is necessary to adequately prepare GRC to continue and expand project interventions. Adequate documentation of this can be found in the project team's review of the project evaluation report. This is still the professional opinion and official position of the project T.A. assistance team.

In the case of the heavy equipment specialist, the existing makeshift counterpart arrangement, for which he had such high hopes, is entirely inadequate to assure any disciplined continuity of the position responsibilities consistent with program requirements. A trained experienced agricultural engineer who understands range management, water development and conservation requirements in relation to necessary agricultural engineering inputs is needed. Mr. Bouba, who has made and is still making a valiant effort to fill this gap in recent years, has the handicap of not having (or desiring) the training required to establish the necessary agricultural engineering expertise the range management division of the project needs for overall coordination of engineering related range development. Wandabe, the new range management counterpart, is promising and dedicated and every effort should be exerted to provide him with required advanced training in the livestock disciplines indicated as desired by the project team. Mr. Mougadougou, Chief de Division, Paturages et Hydrauliques, Kaele has all the necessary interest, experience and initiative required to be a positive influence on development of the livestock sector of the north. Again every effort should be extended by USAID/MINEPIA to reapply (when he returns from US training in 1985) Mr. Nuza's newly acquired expertise and previous project experience toward realization of project objectives through whatever project follow-up approach MINEPIA chooses to make after PACD. Hercule Tchoukdira, who has received extensive on-the-job and in-service training as extension counterpart since his entry into the project effort in early 1982, is dedicated, dependable and motivated. GRC needs people like him to provide leadership in future development. Without fail, he should receive advanced degree training to assure his professional capability and the status required to perform the role he will need to fill if skills and knowledge are to be transmitted to producers in the future. Returned participant (extension), Engoulou, needs to be encouraged to continue his energetic, independent initiative and drive to continue the establishment of self disciplined management of resources by producers. He is tirelessly following up on developing the capabilities of established village and grazing block councils to serve as the organizational structure to get this job done. Counterpart Project Director, Dairou Djalla will benefit from short term U.S. training on project management if he continues to provide leadership in development of the livestock industry of the north. Since development of the

livestock industry and its associated agricultural industry is a many faceted effort, this counterpart will need further broadening of his understanding of the interrelationships of the various disciplines which come to play in the development processes if he is to positively contribute to long term GRC development programs in the North. If he is to be utilized by GRC to meet long term development requirements, further consideration should be given to broadening his understanding and therefore capabilities to direct (manage) complex development programs requiring decisions which affect multidisciplinary inputs and outputs.

One final note concerning the formal organizational infrastructure established to assure that a vehicle exists through which to channel skills and knowledge to the producer and encourage his active participation in helping himself and his fellow producers. As pointed out earlier, the project accomplished its design of activity planning with the inputs and cooperation of existing official, technical and traditional organizations. The project had no authority to command cooperation so it was up to the project to demonstrate convincing evidence that active participation was desirable and beneficial to all those making the effort. Abstract explanations of costs/benefits of becoming involved in the project's demonstrational efforts were not understood --- could not be visualized since cooperators had experienced nothing during their lives to enable them to understand the concept of what the development was all about. In addition, the past experiences with the program/project starts and unfulfilled or insufficient follow-throughs presented the project with cooperators who were wary of official promises. After all, their traditional agriculture and livestock management systems had seen them through until the present, Why risk abandoning it for some new, misunderstood approach? Also, why cooperate overtly with the project with new approaches and lose face with peers if there was a risk of failure? So the project had to develop special management systems and to encourage cooperator participation in managing those systems before their interest to actively commit themselves to the discipline of development responsibilities could be realized. Thus, a physical form of grazing block and a physical form of small integrated agriculture/livestock management were needed to illustrate implementation of principles and to offer the necessary experience of involvement and, hopefully, satisfaction with the experience.

With the nearing of completion of physically visible grazing blocks and related activities, a decision was made by the project to propose to official, technical, and traditional authorities the formal organizational structure involving formation of systems of village and grazing block development councils. The proposed was received enthusiastically. Organizational/operational guidelines were produced to form the basis for these systems and for the necessary registration campaign which would provide a means of evaluating the operating efficiency of the system. Experience to date, after the formation and training of 60 village and 3 block councils, indicates that cooperating leaders and producers are learning to take their new responsibilities seriously. Many have expressed that they now begin to see the big picture of development related to the systems within which they have been participating. With intensive follow-up and reliably visible profitable experience offered to them through the system, I feel that the cooperators and their leaders will be able to realize, in one form or another the objectives of the project as expressed by the project purpose. However, until ministerial and institutional (education and research) authorities unify their effort on a national basis and cooperate to provide the balanced input necessary to assure a broad program vehicle capable of extending the project approach, I do not feel that the project has any where to go outside of its present project enclave. GRC of course has a prerequisite role to play, that of considering and implementing policy changes which have been indicated as necessary by the project in its many reports.

One problem associated with realization of the full development potential of the block and village registration system being introduced at the present time is that the project requirement for and recommendations to introduce computer technology into the project program met with lack of support. Therefore, even though the project's registration process has gained an entrée to producers' confidence and into the forbidden area of determination of exact numbers of livestock owned and herded in the project activity area, the data generated along with raw economics base-line data produced by economist Schar may end up stagnating on some dusty shelves.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS:

1. The project strategy for demonstrating a realistic approach to implementation of introduced intervention leading to realization of the project purpose is viable.
2. A democratic self disciplined system of local management of development resources has been accepted by local organizational/traditional leaders and producers but will require intensive institutional and governmental follow-up to survive.
3. Problems of adapting project interventions to the project zone have largely been identified and, in most instances, solved to the point where serious study by interested ministries and institutions of project recommendations could complement the existing GRC capability to formulate a successful follow-up program approach toward realization of the goal established for the project.
4. Projects of this nature should not be attempted jointly by GRC and donor nation unless there is a complete understanding and agreement with built in follow up capacities at national, regional and department levels concerning goals, purpose, implementation responsibilities, and expected inputs/outputs.
5. Cameroon and the U.S. government have, by discontinuing existing technical assistance, run the risk of losing a tenuous grip that has been achieved on the democratic, voluntary cooperation (active involvement in realization of project objectives) by groups and individuals at the grass roots level.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That future projects of this type in Cameroon be developed and implemented from the top down, not from bottom up. So that support requirements at the project level will be understood and developed at each level to assure effective application of development resources at the project implementation level.
2. That the USAID and the GRC recognize that the problems existing in the Northern plains concerning the agricultural and livestock industries can only be solved when the people of the area fully understand the problems and play a significant role in their solutions.
3. That the USAID and the GRC recognize that the problems which plagued the livestock and agricultural industries of the North in the 1970's are still there. That \$10.5 million of US/GRC resources have been expended to establish an entrée to the solution of those problems. That such an entrée has been established and that immediate continuing joint action be taken by both governments together with the concerned peoples of the north to evolve a broad program solution from this small nucleus of democratic effort initiated by the pilot project.
4. That USAID/Cameroon incorporate the project team's review of the mid-term project evaluation report as an attachment to the evaluation report.