

REPORT OF SHORT-TERM CONSULTANT

on

RURAL COMMUNICATIONS

to

INSTITUT PERTANIAN BOGOR (IPB)
Bogor, Indonesia

by

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Final Report

Rural Communications Project at the Institut Pertanian Bogor

Between April and August 1984, I worked as a consultant on the rural communications project at the Institut Pertanian Bogor, (IPB). The project was under the direction of the International Agricultural Programs, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

My job was to help set up rural communications courses at the S_0 (associate) and S_2 (master) degree levels. During May and early April, I prepared for my assignment by studying Indonesian for four hours a week. Also, I sought books and other reference materials on behalf of the audio-visual, photography, film, video and radio courses. The staff at the Agricultural Journalism Department, University of Wisconsin, was extremely helpful in supplying me with suggestions as to which books would be most appropriate for the above courses as well as with supplementary materials for some of the courses.

During the first three weeks of my stay in Bogor, I became more familiar with the project's current status through discussions with Maurice White, head of the rural communications consulting team, and Nancy Brendlinger, who was also a communications consultant.

I also, attended three seminars on communication theory which were given by people heading efforts to set up the rural communications

courses at the graduate level. Maurice White spoke at one of the seminars. Staff from the Rural Sociology Department, graduate students and the future Rural Communications staff attended the seminars.

When I first arrived, I also attempted to set up individual meetings with the instructors of the S_0 courses in photography, film and video production and audio-visual aids. This was difficult to do because the potential instructors held more than one job and usually had many other duties to perform. Nevertheless by the end of May, I had met with all three instructors. We discussed course outlines, reference materials and what would be expected as far as class assignments. With two of the instructors, I set up a series of workshops.

Hamdani Nasution, the photography instructor, and I set up a training schedule of three afternoons a week to train Meuthia Rachmaniah, a staff member of the Information Resource Center (IRC), in photography so she could assist the S_0 photography course. This class was scheduled to begin in the fall of 1985, and Ms. Rachmaniah had had little experience in photography.

The training sessions were to last about two to three hours a day for three days a week, and they included camera practice, darkroom work, assigned readings and discussion about photographic terms and techniques. (Later, as I became busier with teaching a photography class at the S_2 level, our sessions became less frequent.) Until Mr. Nasution left in late June to go to the United States for

short-term training, he accompanied us in our sessions, and we exchanged much information about differences in American photographic supplies and techniques.

The film and videotape instructor, Muhidan Noordin, and I also set up a training schedule. Mr. Noordin had little experience in film and videotape production, so we agreed to meet twice a week for two hours a day to work on theory, technique, planning and visualization. Later on, Ms. Rachmaniah joined us in the sessions. Dedi Fardiaz, the audio-visual instructor and I also met to discuss class outlines and assignments for the courses he was to teach. Mr. Fardiaz already had some training and experience in audio-visual techniques so we did not set up any workshops concerning the S_0 courses.

On May 15, I attended a meeting at IPB concerning the set-up of the S_2 (graduate level) rural communication courses. I agreed to be the consultant on the photography and audio-visual courses and to produce a brochure to promote the S_2 (graduate level) rural communication courses.

Dedi Fardiaz agreed to be the S_2 audio-visual instructor and to work with me on the brochure. We met about four times to develop a course outline for the course. David Hill, who works for IAD, attended the first session to offer assistance.

As far as the brochure was concerned, I wrote it in English and planned its graphics. Maurice White and Edi Guhardja, dean of the graduate school, each reviewed it. Mr. Fardiaz translated the brochure into Indonesian, drew illustrations for it and laid it out

following my suggestions. The brochure was scheduled to be printed in August or September.

Hamdani Nasution, who will be teaching the S_0 photography course, also agreed to teach the S_2 photography course at the May 15 meeting. Raphael Pranata from Biotrop agreed to assist in teaching the course. I wrote the course outline and suggested possible assignments. Nasution, Pranata, and Amri Jahi, the chairman of the graduate rural communications department, reviewed the outline and made suggestions which I then incorporated into a final draft.

Near the end of June, Nasution began to teach the first rural communications course in photography at IPB. He taught the intersession for a few days before having to leave for the United States for two months of training.

At that time, I and Raphael Pranata took over teaching the course. The course met four times a week for two hours. I taught most of the courses until I left at the beginning of August. Mr. Pranata agreed to finish teaching the course which was to continue until the end of August.

There were about twelve students in the class. Several of them had advanced degrees in agriculture, but little experience in photography. Therefore the course emphasized basic camera and darkroom skills, however the students were expected to complete a major photo story on a topic related to agriculture along with other assignments intended to give them experience in camera and darkroom skills.

I gave my class talks in English and usually typed my notes and had them photocopied for students so they could better follow my explanations. I worked with students in the field on camera skills and in the darkroom to show them how to mix and set up the chemicals, process film and print photographs. I also met with them individually to counsel them on their photo essays and to help them with any other problems they may have had with photography.

I also gave the students an exam, which Meuthia Rachmaniah helped me to translate into Indonesian and later to correct. With the help of Amri Jahi, I arranged to have a guest speaker, a photographer from Green Indonesia, speak to the class.

Despite the language differences, the class was a pleasure to teach because the students were enthusiastic about the subject and were very cooperative. If a student had difficulty in understanding what I was trying to explain, some of the others who understood English better, would translate for me. Also, despite the initial shortage of darkroom space the students split themselves into groups and worked cooperatively in the darkroom. When a South East Asian photographic exhibition came to Jakarta, the students and I took outside class time to attend it. Also, before I left, some of the students had already begun to work on their major photo essays, although they were not due until later so I had a chance to critique some of their work.

In July, I put together a course outline for the S₂ film and videotape production course. Hamdani Nasution and another instructor were scheduled to teach this course. This course outline along with

those from other S₂ courses were presented at a S₂ rural communications staff meeting as was the brochure that Dedi Fardiaz and I worked on for the promotion of the courses.

Other activities I was involved in during my stay in Bogor were the ordering and set-up of photographic supplies for the darkroom and the compiling of a list of books and references relevant to rural communications which were available from the Wisconsin Project, the IRC library and private libraries of IPB staff. Some lists were already in rough draft form so I put them in final order and typed up the list of books and references I had brought with me to IPB.

Throughout May and June, I also accompanied the video production crew of the IRC as it taped IPB meetings and events. During the course of taping, I attended a seminar on the extension services of the Institut and also documentation of the construction of the new IRC building at the Darmarga campus.

On May 26, I accompanied some of the IRC staff on a visit to the Institut Teknologi Bandung, ITB, to tour the interactive television facilities there used to teach courses. Later, Emir Siregar, the chairman of the IRC, asked me to assist on some of the IRC video projects, such as demonstrating teaching methods for interactive television. Unfortunately, because of time constraints and lack of proper equipment, I was unable to offer assistance.

Also in May, I visited a village in which the Family Resources Department was setting up a home gardening project. This was a very interesting experience for me, because I could see how important women were in transferring knowledge in rural communications. At the

village, the wife of the village leader, with the help of a woman from the Family Resources Department, planted the village's first home garden in front of other village women.

On May 23, I attended an all day seminar at IPB on rural communications. Representatives of government ministries and other Indonesian universities came as well as IPB staff. Research papers concerning communication research in Indonesia were read and discussed at the seminar.

In July, I attended meetings at which Hernando Gonzalez, another communications consultant from the University of Wisconsin, was introduced to the IPB and IRC staffs, and I attended some of the communication theory sessions he gave when I was not teaching my own classes.

After leaving Indonesia and thinking about my experiences I have these recommendations to make:

1. Classes taught by instructors whose Indonesian is not fluent should contain at least one student who has a good command of English so he or she can assist the other students and the instructor in understanding one another.
2. Essential equipment for a course should be placed in the classroom in advance of the class.
3. Adequate space for an equipped classroom should be available in advance of a class.

4. Students should know what equipment and supplies they should supply before taking a class, and they should have those items by the end of the first week of class.
5. Classes should be limited or so arranged so that all of the students enrolled in them are able to use the equipment so they can carry out their assignments.
6. Both instructors and students need to be aware of the length of the course and of any changes in scheduled hours.
7. Instructors of courses who have to take workshops to prepare for those courses should receive some type of incentive such as a small payment for their time.

In conclusion I am impressed with the cooperative environment of IPB, and I think that many situations which would be difficult to handle in the United States are perhaps more easily handled at IPB because of this cooperation.

I am grateful for the guidance of John Murdock, Maurice White and Fatma Rahardjo, administrative assistant of the Wisconsin Project.

I also appreciate their and their spouses' hospitality and many kindnesses. I also am grateful to the faculty and staff of IPB and to my students and associates for their tolerance of my speaking ability in Indonesian. A special thank you is in order for Meuthia Rachmaniah. Without her help I would not have been able to give the photography class an exam. Also, I am grateful for the help of Lynn Nelson,

International Agricultural Programs, University of Wisconsin, who diligently worked on the preparations for my trip to Indonesia. Last but not least, I am grateful for the good fellowship of my two American colleagues and housemates, Nancy Brendlinger and Joan Schroeder. They made me less lonely for my friends in the United States.