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SUBJECT . END OF TOUR REPORT--GEORGE B. VIGIL

REFERENCE . M. O. 325.1 Control No. U-513

Transmitted herewith is the End of Tour Report prepared and submitted by George B. Vigil, Rural Youth Advisor USAID/Liberia.

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END OF TOUR REPORT---GEORGE B. VIGIL

I. Introduction

This End of Tour Report of George B. Vigil, Rural Youth Advisor, Position No. 0161, USAID/Liberia covers the period from September 21, 1963 to June 10, 1964. This period was interrupted by a 45-day temporary duty assignment to USAID/Nigeria where the advisor was transferred following his assignment in Liberia.

II. General Objective and Specific Goals

The basic objective of the youth program of the Agriculture Extension Division, Department of Agriculture, is the development of rural boys and girls through a sound 4-H type organization. The development of rural youth will in due time contribute toward the over-all objective of the Agriculture Extension program and of the USAID Mission in Liberia: to assist in the economic and social development of the country.

The basic function of the advisor was to continue (this was the advisor's second tour) providing the leadership, advice, training, and other assistance in the planning and implementation of a rural youth program that would contribute toward the above major objective.

The basic objective of the youth program and function of the advisor entail these long term targets:

(1) To influence youth to accept and adopt improved methods in agriculture and home-making that will result in increased farm production and happier rural home life.

(2) To stimulate interest in and show that farming can be a profitable and respectful career. 4-H Club activities help to decrease the youth movement from rural to urban areas.

(3) To instill a sense of citizenship responsibility in youth for the future development of their country.

(4) To implement a worthwhile youth program that would help meet these targets.

The specific immediate goals of the youth program are:

(1) To continue educating extension employees, local leaders and boys and girls in the organizational procedures and principles of club work and agricultural production methods: socio-cultural activities (social behavior, health and physical development) and citizenship activities.

(2) To seek public and Government support for the development of rural youth.

(3) To concentrate efforts in one district (Gbarnga District) to demonstrate the methods and results of effective club work.

(4) To keep expanding the program as human and material resources become available.

III. Summary of Activities

All 4-H Club activities were planned and conducted to reflect a learning experience for extension employees involved in the program, the 70 club leaders, and the 1,700 members in the 55 clubs in Liberia. These activities included in-service training of extension employees in the organizational procedures and principles of club work, club activities such as meetings, method demonstrations, achievement programs that involved the villagers and their chiefs, project work in gardening, poultry and pineapple growing.

These statistics may help to summarize the report:

(1) Approximately 150 man-days of training was given extension employees during the short period covered by this report. This training does not include the day to day training received by employees while they actually performed club work under the supervision of the advisor.

(2) 960 4-H Club meetings were held by all 55 clubs with an estimated attendance of 22,400. Through these meetings members were exposed to parliamentary procedure, ~~of~~ self-expression, cooperation and other character-building experiences.

(3) A total of 23 instructional materials have been prepared to date. A worthwhile 4-H Club hand book was prepared but has not been printed because of lack of funds.

(4) Project work in gardening and poultry exposed members to improved methods in agriculture such as the use of insecticides, fertilizers, cultural practices of raising vegetables, proper feeding of and caring for chickens.

(5) Twenty-eight (28) different method demonstrations on gardening were prepared and presented by club members under the supervision of extension employees who received instructions from the advisor. The demonstrations were presented in eight different villages in one district (Gbarnga) where the District Commissioner, tribal chiefs and villagers observe the results of club work. The advisor spent 50 percent of his time in this district to demonstrate the results of effective club work. Project work was carried out successfully in this district. Contests that stimulated interest and enthusiasm among members, leaders, and extension employees were conducted. Achievement days were held to recognize club members and leaders for their accomplishments; and successful club meetings reflected the training received by members and leaders. In short, the 4-H Club program has been successfully established in the Gbarnga District. Involved in this demonstration area were eight clubs, 260 members, 18 leaders, four extension employees, the District Commissioner and the respective tribal chiefs.

(6) Of great significance was the unveiling of the Liberian 4-H Club Emblem, a milestone that will help identify Liberian 4-H Club work nationally and internationally. The Emblem consists of a green palm tree on a white background with 4-H's placed horizontally on the trunk of the tree. Members display it proudly. Copies of this Emblem were circulated throughout and outside Liberia.

By working closely with the Liberians, this advisor has provided the leadership, advice and assistance in establishing the successful beginning of a worthwhile 4-H Club program. Over 2,000 boys and girls, 100 local leaders, and at least 30 of the extension employees have a working knowledge of the 4-H Club program. Leading citizens in all of the villages where 4-H Club activities were conducted have been exposed to club work in some way or another, especially in the Gbarnga District where leading citizens and officials supported the program.

Favorable Factors

(1) Good working relationship between the advisor and the extension employees, club members, and leaders.

(2) General acceptance of the 4-H Club by rural people, GOL officials and tribal chiefs.

(3) Favorable response of voluntary club leaders, all of whom were school teachers, with regard to training and acceptance of leadership responsibilities.

(4) Good cooperation from the Department of Public Instruction.

(5) Enough cooperation and budgetary support was granted to establish a successful 4-H Club program in the Gbarnga District.

Unfavorable Factors

(1) An apparent lack of real concern by the Department of Agriculture administrators for the development of youth through an effective 4-H Club program.

(2) An apparent deficiency within the Department to administer the agricultural program efficiently and effectively.

(3) Inadequate logistic support for the agricultural activities in general, especially as it relates to:

a. transportation of employees,

b. in-service training of employees,

c. materials and supplies to effect training.

(4) Insufficient number of professionally trained personnel to assume key positions of responsibility.

(5) Morale among employees is low as a result of inadequate logistic and administrative support.

(6) Lack of a national 4-H Club leader. The leader, apparently, is now employed by another institution and has not been to work since February 1964. Prior to that time he was unable to adequately supervise field work with the advisor because no travel funds were provided.

Evaluation of Results

In spite of the unfavorable factors inhibiting the program, this much progress has been made.

The enrollment grew from 17 groups in 1960 to 55 organized 4-H Clubs with an enrollment of 1,700 boys and girls and 70 leaders.

At least 30 extension employees have received instruction on club work and can carry on the program if adequate logistic and administrative support is provided. Prior to 1961, only a few extension employees had heard of this worthwhile program, now extension employees and leaders have a working knowledge of it.

The club members and leaders have received training experiences in club work that, no doubt, have produced some desirable changes in them. Effective project work has been completed, especially in the Gbarnga District. The public has accepted the program and responded favorably to it.

Recommendations:

1. That the Department of Agriculture make a sincere appraisal of its program, personnel, budget and policies with the view of:

(a) matching the agricultural program with its available human and material resources;

(b) establishing a priority of projects in which to ~~////~~ expend the resources in order to get sound results, rather than trying to cover many projects without funds;

(c) providing field personnel with adequate logistic and moral support, thus building up the morale needed for more effective results;

(d) establishing an effective system of personnel management through the recommendation of proper legislation, if need be.

2. To continue and strengthen the 4-H Club program in the Gbarnga District, if the austerity program prevents adequate support for 4-H Club work in all of Liberia. The limited human and material resources should be concentrated in the Gbarnga District to maintain an active nucleus from which to expand whenever resources become available. This same recommendation was made previously but has received no active consideration by the Department of Agriculture.

3. That USAID continue to support the 4-H Club program, but only if the GOL shows more concern for the program by meeting its financial obligations and providing adequately trained personnel to work with the AID technician.