



### 13. Summary

During the original three-year project period between September 29, 1979 and September 30, 1982, the project was supposed to increase the socio-economic well-being of rural women in northern Togo by providing training in income generating skills, assisting cooperative development and introducing improved nutrition practices. The project has had no visible impact on the socio-economic well-being of rural women. This is largely due to the fact that even though the original project period has expired, the project is just entering the second of its four major implementation phases which consist of developing training programs, training the women, creating cooperative societies, and producing and marketing the craft products. The project will require another 24 months to complete all four phases. The four phases must be completed before one can make a definitive statement about the project's socio-economic impact.

Implementation of the project is significantly off schedule and the outputs to date are far short of those planned under the original proposal. Training programs have been developed in only two craft skills, soap-making and weaving, instead of the original four proposed. The programs of soap-making and weaving, are just getting started, formal cooperative training had not started, and the women's groups have not developed a system to produce, market and distribute their products. Most of the slippage in the implementation schedule is explained by the late arrival of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) and Government of Togo (GOT) project personnel. The last individuals arrived more than two years after the project agreement had been signed. The fact that two instead of four craft skills will be taught results from the failure to adequately investigate local interest in the crafts and the availability of materials for the products prior to including them in the proposal. The two skills dropped were cloth dyeing and basketery.

In order to make the implementation plan more realistic and improve the prospects for achieving the project goal, the craft skills training will be limited to soap-making and weaving, the number of women's groups will be reduced from 27 to 22 and the project will be extended by two years, until September 30, 1984.

The project provides training in soap-making, weaving, gardening and nutrition. The most promising of these training programs are those in soap-making and nutrition. The project soap is easier to make, lasts longer and smells better than the traditional soap produced by the women. The nutrition program provides practical and useful information in the local context. The weaving technology needs to be improved in order to control the quality and size of the woven cloth. The gardening program consists of gardening tools and fencing provided by the project and agricultural training provided by a French volunteer, at no cost. The craft skill and nutrition training programs were developed by Togolese resource personnel and even though local women were able to improve their craft technologies,

there were no real improvements or innovations in existing craft technologies in Togo. The craft technologies used represent a simple transfer of craft skills practiced in other areas, i.e., Dapaong to the Kara Region. It is now projected that by the September 30, 1984 project termination date, 70 women will have been trained in weaving, 125 in soap-making and 220 in gardening for a total of 415. All of the women will be trained in nutrition.

Without having access to detailed cost benefit data, it seems that the total project cost of \$672,000 over five years is an expensive and inefficient way to offer training in locally available craft technologies to 195 women and training in gardening to 220 women. Even with this substantial cost, there is no certainty that the women's groups will be able to market their products profitably and thus increase their income and socio-economic well-being in the long-run. The marketing studies for soap and women's cloth have not yet been carried out and little, if any, thought has been given to the adverse effect of a substantial increase in local production on the profitability of the products to be sold.

#### 14. Evaluation Methodology

This is a regular evaluation that was conducted to measure progress to date, identify problems which impede project implementation, and identify corrective steps to be taken. The timing of the evaluation, which was conducted during the period of August 30 to September 8, 1982, was significant because the project was scheduled to terminate September 30, 1982 and fifteen months had passed since the last evaluation was conducted in June 1981. This evaluation also provides an effective means of identifying actions to be carried out and the time required to complete the activities identified.

USAID/Lome Project Officer Rudolph Thomas was responsible for organizing the evaluation and drafting the Project Evaluation Summary (PES). Throughout the evaluation there was active participation by three NCNW representatives and three representatives of the GOT Ministry of Social Affairs and Feminine Condition (MSAFC). The NCNW participants were Mrs. Ruth Soumah, NCNW/Washington Project Coordinator, Mrs. Lilian Robinson, NCNW Coordinator for West Africa, and Miss Carla Van Blake, NCNW/Togo Project Coordinator. The MSAFC participants were Mr. Tchatomby Ouro-Bawinay, Kara Regional Director of MSAFC, Mrs. Mina Awade, Kara Regional Coordinator for Feminine Condition, and Mrs. Katherine Nimon, Assistant Project Coordinator.

The line of inquiry used in conducting the evaluation followed that established in AID guidance for preparation of the Project Evaluation Summary. The evaluation covered all elements of project implementation and involved the participation of national, regional and local MSAFC officials. The methods used to obtain project information were as follows:

1. Review Project documentation and reports;
2. Interview NCNW and GOT Project officials, crafts and nutrition instructors, and members of the women's groups;
3. Site visits to the Kara Regional office for MSAFC, the Landa training center, and local soap, gardening and weaving groups;
4. Observe nutrition demonstration, soap making, weaving and gardening activities.

After the field visit to the Kara Region had been completed, Mr. Thomas returned to Lome with the three NCNW representatives and the three MSAFC representatives of the Kara Region to review the findings of the evaluation team with Mrs. Anakola Aithnard, MSAFC's Director General for Feminine Condition, and to develop a mutually agreed upon list of actions to be taken by the three parties involved.

#### 15. External Factors

External factors have not influenced the project. The socio-economic conditions and GOT priorities have not changed since the original project proposal was written.

#### 16. Inputs

Total inputs to be provided over the life of project are estimated at \$672,000. This includes a \$383,000 grant from AID to NCNW to provide project management and technical assistance, a \$229,000 grant from AID to the GOT to cover the cost of commodities, training and construction, and \$59,000 provided by the GOT in land and salaries.

Since the signing of the September 1979 and November 1979 Grant Agreements with the GOT and NCNW, respectively, the project has encountered several significant implementation problems which have caused the project to be at least two years off schedule. The implementation problems resulted from both GOT and NCNW failure to provide project inputs in a timely manner. These inputs which delayed project implementation are as follows:

- a) The NCNW project coordinator arrived in Togo February 29, 1980, five months after the agreement was signed with the GOT;
- b) The GOT assistant project coordinator assumed her responsibilities February 1981, 17 months after the project was signed;
- c) The GOT project accountant assumed his responsibilities October 1981, 27 months after the agreement was signed;

- d) The GOT project chauffeur assumed his responsibilities in November 1981, 28 months after the agreement was signed;
- e) Because of a structurally unsound design, the construction of the training center was stopped in June 1981, far short of completion and had not started again at the time of the evaluation;
- f) The production of soap was delayed because the soap and oil specialist recruited by NCNW from the Ghanaian Technology Consultancy Center failed to develop a soap that was cheaper and better to use than the local soap already on the market. As a result, soap activities were stopped in early 1982 and a search for a new soap specialist started. The new soap specialist, who was found in Dapaong, Togo, began his soap training activities on July 1, 1982;
- g) The Ghanaian soap and oil specialist also produced an oil press to produce palm and peanut oils. Unfortunately, neither of the oil presses produced a sufficient quantity of oil with local palm nuts and peanuts to be cost effective. It was still cheaper to purchase oil from other regions;
- h) At the time of the evaluation, the GOT still had not assigned a cooperative advisor to train the women's groups in basic skills of book-keeping and cooperative management. As a result, the women's groups have not yet begun to practice and develop cooperative and business skills.

## 17. Outputs

The projected project outputs to be achieved by the September 30, 1982 Project Assistance Completion Date are presented on page 3 of Annex I of the USAID-GOT Project Agreement No. 698-0388.12. The planned outputs and the progress toward their achievement at the time of the evaluation are presented below:

<u>OUTPUT</u>	<u>PROGRESS AS OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1983</u>
A. 560 women trained in improved techniques of weaving, cloth-dyeing, soap-making and basketry.	A. Training is offered in only weaving and soap making. There was a group of 10 women attending weaving training sessions and two groups with a total of 44 women attending soap making. None of the groups had completed their training.

OUTPUT

PROGRESS AS OF SEPTEMBER 3, 1983

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|---|---|
| B. 560 women instructed in improved child care, health, hygiene and nutrition practices.                                      | B. The training program concentrates on nutrition practices and child care. Two groups consisting of 82 women had attended nutrition training sessions.                                     |
| C. 28 village-based artisan co-operatives legally constituted and functioning making credit available to cooperative members. | C. There are twelve artisan groups. There are no cooperatives and none of the groups has received cooperative training and a co-operative advisor had not yet been recruited or identified. |
| D. Documentation on the socio-economic and nutritional status of women and their families in the Kara district.               | D. Both a socio-economic study and a nutrition study have been completed.   |
| E. Surveys conducted by the Technical Advisor and craft-consultants on outlets for products produced in four skills areas.    | E. The marketing study for the crafts has not been conducted.   |
| F. 28 women trained in craft cooperative and credit management skills.  | F. Cooperative training had not started and the idea of credit has not been considered. Given the funds available under the project there is no need for credit.                            |
| G. Technologies designed to aid in craft production are in place and operating in the villages.                               | G. Since none of the groups had completed their training, none are operational. Only the soap-making technology is perfected enough to be marketed widely and profitably.                   |

One can see from the above review of the progress toward achieving the project outputs that even though the original three-year project period has expired, the project is significantly short of achieving its targets and in several cases there is little prospect that the original targets will be achieved. There are a number of factors which account for the huge differences between what was planned and what has been achieved. The local interest and capacity to develop specific crafts was not adequately verified before the crafts were included in the proposal. If this had been done, cloth dying and basketry would not have been included. The project was seriously delayed by the late arrival of RCNW and GOI personnel. The architect selected to design the training center and supervise its construction was incompetent and the construction had to be stopped in June 1981. The soap and oil advisor from Ghana also proved to have little to offer and had to be replaced. Even the June 1981 evaluation delayed

project implementation by throwing into question the direction and activities of the project and wasted many hours of project staff time in an effort to revise the project. Despite this effort, the revision was not even completed.

The delays in project implementation made it impossible, within a three-year period, to develop and establish self-sustaining, craft-producing, profit making cooperatives. Even though it wasn't listed among the project outputs, a cooperative that functions as an efficient entity that profitably produces, markets, and distributes its products, is the single most important project output and is the vehicle by which the women will be able to generate income and increase their socio-economic well-being. At present the project has a long way to go to realize this objective. To date the project staff have devoted their energies to improving the craft technologies, developing the training programs, and organizing and training the women. Very little has been done to cultivate and develop the business/marketing aspects of the craft activities. Even at this stage of the project, when the craft technologies have been developed and the training is underway, the marketing study has not been conducted and the cooperative training has not started. If the project is to obtain its objectives of increasing the income of the women involved, then the project staff need to give top priority to identifying marketing outlets, developing a distribution system and providing cooperative and management training for the participants. If these issues are not addressed immediately the project runs a strong risk of having groups of women trained to make soap and weave cloth but not making money.

In considering the fact that the original three-year life-of-project expired September 30, 1982 and yet the training activities have just begun, while the real production and selling phases have not yet started, the project has to be adjusted to improve the prospects of obtaining its objectives. The participants in the evaluation have agreed to limit the number of women's groups to the 22 in existence at the time of the evaluation and limit the number of participants to 415. The 22 groups and 415 women consist of 6 weaving groups with 70 participants, 10 gardening groups with 220 participants, and 6 soap-making groups with 125 participants. These limits will allow the project staff to focus on training, production, and marketing rather than using limited time and resources to identify and organize new groups. The craft activities will consist only of weaving and soap-making and there will be no attempt to develop additional crafts. This also will allow the project staff to concentrate on the latter phases of project implementation.

Finally, an outcome of the evaluation which was not determined by the Evaluation Team, but which was viewed as essential to the project's success by USAID/Lome, is the extension of the project to September 30, 1984.

## 18. Purpose

The Project purposes are as follows:

- A. Provide training in income generating skills and assistance in cooperative development for rural women;
- B. Introduce rural women and their families to improved nutrition practices.

Appendix A, page 2 of the logistical framework included in the approved sub-Project Paper for the Project presents seven end-of-project status (EOPS) indicators for the achievement of the project purposes. The information below shows the EOPS and specifies the progress toward their achievement.

### A. EOPS #1

A fully operational training facility capable of providing training for 350 women per year.

#### Progress to date:

As a result of the problems encountered in constructing the Training center and the stopping of all construction activities in June 1981, the center has not yet been built. There has also been a significant delay in starting the training activities. The project has, however, developed the capability to provide training for 350 women per year. The project has trained eight trainers in weaving, soap-making, gardening and nutrition. There are two trained teachers in each area. Much of the current training activities are conducted in rented facilities in the town of Landa in the Kara region.

### B. EOPS #2

Training courses in 4 occupational skills designed, tested and implemented.

#### Progress to date:

The project has developed occupational skills in only two areas, soap-making and weaving. The other two occupational skills, cloth dyeing and basketry, contained in the original proposal were dropped because there was little local interest and materials were not available. However, gardening has been added as a replacement activity. Gardening provides both a source of income and complements the nutrition program. The women to be trained under the project are members of groups which specialize in either soap-making, weaving or gardening. There are a total of 22 women's groups consisting of 415 women. Among the 22 groups, the number of

groups and the total number of women involved in soap-making, weaving and gardening respectively are 6 and 10, 6 and 126, and 10 and 220. At the time of the evaluation, the groups actively enrolled in training programs consisted of one group of 10 women in weaving, 2 groups totaling 44 women in soap-making, and 5 groups totaling 139 women in gardening.

The two occupational skills of soap-making and weaving still need to be perfected. While the soap is marketable and popular in the Kara region, the project has not yet found a cost effective way of improving its odor or a reliable and stain-proof method of coloring the soap. According to the women involved in soap-making, the new soap introduced by the project is an improvement over the old soap in several ways. It is more solid and lasts longer. It takes less time to make and the production process doesn't require scarce and expensive wood.

The weaving program still has major problems and it is not unreasonable to wonder if the project will succeed in developing techniques that will consistently produce quality cloth. The looms being used by the weaving groups, which were developed by a weaving consultant from Dapaong, Togo, are not sturdy and as a result, produce a cloth which varies in width. The GOT and NCNW representatives are now exploring the possibility of having the looms, which are now part wood, made entirely of metal. This would make the looms more sturdy, but more expensive and less mobile. Another problem associated with the weaving is the lack of locally available inexpensive thread. The project has not yet developed an alternative source of thread.

The gardening program was much easier to put together than the weaving and soap programs. The project provides the gardening groups with farming tools and fencing to keep animals out. Training is provided by a French volunteer at no cost to the project. The introduction of the gardening program increases the food produce available to families as well as supplements income.

### C. EOPS #3

Women are members of legally constituted cooperatives thereby assured of access to credit.

#### Progress to date:

The women's groups are not registered cooperatives and have not yet received cooperative training. According to the USAID/GOT Project Agreement, the GOT is responsible for providing a cooperative advisor to work with and train the women's groups. No cooperative advisor has yet been assigned. This is clearly an area which needs much more attention if the women's groups are to function as self-sustaining economic entities.

D. EOPS #4

One woman trained in design, implementation and management of community development projects.

Progress to date:

The assistant project coordinator, who is an employee of MSAFC, has been actively involved in the project for close to two years and has acquired a substantial amount of hands-on, practical experience. She exhibits a mastery of the project details, an eagerness to learn and a commitment to follow through. She is ready to assume responsibility for the project management and implementation.

E. EOPS #5

Four instructors trained as trainers of occupational skills.

Progress to date:

The project has trained eight instructors, two in each of the fields of soap-making, weaving, gardening and nutrition. However, there has been no attempt to standardize the training by developing specific course curriculum, quality standards to be achieved by the trainees, or a system of trainee evaluation.

F. EOPS #6

One demonstration vegetable garden located at the facility serving as a source of food for the trainees and staff and as a teaching aid for nutrition education.

Progress to date:

A demonstration vegetable garden has not been developed. The demonstration garden probably was not developed because construction of the training center was stopped in June 1981 and since that time the training activities have been conducted in temporary, rented facilities and at other training sites in the Kara Region.

G. EOPS #7

One nutrition education course designed, tested and implemented.

Progress to date:

The nutrition education course has been designed and tested and is currently being implemented. The first groups started their training in nutrition education in May 1982. The nutrition program, which was developed by Togo's Institute for Food and Technology, is

practical, relevant and easy to follow. The course concentrates on the growth problems of small children and uses a combination of posters presented in a local context, group discussions, cooking demonstrations and child weighing to improve nutrition practices.

#### 19. Goal

The project goal is to increase the level of socio-economic well-being of rural women in the Kara region of Togo. To date, there is no evidence that the project activities have had an impact on the project goal. At the time of the evaluation, the women were just beginning their training in soap-making, weaving, nutrition and gardening and had not yet had an opportunity to take advantage of their training. The reasons for the delays in project implementation are discussed in section 16 above.

#### 20. Beneficiaries

To date, the beneficiaries of the project are the four craft, two gardening and two nutrition instructors who have been trained in their respective teaching areas. These individuals are employed by the project and are currently training the women in the various groups. In the long run, the direct beneficiaries will also include the 22 women's groups, consisting of 415 rural women in the Kara region. These women will have received training in nutrition education, weaving, soap-making and gardening. Both the training center to be constructed and equipped and the trained instructors will have an impact on future women's groups who receive training by MSAFC. With the skills and information acquired by the groups and the initial start-up investment provided each group, the women should be able to increase their income through the production and selling of crafts and improve their families' diets by following improved nutritional practices and by raising nutritious food in their gardens.

#### 21. Unplanned Effects

The project has not produced any noticeable unplanned effects.

#### 22. Lessons Learned

- A. The project's three year time frame was insufficient to allow the proposed activities to be carried out in a timely and sequential fashion. More time should have been allowed for NCNw and GOT start-up activities, perhaps 9 to 12 months. During this period, personnel would be recruited, housing and office facilities established, vehicles purchased, and women's groups identified and the process of activity sensibilization started. In the original design, three months were allowed to recruit personnel and no specific time was

set aside to identify and organize the women's groups. Also, not enough time was provided to allow the socio-economic, crafts, and marketing studies to be conducted and appraised. The other activities, such as the identification of the type of training to be offered, development of a curriculum and training program, and the training of trainers were dependent on the outcome of the start-up and research activities. The actual training of women, development of the cooperatives, and marketing of products could take place only after the research had been conducted, the crafts perfected, the training program developed and the trainers trained. It seems reasonable that at least two years should have been devoted to project start-up planning activities and three years for implementation of the training and organization and supervision of the production, marketing and cooperating activities. Thus a more realistic life-of-project would have been five years instead of two.

- B. The project proposed that beginning with the fourteenth month, the craft consultants conduct a research study to find ways to improve the crafts and reduce their costs and conduct a marketing study to identify potential markets. The information to be obtained by these studies was supposed to indicate whether there is a sufficient demand for the products for them to be profitably produced by the women's groups as well as to identify the quantity of production which is practical. These studies should have been carried out as a part of the project design in order to establish a need for the training and determine the number of crafts that could be supported by the market. As of yet, the market study has not been conducted and there has been no attempt to relate the number of women to be involved and their output with the potential market, the price the market will support, and the profitability of the craft products.
- C. The research studies that were conducted to develop peanut and palm oil presses and the attempt to improve soap-making technology were not successful. The experience seems to indicate that the objective of developing new technologies or improving existing technology is too uncertain and risky to be pursued by this kind of low-budget, time-limited project. The experience of the project also indicates that it is much more practical and cost effective to identify existing local technologies which can be easily adopted to a new but similar setting. Also, the experience of the project shows that this can be done just as easily by local officials as by foreign technical advisors and for a small fraction of the cost.