

PD-AAZ-773  
62451

PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

USAID/BURKINA FASO

I. ADMINISTRATIVE DATA

A.	Project Title	:	Training Women in the Sahel
B.	Project Number	:	686-0226
C.	Authorized LOP Funding	:	\$1,700,000
D.	Source of Funding	:	Education/Human Resources
E.	Initial Final Obligation	:	FY 1978
F.	Cumulative Obligation	:	\$1,170,000
G.	Date of Initial Obligation:		1978
H.	Life of Project:	:	September 30, 1978 - December 31, 1987
I.	Date of Final Evaluation	:	None
J.	PACD	:	December 31, 1987
K.	Deob/Reob FY 86	:	\$527,000
L.	Deobligation FY 88	:	\$133,422
M.	Cumulative Disbursements	:	\$1,036,595

## II. BACKGROUND

The Training Women in the Sahel Project (TWIS) was authorized on September 30, 1978 for five years, with a total grant funding of \$1.7 million from the Section 105, Education/Human Resources (EHR) Account to the then Burkinabe Ministry of Social Affairs. The purpose of the project was to train Sahel based extension agents and female village paraprofessionals to work with women in Burkina's Sahelian regions in the organization, financing and management of labor-saving technologies, income-generating activities, health and hygiene programs and local-language literacy.

Project Implementation took place over three periods: (a) September 1978 - September 1983; (b) October 1983 - November 1985 and (c) December 1985 - September 1988.

## III. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION FROM SEPTEMBER 1978 TO SEPTEMBER 1983

The TWIS project has had a two-cycle life. Over the first period of September 1978 to September 1983, the original PACD, the project was implemented at less than 50%, both financially and programmatically. Tremendous management difficulties engendered that poor performance. To illustrate the magnitude of the project problems, one of its major outputs, the construction of the women training center at Dori was abandoned, due to the combination of delays on the part of the then Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA) in extending the original invitation for bids, the lack of response on the part of local entrepreneurs to the invitation for bids, MSA delays in submitting buildings plans to USAID for approval, and the suspension of project funds by USAID during the last nine months of the project.

Associated with poor management was the inability of the project implementation agency to establish and maintain, on the national, regional and village levels systems for monitoring and evaluating project activities. A credit fund set up for financing gender-specific income-generating activities was decapitalized after a short period of operation, due to management problems. Finally, among the other major causes which engendered the TWIS project failure during the first cycle, were the undesirable hands-on of the local authorities over the project, and their subsequent misinterpretation of project objectives - they saw it as a rural credit project rather than a training project.

Nonetheless, aside its general poor performance, the TWIS project was credited with the following achievements: (1) training in the area of animation, nutrition, hygiene, MCH, home economics, literacy, management for paraprofessionals, extension agents and project supervisory personnel; (2) carrying out home economics, agro-pastoral activities, (3) provision of equipment.

In financial terms, by the PACD of September 30, 1983, the project had disbursed \$705,018.22, or 42%, leaving a pipeline of \$994,981.78. The period from September 1983 to June 1985 was an interim period during which the decision was made to deobligate \$530,000, 1/ thereby decreasing the LOP to a new total of \$1,170,018.22. Of the new LOP, as mentioned above, \$705,018.22 were already spent and \$465,000 remained in pipeline.

## IV. INTERIM PERIOD OCTOBER 1983 - NOVEMBER 1985

At that point, in terms of project life, the Mission had the following options:

1/ Of which \$527,000 reobligated into the AgHRD project (686-0221).

1) confirm the project close-out as it stands and deobligate the pipeline of \$465,000. Such a decision was subsequently made difficult, given the severe 1985 drought effects on the Sahel region and the GOB appeal to the donor's community for development and emergency relief assistance;

2) explore with the Dori-based Save-the-Children Fund (SCF) the taking over of the project, on the ground that SCF involvement would provide more security in terms of financial management. Extended tripartite negotiations between SCF, the Ministry of Family Welfare and National Solidarity (MOFWNS) and USAID resulted in the preparation of an ad-hoc OPG for execution. Unfortunately, due to last minute considerations, SCF backed-off, leaving USAID in a "no alternative situation", but reaching direct agreement with the MOFWNS, despite USAID apprehension to do so;

3) reach agreement with the MOFWNS. When this last option became available, USAID continued to resist, until pressure arrived from the highest GOB authorities. Then, minimal-risk financial management arrangements such as direct payments to suppliers of goods and services, training of the GOB project accountant by the Sahel Regional Financial Management project, installation of a certified accounting system, were made by USAID in order to utilize the balance of \$465,000 remaining in project budget. The balance was to finance the construction and equipment of the Dori Women Training Center and limited women training.

#### V. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION FROM DECEMBER 1985 TO SEPTEMBER 1988

Having reached agreement with the MOFWNS to fund the above project activities, the PACD was extended to September 30, 1986. First advance of \$44,744 to start up training activities was approved by the then project officer of the Office of Human Resources (OHR). In the meantime, the GOB was asked to competitively award contracts for the design of the center plans and for its construction.

Meanwhile, due to internal USAID reorganization and departure of OHR project officer, the project was moved into the Program and Project Development Office in March 1986. Following were the outstanding actions on the side of the MOFWNS: a) report the expenditures against the advance received, b) award the contract to design the plans of the construction and start it. Unfortunately, none of these actions were taken timely by the MOFWNS. For instance, the final financial report was not provided to USAID until September 1987. The delay in providing financial reports to USAID motivated the project officer decision of not making any further advance until the first advance was fully liquidated, despite pressure from the MOFWNS. As for the design of the center plan, it was completed in August 1986, instead of January 1986. The construction started in March 1987 and was to be completed within six-months. However, by the extended PACD of September 1987 and its subsequent extension to December 1987, the contractor could report 90-95% of completion for the training center.

Given the situation, USAID by letter dated January 9, 1988, reminded the GOB to take actions required to finish the center. Again, the GOB was not able to successfully persuade the contractor to do so. In last resort, then, the inauguration of the center, as it stands, was held in the presence of GOB and USAID Representatives on April 14, 1988.

## V. PROJECT CLOSE-OUT STATUS AS OF DECEMBER 30, 1987

As mentioned earlier, the center was completed at 90-95%. All commodities for the center were delivered and installed. The project assisted in training, and creating village gardens, 4 grain mills. The attached input-outputs table summarizes project achievements. However, since the project was "discontinued" at different periods, it was difficult to foster training of a core of para professionals. More specifically, such program as local language literacy were picked up by larger national programs and therefore dropped from by the project.

The breaks in project implementation have lessened project impact. For instance, by the PACD of December 31, 1987, it was difficult to measure the impact of one-time training activities supported by the project.

From the inauguration date to September 30, 1988, no effort was made by the GOB/contractor towards the 100% finishing of the center so that USAID could pay final bills, despite a second letter dated May 10, 1988, reminding the GOB to take necessary actions. To resolve the issue and be in line with terminal provisions for payments as per the ProAg, USAID negotiated and reached agreement with the GOB on the following: the amount due by USAID for the construction equals the actual value of the building (CFA 65,924,562), minus the sum of progress payments (CFA 58,396,912), already made by USAID minus the penalty clause rate of 5% of contract or CFA 3,624,471). Therefore, the final payment made to the contractor was CFA 3,903,779. Upon 100% completion of the center through another source of funding, the GOB will hopefully implement its plans to use the center for training women at the local, regional and national levels.

Finally, the close-out financial project status is that the TWIS project expenditures totaled \$1,036,595.64 out of \$1,170,018.22. The balance of \$133,422.58 were deobligated in FY 88.

## VI. LESSONS LEARNED

First, the PP administrative analysis failed to recommend the suitable mechanism, i.e., decentralized responsibility.

The project implementation has been consistently hampered by financial management problems. This vulnerability was due primarily to the centralized management mode adopted for this project. Yet, the retention of financial management responsibility at the central ministry <sup>1/</sup> instead of its provincial agency in Dori was a killer issue. Thus, and paradoxically, the provincial agency which had little control over the funds, had to implement the project; the central ministry which had little control over the implementation was making decision over the funds. A direct management by the GOB field implementing agency was likely to produce better results, in terms of communication between USAID and the provincial agency.

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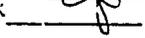
<sup>1/</sup> A National Coordinator based at the central ministry was nominated for both phase 1 and 2.

Second, for phase II, a full time project manager was necessary.  
In a remote area like Dori, a full time USAID-project manager is a must, despite the relatively limited amount of funds engaged with this phase.

**VII. TERMINAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The project officer prepared a final PIL requiring that project commodities be kept at the project site for three years at least to further project objectives, pursuant to Annex I of the ProAg.

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## ATTACHMENT

## TRAINING WOMEN IN THE SAHEL PROJECT (686-0226)

## PROJECT SCORECARD

COMPONENT ACTIVITY	TARGET	COMPLETED	%
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A. ORIGINAL PROJECT (9/78 - 9/83)			
1. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE			
a. Long-Term			
Technical Advisor	60 p/m	48 p/m	80%
Program Assistant	24 p/m	24 p/m	100%
b. Short-Term			
Anthropologist	4 p/m	12 p/m	300%
Evaluation Specialist	3 p/m	3 p/m	100%
Training Specialist	2 p/m	4 p/m	200%
Audio-Visual Specialist	2 p/m	2 p/m	100%
Appropriate Tech. Spec.	3 p/m	2 p/m	67%
Domestic Econ. Specialist	2 p/m	- p/m	0%
Rural Credit Specialist	2 p/m	1 p/m	50%
2. CONSTRUCTION			
a. Training Center	1	-	0%
3. COMMODITIES			
a. 4-Wheel Drive Vehicles	6	3	50%
b. Trucks	1	1	100%
c. Mobylette/Motorcycles	60	17	20%
d. Commodities/Equipment	\$208,000	\$32,000	15%
4. TRAINING			
a. Extension/Field Agents	25	11	44%
b. Village Women Trained	2,000	450	23%
c. Literacy (women/men)	400	140	25%
5. LOAN/GRANT FUND ('000)			
a. Grant	50	-	0%
b. Loan	150	20	13%
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B. EXTENSION PERIOD ONLY (9/85-12/87)			
1. CONSTRUCTION			
a. Training Center	1	-	95%
2. COMMODITIES			
a. 4-Wheel Drive Vehicles	1	1	100%
b. Center Equipment/Supplies	\$52,000	1	100%
c. Grain Mills	4	4	100%
3. TRAINING			
a. Extension/Field Agents			
Family Planning	24	20	83%
Community Development	26	19	73%
Group Animation	4	9	225%
Mgmt. of Inc. Gen. Activities	5	5	100%
Sewing/Embroidery	8	20	250%
Monitoring of Field Activities	24	20	83%
b. Villagers/Paraprofessionals			
Grain Mill Repair/Operation	4	9	225%
Village Women Reached/Sensitized	3,000	2,700	90%
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