

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20523  
BIBLIOGRAPHIC INPUT SHEET

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Batch 89

1. SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION	A. PRIMARY Food production and nutrition	AC00-0000-0000
	B. SECONDARY Education, extension, and advisory work	

2. TITLE AND SUBTITLE

Educational tours; a guide for extension and village workers

3. AUTHOR(S)

Murry, S.T.

4. DOCUMENT DATE

1974

5. NUMBER OF PAGES

7p, 9p.

6. ARC NUMBER

ARC

7. REFERENCE ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS

AID/TA/AGR

8. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES (Sponsoring Organization, Publisher, Availability)

(Revised 1974)

9. ABSTRACT

10. CONTROL NUMBER

PN-AAF-853

11. PRICE OF DOCUMENT

12. DESCRIPTORS

Farms, small  
Home economics  
Villages

13. PROJECT NUMBER

14. CONTRACT NUMBER

AID/TA/AGR

15. TYPE OF DOCUMENT

PN-9AF-553

# EDUCATIONAL TOURS

A Guide for  
Extension and  
Village Workers

Extension Service,  
U.S. Department of Agriculture,  
in Cooperation with  
Agency for International Development,  
U.S. Department of State



*By Sue Taylor Murry, Educational Specialist, International, Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture*

### **What is an Educational Tour?**

An educational tour is an organized trip by a group to observe results or situations related to specific problems.

Special tours relate to one project, or to demonstrations of one improved farm or home practice. General tours may show several kinds of demonstrations and Extension activities.

A tour, well-planned and conducted in a businesslike manner, can be a highly effective teaching method.

### **Tours Teach**

Tours are ideal for showing the results of a practice. They teach improved farm and home methods by letting people see the results obtained by their neighbors who are using improved practices. Tours show how these new methods *can* and *do* lead to better living.

### **Tours are Convincing**

The new practice is located where people are. Seeing new methods and talking to those who are using them often convinces farm people of the value of a practice. Then they are ready to try it — "Seeing is Believing."

When Mr. Bandi sees, on Mr. Kapota's farm, a fine-looking field of new hybrid maize — taller, with larger ears and much greener than he has ever seen before — and then hears Mr. Kapota tell how he obtained the new seed from the Government through the Extension worker, how he prepared the ground, cultivated the maize, and how much grain he expects to harvest, Mr. Bandi believes this new kind of maize is worth trying. So he talks to the Extension work-

er about getting some seed to plant on his own farm. Several result demonstrations such as this make a good tour.

### **People Like Tours**

Tours are enjoyable. A tour gives its members a chance to visit with each other and exchange ideas. People like to see what someone else is doing. They like to get away from home.

Families selected for demonstrations have an advantage. They serve as hosts while the group is at their place. They like to show the results of their efforts and skill, and they generally do this in a most natural and convincing manner.

### **Tours Permit Many People to Take Part**

You need many people to plan and conduct a tour. In fact, few methods used in Extension teaching offer as many places for local people to participate as do tours. The people will be involved from the first. If you plan carefully and prepare them fully, the people can practically run a tour and you, the agent, can stay in the background on the day of the tour.

Many people will be needed for a tour involving all the farmers of a village. A youth club tour to see members' gardens will take fewer people and less preparation. In either case, a general committee will be needed to plan the time, visits to be made, route to be followed, etc., with subcommittees for such jobs as publicity, facilities, directional signs, recreation, and guides.

All members of the demonstra-

*Cover Photo:  
Tours teach. Here a local tour leader in Iran shows his neighbors a better way of beekeeping.*

*Photo Credits:  
Agency for International Development,  
Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations,  
and United Nations Children's Fund.*

ting families can share in the activities. They will present their projects and act as hosts to the group.

### Tours Encourage the Group to Ask Questions

Tours prompt people to ask questions of the Extension worker and the host families at the time they think of them. Such questions are more meaningful than they would be in a meeting removed from the actual site. Further, they give the Extension worker an opportunity to explain improved practices in their natural setting — on the farm itself, or in the home.

### Tours Arouse Interest

Tours are an excellent way to arouse interest in improved practices. A tour makes it possible for a group to visit several demonstrations in one day. Whether they see the same practice or different ones at each place they visit makes no difference.



*At the end of the tour, gather the group for a summary of what they've seen. This group in Ghana ends their tour with a song.*



*Tours are convincing. This homemaker in El Salvador tells a tour group why she likes her new smokeless stove.*



*Explain the purpose of the tour before it starts. These Liberian villagers hear what they will see and do during their day's tour.*

## Kinds of Projects

Almost any project or improved practice that has value and meaning in the area could be shown on a tour. Here are a few examples:

- *The user of fertilizer* — For example, a field or even a small plot of cotton grown with fertilizer and, in the same field, a small patch grown without fertilizer.
- *Kitchen improvement* — This is interesting to both men and women. It is easy to show “before” and “after” situations. The homemaker could demonstrate the use of her new sink or her smokeless stove, or show how she uses her covered garbage can to keep the kitchen floor clean.
- *Dairying* — This tour might show pasture improvement only, or it might also include other phases of dairying, such as sanitary handling of milk. A milking demonstration could be given.
- *Vegetable gardens* — This is an excellent kind of tour. Most village families need to increase vegetable production for home use. They need to improve planting and cultivating practices. The opportunity to see and study a few good gardens with a variety of vegetables planted in rows or beds, instead of the usual scattered planting, would be a convincing teaching method.

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## HOW TO PLAN AND PREPARE A TOUR

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### Plan

A tour must be well-planned if it is to be successful and produce results. *Tours will not run themselves.*

Planning starts when you and the people decide to include a tour in the year's program. At this time write the tour into your plan of work, decide what it should show, and plan what needs to be done to prepare for it.

Help the people choose a tour committee well ahead of time. Here are some suggestions to help you and your committee plan and prepare for a tour. You don't have to do them in any special order.

- Secure the interest and cooperation of village leaders.
- Decide exactly what the tour is to accomplish. State these objectives clearly so the people can understand.
- Decide the audience you are trying to reach.
- Decide specifically which improved farm or home practices will help reach your objectives. Plan each tour to show these practices to the people you want to have adopt them. A good tour will convince them of the value of these practices.
- Decide where the improved practices will be seen. This is very important. The place must show improvement or demonstrate success. Select farms or homes that are neat and well cared for, and where the farmer and his wife stand well in the village. Don't try to visit too

many places. Three or four stops will be enough to make an interesting tour.

- Plan the route of the visits — decide where the crowd will assemble, what they will see, in what order, and who will discuss it. Tour signs will help the people find the places in the right order.
- Work out the time schedule. Walk the route. Check the exact time it will take. Include the length of time at each stop and the time to be allowed for walking from place to place.
- Publicize the tour — announce it at meetings, put up posters, and give personal invitations wherever possible.
- Visit each host family several days ahead of the tour to let them know exactly what is expected of them.

An actual method demonstration or two by the host family increases the effectiveness of their presentation. If the project being shown is a field of hybrid maize, the farmer might show the seed, demonstrate how to plow one furrow, and actually show how he planted the seed.

“Before” and “after” situations add interest. If it is a tour to see improved home storage, the homemaker might show where she kept

her dishes before the new cupboard was built or where she put her clothes before she got the new clothes closet. The farmer might show how he had to keep grain in sacks piled in a corner of the house where the mice could eat it before he got his new grain boxes built.

- Arrange for rest often enough so the people do not get tired. If it is an all day tour, plan and arrange how the people will get lunch. You can make a tour more enjoyable if you serve refreshments and provide some type of relaxation for the people who go.
- Plan some recreation. Young and old enjoy fun and recreation. Some form of entertainment, such as music, singing, or games can add much to the success of the tour. Decide who will be in charge of the recreation.

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#### WHAT YOU SHOULD DO WHILE MAKING THE TOUR

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##### **Assembling**

Ask members of the committee to help greet the people as they arrive.



*Tour hosts like to show their accomplishments. This 4-K member in Kenya explains his garden project to other members and the leader.*

*Pre-plan with the host. Here a Libyan extension worker helps the host farmer plan how he will explain to the tour group why his new plow works better than this old one.*



When the group is assembled, carefully explain the purpose of the tour, the places to be visited, the approximate length of time for each stop, the importance of keeping together. A bell can be used to get the crowd started after each stop.

### At Each Stop

You, or preferably a committee member or village leader, should introduce the host family. Then explain the purpose of this visit, what is to be seen on this stop, etc. The host family guides the group around to observe the improved practices, explaining how they started and how they have carried out the practices, and the results they have had or expect to get. The family should actually demonstrate what they have done and how, as much as they can.

Have a question and answer period.

Keep the tour on schedule.

Summarize what has been seen at each stop.

### Recreation Period

Get the group to participate as much as possible. Everyone can take part in singing. If games are used, those not taking part will enjoy watching the others. See that everyone is comfortable. Stop the recreational period while everyone is having a good time. If it is too long, some will get tired.

### Closing

Summarize the entire tour. *This is essential.* Include the following:

- Tell what was seen.
- Tell how the improved practices were carried out.
- Involve the group in as much discussion as possible — give them a chance to evaluate the tour.
- Emphasize the importance and value of the practices observed.
- Get the names of those attending.

### What Followup Is Needed?

- Thank the committee and the

cooperators.

- See that they receive recognition.
- Write up the tour for the local paper, if there is one, or for a wall newspaper or a bulletin board. Send a copy of the report to both official and non-official leaders.
- Continue your teaching program on the practices observed on the tour.
- Evaluate the tour. The following form will help. Then list ways that the next tour could be improved.

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### AFTER THE TOUR ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS

Did the tour:

Show the results of improved practices?

Show comparisons clearly?

Include demonstrations?

Could people see easily?

Could people hear?

Did the host families explain their own projects?

Were verbal explanations clear and brief?

Was discussion active?

Was the necessary information furnished?

Did the people you wanted to reach attend?

Did they show interest?

Did they stay until the end?

Did the tour start on time?

Did the time-table work?

Did the people stay together enroute?

Was adequate rest provided?

Were refreshment arrangements satisfactory?

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Cooperative Extension Work:  
United States Department of  
Agriculture and State Land-Grant  
Universities Cooperating. Revised  
May 1974.