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

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6/25/64

Transmitted herewith is the End of Tour Report prepared and submitted by George J. Funke, Chief Extension Advisor, USAID/Liberia, for the period September 18, 1962 to July 10, 1964.

Mr. Funke's report provides a thoughtful resume of the role of extension in the development of Liberia's agriculture resources and of the U.S. contribution in this area. His conclusions and recommendations touch on some of the more important needs in the agricultural economy toward which he believes the GOL and U.S. should direct their attention in the future.

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END OF TOUR REPORT--GEORGE J. FUNKE, CHIEF EXTENSION ADVISOR
AGRICULTURE DIVISION USAID/LIBERIA (9/18/62 to 7/10/64)
Ref: M. O. 325.1 Control U-513

George J. Funke

This report is for the Period September 18, 1962 to July 10, 1964. The writer originally arrived at this post on December 11, 1960 to assume the duties as Chief Agricultural Extension Advisor. This was a new position. Previous to this date the Mission had two Area Extension Advisors and an Agricultural Training Advisor.

Duties and Responsibilities:

1. Provide leadership, advice and guidance in the planning, organization, development, and training of a National Extension Service within the GOL Department of Agriculture.
2. Provide leadership and supervise the USAID staff of Agricultural Extension Advisors.
3. Provide guidance in the administrative aspects of operating a National Extension Service. This included the preparation of procedures and policies, forms and reporting methods, fiscal and property control, office management, job descriptions, personnel selection and placement, and pre-service and in-service training of the GOL Extension staff.
4. Plan and prepare Project Documents and implement participant training, commodity support, and field operations.
5. Review and analyze proposed technical projects in the field of agricultural extension, including the practicability of the project components.
6. Served as Acting Chief of the USAID Agriculture Division during several extended absences of the Division Chief. The most recent period was April 5 to July 10, 1964.

1. GENERAL OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

The general objective of Extension is to teach ~~and~~ and stimulate the use of improved practices in farming and rural living. Government participation in improving agricultural production and efficiency must involve the cooperation and participation of the individual farmers. This cannot be accomplished without a field staff that: knows the situation in the rural areas; gains and maintains the confidence of the rural people; and has training and experience in conducting educational and production programs. A stable, permanent staff is required.

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The Government of Liberia established the following priorities at the start of 1961: 1. Increased use of swamp areas for rice production to help the country become self-sufficient in rice production and to discourage the destructive practice of "bush farming";

2. Increase vegetable production for the urban centers and home use;

3. Increase egg and poultry meat production to avoid the need for imports. In order to accomplish these goals GOL requested the assistance of USAID in establishing and training a field ~~staff~~ staff to work with the farmers. The goal of the writer has been to help establish a permanent organization of Liberians to carry out the field activities of the Department of Agriculture.

2. ACTIVITIES

The agricultural extension project was started under the Point IV Program during February, 1951. Extension Advisors started training village level workers in very basic improved farming practices. Most of the village workers were provided by the Tribal Chiefdoms. There were no Liberian agriculturists available with University level training. Through participant training programs and work with the local schools the Liberian staff was built up to six Agricultural Extension Agents with B.S. Degrees in Agriculture and 91 village workers with 0 to 10 years of schooling. The results of the activities during the 9-year period demonstrated the value of and the need for a well organized educational service within the Department of Agriculture.

The legal basis authorizing the Agricultural Extension Service in Liberia is provided by: Liberian Code of Laws of 1956, Volume II Titles 12-26, Pages 569 and 570 Chapter 19. By 1960 the GOL asked USAID for assistance in expanding the Extension program and provided budgetary support to establish a National Extension Staff. This was put into effect January 1, 1961, shortly after the arrival of the writer. During the year the staff was built up as rapidly as men with agricultural training became available from the Agricultural Colleges in the United States and from Cuttington College in Liberia. By mid-year the staff included a Director, a Deputy Director, a Poultry Project Leader, a Home Economics Project Leader, a Vegetable Project Leader; a Rice Project Leader, a Marketing Leader, and a Rural Youth Leader. The field staff included one graduate from Hampton Institute, one from Lincoln University, and five from Cuttington College as Extension Agents. These were assisted by 104 agricultural aides with zero to 12 years of education.

A central office was established in the Department of Agriculture building and equipped for the National Extension Staff. Administrative and reference files were established. Demonstration supplies and equipment

were secured for the educational program. By 1962 all professional level workers had motor vehicles and the sub-professional staff received bicycles or motor-bikes for mobility. During 1962 the GOL budget was sufficient to conduct three national training workshops and monthly training meetings in each of the counties and provinces. Unfortunately, the 1963 and 1964 budgets did not provide sufficient logistic support to continue the training conferences. Only two were held during 1963 and one in 1964. The monthly area meetings are continuing on a very limited basis.

USAID ADVISORY SERVICES

During the two tours of the writer the Mission provided the following advisory service:

Rural Youth Advisor—George B. Vigil 12/18/60 to 6/10/64. Details in his "End of Tour Report" TOAID-A 1301 dated 5/18/64. The 4-H program was developed to the present stage of 55 clubs with 1,700 members and 70 volunteer leaders. The activities were planned and conducted to reflect a learning experience for the extension employees involved in the program. Necessary forms, booklets, and procedural manuals were prepared so that the Liberian staff can continue and expand the program as priorities and logistic support permit.

Home Economics Advisor—Mary E. Border 7/31/61 to 6/30/62. Details in "End of Tour Report" TOAID-A 581 dated 6/7/62. This position was established as a result of a study made by Katharine Holtzclaw and published as "Developing a Home Economics Extension Program for Farm Girls and Women in Liberia" dated February 21, 1961. An excellent, well-trained counterpart, Mrs. Nancy Nah, was hired by the Department to work with Miss Border. No girls with Home Economics training in school were available, but, a group of eight girls were recruited and given intensive training for field work. The limited GOL budget in 1962 indicated no possible expansion of the program, therefore, the advisory service was discontinued. The GOL Home Economics program is continuing on a limited basis under the leadership of Mrs. Nah.

Area Extension Advisors—Wilbert M. Holcomb 3/8/58 to 6/9/64 "End of Tour Report" TOAID-A 1204 dated 4/27/64; Ryland L. Holmes 2/8/57 to 3/1/64 "End of Tour Report" TOAID-A 1073 dated 3/30/64; and Dreyfus W. Froe 8/26/59 to 2/14/64 "End of Tour Report" TOAID-A 866 dated 2/17/64. These men worked directly with the GOL field staff in their respective work areas. In addition to monthly training meetings they trained Liberian staff members on a day-by-day basis in advising and guiding them in their work directly with the rural people. As a result the field staff are now capable of conducting good extension programs during the future provided they are given adequate administrative and logistic support by the GOL.

Fresh Water Fishery Advisor—William A. Smith, Jr. 8/14/60 to 6/30/64
"End of Tour Report" TOAID-A 548 dated 12/20/62. Mr. Smith has served as advisor to the Fishery Division of the Central Agricultural Research Station. In addition to the research and fingerling production work at the station he has stimulated Cuttington College students in Fishery work. One, Peter Youn, has received his Master's degree from Iowa State University as a USAID participant, and is now Director of the Fishery Division. Another is Bismarc Kuyon, who is now doing graduate work at Iowa State University. Another Cuttington graduate is working in the Fishery Division. The research station facilities have been built up so they can continue supplying fingerlings for the numerous ponds built in the rural areas of Liberia.

Fishery Advisor—Charles B. Wade 3/4/63 to continuing. Mr. Wade's principle responsibility has been supervising the construction of community fish ponds in the Gbarnga area and training the Liberian staff in construction and management methods. His tour will continue in FY 1965 during which period he may do advisory work in marine fisheries.

GOL STAFF

The Department of Agriculture has been hiring graduates from the high schools that teach Vocational Agriculture and graduates from Agricultural Universities as they become available. These replace employees that were on the staff with little or no school training. This up-grade in process was moving along very well until 1964 when the "Austerity Program" and Executive Orders prohibited the hiring of new employees even though vacancies occurred in the existing staffing pattern.

Through participant training programs of training employees with past field experience the average ability and quality of work has improved during the past 3 years. A total of 20 Liberians have received participant training in agricultural extension. Five more will return from the United States during the summer of 1964. The USAID contribution for participant training has totaled \$74,000.

Since February 1951 USAID and predecessor agencies provided 61 man years of technical service in agricultural extension and provided \$213,000 in commodities.

The Director of Extension during 1963 has a Master's Degree in Extension. He was an excellent Extension man. He has been promoted to the position of Special Assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture.

The present Director, Mr. D. James Sirleaf, was appointed Director of the National Extension Service when the organization was established on January 1, 1961. In August 1963 he was sent to the United States as a participant and received his Master's Degree in Extension at the

University of Wisconsin. With these two men as leaders and a nucleus of well-trained men in the field, the organization has become a well established and, I think, permanent group to conduct the field activities of the Department of Agriculture. Given adequate administrative and logistic support they can continue improving agricultural production and rural living in Liberia.

Accomplishments during the 3½ year period include:

1. The poultry industry has been built up to the point where there is no longer a need to import eggs.
2. Production of rice in the swamp areas has expanded from a few acres in 1960 to 30,000 acres during 1963. A further increase is ~~is~~ expected during 1964 as there is an intensive campaign in process now.
3. Vegetable production has been introduced into practically all of the rural areas. Further expansion will require work on transportation and marketing systems and Home Economics work to stimulate more home use.
4. 4-H Club Work has become a well established activity and the GOL staff are capable of continuing the work.
5. Through the production and distribution of citrus, coffee and cocoa trees, small, but important, industries have added to the agricultural economy.
6. Extension has played an important role in the expansion of the natural rubber industry. Almost 5,000 independent growers have rubber plantations. Intensive extension work on management must continue in this field.
7. Most important is the fact that the Department of Agriculture now has an established, trained field staff to conduct the educational programs needed for improving the efficiency in agricultural production.

3. FAVORABLE AND UNEAVGABLE FACTORS

Favorable Factors

a. Liberia had no governmental field staff working in agriculture before the United States Technical Assistance program was started. For this reason the Extension Advisors were able to demonstrate the value of and the need for extension work. There were no past habits or policies to

change. All agricultural graduates received their training in the United States or at Cuttington College where they were taught and guided by U.S. personnel. This provided a favorable situation in which their philosophy of extension was U.S. orientated.

b. Educational institutions have been improving and expanding to provide an increasing supply of workers with a basic education. The University of Liberia started a School of Agriculture during 1962.

c. There has recently been an increased interest in developing agriculture by the President and Government of Liberia. (Due to the Austerity Program this interest has not been reflected by increased budgetary support.)

d. Communication facilities are improving which aides in supervision of the staff and reaching farm people.

e. The ~~the~~ expansion of the money economy is broadening the outlet for agricultural products. This increases interest of the land owners in improving production methods.

f. In general local officials and citizens are dissatisfied with present conditions and have a desire for improvement. There is ^a much stronger trend toward attempting to improve the welfare of the rural population.

g. Working relationships between the GOL staff and the U.S. Extension Advisors have been excellent.

h. There are no governmental laws or conflicting agencies that hamper the activities of the extension program.

Unfavorable Factors

a. Very, very few of the farm people are literate therefore communications have been difficult. It is difficult to get illiterate people to accept and put into practice improved farming methods.

b. The rural people have not had the monetary resources or credit establishments to invest in improved agriculture. The Agricultural Credit Corporation is new, has had a very limited fund, and has not, to date, put their loans to effective productive use.

c. Professionally trained personnel is still inadequate in number or quality to fill the staffing pattern. There is no competition for the jobs.

d. At present the es'prit'de corps is very low. The Department of Agriculture has no established incentive system. Executive orders do not permit increases in salary for the efficient workers or permit retrenching the inefficient. Cuttington College graduates that have done good work for 4 years are still receiving \$1,800 per annum, the same rate at which they were hired. We have established a system of yearly efficiency ratings, but, have not been able to put it to effective use. The total budget for Extension has been reduced with the requirement that no personnel could be retrenched. This practically eliminated funds for logistic support such as per diem, gasoline, tires or demonstration materials. This is very discouraging to the men that want to reach and work with the farm people. Lack of logistic support prevents adequate field supervision or help to the field workers by the National Staff. Some of the administrative practices do not stimulate loyal support. Staff members are given responsibilities without the necessary supporting authority or the logistic support to carry out the responsibilities. Many of the staff members are now in a stage of lethargy. The more energetic members are seeking other sources of income such as developing private farms. Due to these conditions we see little ~~///~~ evidence of a desire to make Extension their life career. This condition was not true in 1962, but, as years pass without a change in working conditions trained staff members will continue to seek private employment.

e. The situations mentioned in the above item d. will have a profound effect on the future because it is becoming difficult to maintain, let alone increase, the number of students studying agriculture in the high schools and colleges.

4. EVALUATION OF RESULTS

In evaluating the results of the technical assistance program in agricultural extension we must understand the situation in Liberia in 1951. At that time there was one University Graduate in Liberia with training in agriculture. There were no college level courses in agriculture available in Liberia. Firestone Rubber Plantation was the only money economy industry, therefore, there was a very limited cash market for agricultural products. There were no local eggs or vegetables on the Monrovia market. There was no Cabinet level Department of Agriculture.

My predecessors demonstrated the value of and the need for agricultural extension work through their activities in working directly with farm people and training tribal representatives. The interest was developed among the government officials and the stage was set for the establishment of a National Extension Service by the time the writer arrived in December, 1960. Since that time a well established, permanent type extension organization is functioning.

The basic goal is increased agricultural production and improved rural living, but, we have felt that our first and primary task has been to first train and establish a field organization to teach and stimulate rural people. This has been accomplished on a gradual basis. More adequate OAL budgetary support would have permitted more rapid staff development and more thorough training.

The participant training program has been very effective and all participants sent by this division are now working in their field of training and making a good contribution. The writer feels that, whenever possible, candidates should have actual experience on the job for at least a year before they become eligible to be a participant.

Considering all of the existing factors, the writer feels that the Technical Assistance Program in Agricultural Extension has been very successful. Staff development has been slower than in some more advanced countries because we didn't have people to develop. We had to start at the high school level and bring them along as participants. College graduates have just started to appear for actual work during the last 4 years. The small nucleus of trained men can continue and expand the work with limited outside assistance. At present their greatest need is financial support and improved administrative practices that will stimulate rather than retard their interest in the job.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

The USAID Extension Program is being phased out effective June 30, 1964. Agricultural development must be taken step-by-step and certain planes are reached. There are times when emphasis must be changed. It was necessary to first develop a staff to conduct field activities in agriculture. The job is not finished, but, it is necessary now to put financial and technical assistance into selected production projects and the transportation and marketing of agricultural products.

Most of the USAID efforts to date have been focused on staff development and training. There is now a need to increase national income. In order to raise income, there must be more production within the country and greater internal exchange of products. The domestic market must be enlarged to create jobs and wealth. This involves a more effective distribution system to link the urban and rural areas through a two-way exchange of each other's products. I recommend more concentration on assistance directly in the field of distribution, commodity storage, transportation facilities, marketing cooperatives, wholesale institutions, and effective agricultural credit. Effective assistance can be given in developing an agricultural climate that will encourage private credit institutions to participate more in agricultural

development. Some changes in land tenure laws and practices; clearly defined and legal deeds; and a well defined mortgage system for real estate and chattel mortgages are needed to attract private credit. The lender needs more legal protection. If these safeguards are provided much local private capital is available to develop the agricultural industry.

In general, Liberia is not in a good position to expect a larger share of the world market for agricultural products, therefore, building a domestic market for their products is imperative. The only export products that should be given special attention are those from tree crops such as rubber, coffee, cocoa, piassava, and oil palm.

The GOL is not giving enough attention to improving the management of rubber farms. The 5,000 individual rubber farms now in existence are Liberia's greatest agriculture resource. Much investment has been made in clearing the land, planting the trees, and maintaining the areas while the trees grew to productive size. Poor management (lack of daily supervision) has resulted in ruining the tapping panel for future use on many farms. The Department of Agriculture should maintain a staff to work intensively and continuously with the private rubber farms. Natural rubber is now at a competitive price with synthetic rubber and will continue to be a profitable farm crop on well managed farms.

Liberia is now importing palm oil. This situation can be reversed in less than 10 years.

The President of Liberia has been concerned about a food shortage in case of world strife. The most practical solution is the construction of sanitary storage facilities. This was the first priority item for use of funds generated through the PL-480 program. It should not be forgotten as there is a very great need for proper storage facilities of rice and feed grains to maintain an ever-normal grainary.

USAID should support and stimulate the construction of access roads for the agricultural and forestry areas. Adequate surveys to determine the needs for particular areas have been made.

USAID-GOL Project Agreements must be developed on a more bi-lateral basis and include every necessary detail to help assure that the program does not bog down due to the lack of logistic support for the GOL staff involved. From past and present experiences it appears that the only solution to guarantee that the components of a project will actually be available when needed is to establish a bank deposit system before the project is started. Future Projects should be for a narrow, specific objective that is measurable in regards to time and scope.

USAID assistance in Extension will be needed again in the future. When the economy of the country permits an active, expanding extension staff with logistic support to permit adequate travel for supervision and training, very effective benefits of USAID advisory services may be expected.

USAID should be very active in helping the GOL develop and implement an effective Civil Service System. Young people that train for and desire a career in government employment must have incentives that are provided for and guaranteed by laws of the land.

A very great need in all departments of the government is training in supervision. There is very little evidence of the use of basic principles in making a supervisory visit. Training in this respect can be conducted through evening classes, etc.

The Mission should expand interest in the teaching of agriculture in the schools of Liberia. The work being done at Zorzor in teacher training in agriculture is very creditable. This type of teaching should be included in the training of all rural teachers.

As long as the United States supports agriculture in Liberia through technical aid, loans or PL-480 funding the Mission should provide an advisor to work closely with the Secretary of Agriculture and his administrative staff.

SILVER