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In accordance with M.O. 325.1, transmitted herewith is End of Tour Report prepared by Dreyfus W. Froe, Area Extension Advisor, USOM/Liberia.

Attachment

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END OF TOUR REPORT

Dreyfus W. Froe
Area Extension Advisor
Maryland County and Part of Eastern Province

September 7, 1961

On May 17, 1959, I was assigned to Maryland County and the Eastern Province as Area Extension Advisor. On August 20, I arrived in Liberia. After spending five days in Monrovia, arrangements were made for me to report to my assigned post. Due to lack of housing, permanent residence could not be taken in the area, therefore, I was reassigned to Monrovia from whence I would commute in an effort to hasten the housing repair job.

From September until January 1960, I acted as assistant to the acting chief of the Agriculture Division. The duties included planning and conducting training classes for the Aides and workers in the Eastern, Central and Western Provinces. Two classes were held in each Province for a period of four days with an average attendance of twenty-six persons in each area. The training was of a general nature dealing with the philosophy of agriculture extension, the recognition and analyzing of the problems of farmers and youth workers. The training was slow due to the lack of training personnel and the low educational level of the agriculture workers and aides.

The remainder of my time was used assisting with program planning and logistic supplies to the field technicians. This was also a difficult task due to lack of personnel in the Agriculture Division.

I was not able to live at my assigned post, Cape Palmas in Maryland County until March 24, 1961. During this 19-month period advisory work with the Maryland County Extension staff was accomplished by commuting. No surface transportation facilities are available, therefore, 39 trips were made by airplane.

Description of Maryland County and Eastern Province

Maryland County and the Eastern Provinces are situated in the eastern part of Liberia, bordered on the east by the French Ivory Coast, on the south by the Atlantic Ocean and by Guinea on the North. Since there has been no accurate census made of the area, an estimation has been made of 15,000 farm units. In the Webbo District of the Eastern Province, there are nine Chiefdoms with 566 huts averaging five persons per hut. There are approximately 1408 huts in the Lower Kru Coast District and 425 huts in the Sodoken District.

The chief economy of the area is rubber, coffee, and cocoa. Rubber production is confined mainly to the large farmer or plantation owner. Coffee is grown by many of the natives but due to unfavorable marketing conditions, many are turning to rubber production on a small scale. Cocoa is grown mainly in the Eastern Province. Lack of roads and transportation facilities hamper the producers in marketing at a profit.

All farmers grow a small patch of cassava, pepper, rice and corn. Land tenure for the small farmer is uncertain and risky. There is no source of farm credit in the area for native farmers.

After analyzing the needs of the people of the area and working with the National Extension program of Liberia, the following goals were established for the first four years:

1. Training of 150 agricultural workers and leaders.
2. Production and utilization of more foods.
   a. Vegetables
   b. Meats and eggs
   c. Diversification of crops
3. Rural Youth Clubs
4. Establishment of four farm organizations.
5. Establishment of sources of local credit.
6. Improved rubber production.
7. Marketing facilities.

In order to attain the above goals, the following organizational staff has been formed in the area: One Extension Advisor, one Agriculture Agent GOL; 14 Agriculture Aides, GOL; 1 Poultry and Livestock Aide, GOL; 1 Aide to work with Youth Clubs, GOLs and 1 Veterinary Aide, GOL.

There are six agriculture stations in the area functioning to demonstrate improved practices for the farmers. Each station has from one to four laborers.

Training

The Agriculture Aides and Agent are receiving constant formal and practical training. The Area Advisor works with the Agent in preparing and promoting the extension programs based on the founded needs of the people. There is close cooperation between Advisor and Agent in working with the Aides to discover, analyze and solve the needs of the people. At present, there are five persons in training for a period of 12 months. Training consists of field and formal classes which are held three times per week by the Advisor and Agent.

Food Production

Over 40,000 vegetable scions have been distributed from Boneke Station to the native farmers. One hundred and forty-five (145) pounds of vegetable seeds were also distributed. The Aides supervised the making of 80 demonstration nursery vegetable beds. They also supervised the transplanting and care of the plants. Rice production has been increased by 15%.

One thousand, two hundred and fifty-two (1252) American breed chickens were distributed to local farmers for the purpose of starting flocks and the up-grading of the native breeds. Thirty-three farmers started poultry projects during 1961. There are four farmers with flocks of over 300 birds. Two are selling eggs and poultry on the local market.

Six church mission schools have started poultry projects and are producing enough eggs to supplement the diet of the student body. The projects at the missions serve to teach the students improved poultry management practices.

All poultry projects are housed in improved buildings and are inspected regularly by the poultry veterinary aide. The lack of a constant supply of feed has been a great handicap. Feed must be shipped from Monrovia via air or surface. At times there is no feed in Cape Palmas since the agents in Monrovia import the feed at irregular intervals. All medicine and vaccines must be imported also. Until a constant supply of feed can be obtained, the expansion of poultry projects is not advisable.

The lack of a local source of seeds, insecticides and fungicides plus the improper utilization and preservation of vegetables presents a problem in the area.

Four-H Clubs

Seven 4-H clubs have been organized with an average membership of 26. Basic tools and seeds were given each club to start its projects. Three training meetings have been held in each school. Training for local leaders and advisors is being planned.

Farm Organizations

There is one agriculture organization in the county, namely, "The Maryland Agriculture Council". Meetings are held once each month to discuss the problems peculiar to the group. This organization was formed six years ago and consists of lettered and native farmers.

Farm Credit

The Maryland Agriculture Council is studying plans and means of forming and utilizing an Agriculture Credit Cooperative. The president of the Council spent six months in the United States on an ICA grant studying Agriculture Cooperatives.

Improving Rubber Production

Each farmer is being encouraged to start his own rubber nursery. 110,000 bud-grafted and improved seedling rubber stumps were issued from Bonake Station. The Agent and Aides visit various rubber farms to give advice on improved practices of rubber production and processing.

Marketing

Very little has been done about marketing. As the need arises, more attention and planning will be given to this phase of the work.

Unfavorable Factors Hindering the Work

1. Inadequate land tenure laws.

2. No local source of seeds, poultry feed nor agricultural supplies.

3. Lack of roads and other means of communication.

4. No extension headquarters or office.

5. Low level (educational) of Agriculture Aides.

6. No local source of Agriculture credit for small farmers.

Favorable Factors

The people are willing to move forward with new ideas when given a chance.

Recommendations

1. A constant source of agricultural supplies and feed be established.

2. A local source of credit be established for native farmers.

3. A Home Demonstration Agent be placed in the area to work with Aides.

4. Agriculture Advisor and Agent be placed in the Eastern Province with necessary Aides.

5. Eliminate all Agricultural Demonstration Stations except Boneke and Havosa. Maintain the plantings at Boneke. Establish a sub-research station at Havosa to work in connection with the Central Experiment Station at Suakoko.