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REDSO/WCA

PROJECT ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT

FOR

HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE, MAURITANIA COMPONENT

(698-0463.82)

Date of Report: September 1993 PACD: September 30, 1995

I. INTRODUCTION

The Human Resources Development Assistance Project (HRDA) was formulated to support training programs that would produce qualified personnel to strengthen African development institutions, enhance the growth of the private sector, and increase the participation of women in Africa's development.

HRDA is the third in a series of projects designed to promote economic growth and address Africa's pervasive lack of trained human capital in policy planning, technical, managerial, and scientific fields. The predecessor projects were the African Manpower Development Project and the Sahel Human Resources Development project.

The Office of the AID Representative in Nouakchott (OAR/Nouakchott) began its incrementally-funded HRDA activities through a buy-in on August 28, 1988. Activities included short- and long-term academic and special training for Mauritanian students and professionals. The GIRM and OAR/Nouakchott financed long-training in the U.S. Participants studying at the Masters level were required to write their theses or dissertation on subjects directly related to Mauritania's economic development. The program also funded long-term third-country training (TCT), short-term training in the United States, short-term training in other African countries, and in-country training opportunities.

Approved fields of training were: agricultural crop and livestock research; disciplines related to food production; agricultural economics/farm management; veterinary medicine/animal husbandry; cooperatives/public sector management; agricultural education; civil engineering/environmental engineering; computers; forestry/fisheries/national resource planning; public health and paramedical care; mother and child health/family planning; nutrition; rural development; social anthropology; communications; public and business administration; project management; procurement and accounting; economics; and, educational economics/educational technology. Project funds were also used for special training courses offered by African institutions. These courses had to address applicable regional or country needs.

Candidate selection was made by OAR/Nouakchott using written recommendations from the GIRM and the General Confederation of Mauritanian Employers (CGEM) based on an individual's demonstrated need for specialized training to upgrade his or her skills. Priority was given to candidates who could contribute to the project's strategic objective and to trainers of other instructors. Training opportunities for women and private entrepreneurs were priorities of the CGEM; therefore, the project obligated funds to support these. Project documentation noted that 35 percent of the candidates were to be women, and at least 50 percent must be from the Mauritanian private sector. The GIRM also selected candidates to reflect Mauritania's multi-ethnic composition.

HRDA training complemented the following projects: the Human Resources Development Project (682-0233); Sahel Manpower Development Project (625-0960); Sahel Human Resources Development Project (625-0977); and the African Graduate Fellowship Program (AFGRAD).

The project was amended on August 24, 1989 to add additional training funds. The project assistance completion date of September 30, 1995 was not altered.

Following the June 1993 close-out of operations in Mauritania, project files were delivered to the REDSO/Abidjan office. This project assistance completion report was compiled from these documents, which consisted of grant agreement, an amendment, a regional project paper, project implementation letters, and correspondence.

II. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PARTIES

GIRM

The GIRM paid the salary of its employees participating in training exercises, and agreed to resume employment of trainees upon their return in an equal or higher position reflecting their new skills.

USAID

USAID provided \$1,720,000 from the Development Fund for Africa. The funds covered tuition, international travel, maintenance allowances, books, in-country allowances, and training program management costs.

Private Sector Employers

Private sector employers, which allowed their employees to undergo training, provided salary payments and benefits during training and consented to continue employment at a commensurate level.

III. IMPLEMENTATION

The Minister of Plan and Employment was designated as the official representative of GIRM. According to the project's first implementation letter, his responsibilities included the general oversight of the project and the authorization to sign all project documentation on behalf of the GIRM.

The OAR/Nouakchott Program Officer served as Project Officer, and coordinated and monitored all project activities including project disbursement, commodity procurement, and technical assistance.

A Project Implementation Officer was designated to coordinate operational details of the project with the GIRM and obtain the Program Officer's approval of proposed activities.

Requests for disbursement of funds, assistance, reports and inquiries were addressed to the Program Officer. Funds were disbursed on a reimbursement basis for goods received or services performed.

Records related to the acquisition of goods and services financed under the project were to be maintained by the GIRM for a period of three years.

USAID Financial Inputs

A summary of financial reports as of June 30, 1993 indicated that of the total project funds, \$1,678,245 was obligated. Unused project funds will be de-earmarked and deobligated after the completion of participant training.

IV. ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objective of this multi-year project was to increase the availability of trained Mauritians to contribute to the economic and social development of Mauritania. In meeting this objective, the project was designed to assist the GIRM in lessening the country's qualified manpower shortage. Documentation was not available, however, to verify attainment of this objective.

Short-term training in the U.S. was provided for nine individuals; long-term training in the U.S. was provided for ten individuals; and long-term TCT was provided for 115 individuals. The project planned to support short-term TCT for 53 individuals, but no activities were funded under the project; and in-country training was planned for 55 individuals, but only two were sponsored.

LESSONS LEARNED

In the absence of project evaluations or reviews, establishing lessons learned during the implementation of the Human Resources Development Assistance project cannot be ascertained.

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