

POLICY RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Teacher Incentive Systems

LIBERIA

Status Review

September 1987

IEES

Improving the
Efficiency of
Educational
Systems

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The current resurgence of both national and international interest in quality education, along with the need to recruit and retain quality teachers, has been marked by renewed attempts to develop pragmatic incentive programs to help upgrade education in Liberia. The search for efficient means of providing quality education for all Liberians by well-trained manpower is not new. It has its antecedents in a wide variety of recommendations formulated a little more than 60 years ago by missionary and philanthropic organization.¹ However, current events have redirected national attention to the new Liberian Minister of Education's call for "the Rebirth of Quality Education."

Education in Liberia started on weak and shaky foundations. The emphasis, apart from rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic, plus an elementary knowledge of English, the new language, was religious knowledge. This system of education differed radically from the environment and religion of the people indigenous to the area. Thus divorced from day-to-day living, education came to be identified with mere acquisition of information in books necessary to land a job today. Liberian school and education officers realize how difficult the task of the school is at best and how more difficult it is when the foundation laid in early years is so weak. A former Minister of Education recognized this fact in 1968 and noted with personal regret in his annual report that "the extremely high dropout rate and the fact that only 16.5% of the registered candidates succeeded in passing the national examination give reasons for concern."² Indeed, this situation

seems to have worsened. A high dropout rate at all levels of education in Liberia is not, however, related to the quality of programs, but is influenced by the competence of teachers, the amount and type of relevant textbooks and other instructional materials, equipment, and necessary professional services provided by the Ministry to support classroom teachers. Today there is a growing concern for the poor performance of registered candidates on local and regional examinations. Past shortages of teachers in Liberia at the start and even at the turn of the century led to indiscriminate hirings. This policy inevitably resulted in a large residue of the undertrained and underqualified along with mediocre timeservers and catechists still present in our schools.

The basic function of education is to provide trained citizens required for the survival of a nation and to provide each with the necessary skills required for personal survival and general improvement of society. It is assumed that the Ministry of Education will have to invest heavily in incentive programs that will enable teachers and other school personnel to climb the social and economic ladder and motivate them to do a better job.

One way to approach the problem of raising the standards of education at primary and secondary levels is to develop adequate incentive programs, including materials, tenure, and fringe benefits. It then will be easier to attract and retain quality manpower. Special attention should be given at the primary school level, where the need is most acute.

Salary awards for public school teachers that went into effect in 1986 are shown in Appendix A. To a very large degree, the salary scale does not depend on years of service or experience. In other words, a newly-employed holder of a recognized degree commands the same salary as does the veteran teacher with same academic qualifications plus years of experience. Similarly, old and new teachers within the same category of certification make the same salary. Extra reward for experience and years of service could be a powerful stimulus.

This report describes a program of teacher incentives. It suggests that the Ministry of Education can arrest the high turnover rate of teachers and improve their lot socially and academically by providing incentive systems which are directed at motivating old and new recruits to improve their performance as well their intellectual growth and development. Further, it contends that classroom teachers, particularly the untrained and underqualified, should attempt to answer this question: What personal competences are necessary and desirable for a successful teacher career? It also contends that a description of existing situations in the teaching profession will enable the Ministry of Education to answer this question in order to enhance the quest for quality education and pursuit of excellence in Liberia.

Further, if education is to be a tool in national development it is essential that thought and attention be given to this question: How much responsibility for education, particularly at the elementary level (Kindergarten through Junior High), should be given to untrained and underqualified teachers?

2.0 THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF SCHOOLING IN LIBERIA

Liberia was an American colony from 1822-1847. With backing of the U.S. Government, it was founded by missionaries and freed men whom colonization societies organized into teams and sent over. With a constitution modeled after that of the United States, it became, in 1847, the first Republic in Africa.

U.S. missionaries had a virtual monopoly on education and, as was the general practice, schools stood by chapels erected by various denominations. Thus Liberia became a dual society in the sense that it was composed of both indigenous and acculturated persons, with citizens of American descent making up only 3% to 5% of the population. The others were members of tribes which were Liberia's original inhabitants. This brief review is limited to the indigenous populations.

2.1 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL GROUPS

There are 16 major ethnicities in Liberia. They are Bandi, Bassa, Belle, Dan (or Gio), Dey, Gola, Grebo, Kissi (or Gissi), Kpelle, Krahn (Kuhlan), Kru (Kulu), Loma, Ma (or Mano), Mandingo, Mendi and Vai. Some of the ethnicities, if not most, are subdivided into several branches with cultures peculiar to them, although all have common basic customs.

Educationally, these ethnic groups may be further divided into two main social groups, the Poro (Polongi), and Sande (Bondoi) groups. The Poro group consists of the Bandi, Bassa, Belle, Dey, Gola, Kissi, Kpelle, Loma, Ma, Mendi, and Vai. The Non-Poro group includes the Dan, Grebo, Krahn, Kru, and Mandingo.

Poro and its counterpart, Sande, are respectively organized for the training of boys and girls. Their initiation rites are intended to prepare young people for the adventures of life within the general context of West African societies. Although somewhat affected by pressures of Westernization and Islamization, all children are still expected to join one of the secret societies. Otherwise, one faces the possibility of remaining an outsider or a social outcast in one's land, for both Poro and Sande are communal as well as invisible institutions. Thus, a step on one member's foot is regarded as a step on the invisible feet of all Poro groups.

The Non-Poro group have their respective institutions which train their young members for the social activities of life.

Today, young people of both groups, if in Western-type schools, use the Christmas vacation period (December, Mid-March) to go through their rites. Many of these young people, particularly those who struggle to finish some formal education, find employment in acculturated communities, missions, and foreign concessions. Most are Public and Private school teachers, although a good many hold top positions in government, business, industry, and medicine. However, a large number of rural secondary graduates still crowd the teaching

field. It may be that, historically, this segment of people has had to contend with lower level managerial jobs than did the coastal secondary graduates whose academic records, according to a rather recent comparative study, fell far below their rural counterparts.³ The reason is quite obvious. Over the span of our national history, rural people were routinely excluded from top-level administrative posts in the public sector. In those days, and perhaps even still, an unwritten national employment policy was that it didn't really matter "what you know and can do, but rather who knows you."

It should be pointed out that education in Liberia means what one intends it to mean. Strictly speaking, education in Liberia falls into the following two main categories. They are:

1. Public schools. These are entirely under the jurisdiction of the national government and are operated by the Ministry of Education with funds from the public treasury.

2. Nonpublic schools. These fall into four subgroups:

- Mission Schools. Schools entirely supported by local and foreign missionary boards with a government subsidy and operated by various religious organizations, including Islam.
- Private Schools. Maintained by private individuals who rely heavily on government subsidies.
- Philanthropic Schools. Maintained by various foreign conces-

sions operating in Liberia, such as Firestone, Bong Mines, and LAMCO.

- **Traditional Schools.** Operated by local people without any sort of aid from local government, national government or foreign donors.

3.0 A BRIEF HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN LIBERIA

Education in Liberia, that is to say Western Education, which was introduced by Protestant religious groups at the start of the 19th century and is the story of borrowing, adaptation, and innovation. Initially, the educational purpose was religious and Protestant. Its form and content were derived from the United States. Some settlers from the Americas valued education highly. They founded day schools as soon as their economy became sufficiently stable. The Government announced the funding of public education in 1857 and later enacted a compulsory law which could not be universally enforced because there were few teachers, few schools, and few texts. The first institution of higher education was established in Monrovia in 1862 under the auspices of the Massachusetts State Colonization Society and its Trustees of Donations for Education in Liberia. The development of special schools for training teachers was a result of a great need for more and better qualified teachers, especially in rural areas. These, along with the University of Liberia and Cuttington University College, a church affiliated institution of higher learning, have increased the output of graduates but they have not been

able to meet the nation's need for more teachers.

Current education statistics indicate that there are 8,310 teachers employed in 1,691 schools with a total enrollment of 260,560 students distributed among 12,891 classrooms throughout the nation. Of the total number of teachers, 5,909, or fewer than three fourths, are undertrained. (See enrollment statistic in Appendix C.)

Support of Christian missions and education comes from three main sources outside of Liberia. These three groups have helped established Western-type schools in Liberia:⁴ (1) The missionaries supported by powerful colonization societies (1846-1964) were the first initiators at the start of the 19th century and they established the deepest traditions; (2) In the 20th century, projects have been initiated and supported by governmental groups such as the United States, Asian, and European countries; and (3) the United Nations with its Specialized Agencies, such as UNESCO, FAO, ILO, UNICEF, and WHO. The missionaries no longer direct the schools officially, but missionary education still continues today in Liberia as the legacy of the missionary activities of seven prominent denominations (Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Roman Catholics and Episcopal Order of the Holy Cross). Thus the tremendous missionary impact on the economic growth and social development motivated David Christy in 1857 to dismiss Liberia as nothing more than a "Missionary Republic."⁵

Education today in Liberia is highly centralized. It provides a common program for all children, from the age of six to eighteen or above in some cases. Secondary (high school) education is a part of the program and the percentage of the school population who remain in school for nine to ten years is constantly rising. It should neither be disguised nor denied that the current trend suffers because of tremendous increase in immigration of Liberia from neighboring countries.

4.0 TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

In Liberia, people used to choose teaching as a vocation relatively early and so plan their career training accordingly. (Current examples of this group are candidates or graduates of our two Rural Training Institutes at Kakata, Margibi County and Zorzor, Lofa County, along with education majors of Cuttington and the University of Liberia.) Others are drawn into the profession by fate. In the face of modern economic hardships, teaching appears as an opportunity for security for those who cannot find employment elsewhere. A point of fact is that teaching used to be a respectable occupation and, for almost a century, almost everyone, including past and present national leaders, started out as a teacher. But the economic growth that the country experienced during the latter part of the 1960s and 1970s changed the picture drastically. Today education majors do not fare as well as do other majors on the job market. This accounts for the paucity of teacher education majors currently in training.

In Liberia, the importance of teaching staffs is shown in qualifications established for persons appointed to teach in public schools. The new certification policy (1986) requires grades A, B, or C certificate for appointment. Holders of Grade A certificates are regular college graduates in education, while Grades B or C ('B' two years postsecondary training, 'C' one year postsecondary training) are awarded to graduates of our Rural Teacher Training Institute. Unfortunately, the new certification policy does not take into consideration the years of service of those who had been on the job before the policy was instituted. It is currently estimated that, of the 8,310 public school teachers, 1/8 (or 1/2 of 1/4) are holders of Grade A certificates, while 1/3 is either B or C certificates. Last year (1987) the Rural Teacher Training Institutes graduated a total of 38 candidates. It is not yet known how many entered the teaching field. Since both Cuttington and the University of Liberia were forced to close for various reasons, many seniors have yet to return to graduate or pick up their diplomas. Preliminary statistics indicate 22 education majors graduated from the University of Liberia in 1987.

It is the wish of the Ministry of Education to assign teachers on basis of specialization. But the great need to place a teacher in every classroom makes a mockery of specialization. It is not surprising to find a math specialist teaching social studies. Of major importance to many public school teachers is their teaching load, often measured by the number of hours per week spent in the classroom or some related service. Since schools vary in

terms of location and student population, teaching loads range from 8-12 hours and, in few of the cases, are 40 hours per week. In rural areas, it is not infrequent to find a school manned by one teacher teaching Grades 1-6. Such a teacher teaches every subject.

This fact, along with poor working conditions and inadequate instructional materials, compounds the problem of teacher retention. Because of the generally lower salaries in the Ministry of Education, compared to other government service jobs, the MOE has an extra disadvantage in securing and retaining able teachers. A pay raise was recommended last year, but it has been hampered by long delays in the payment of back salaries. Although there is no available statistics, it cannot be disguised that a good number of the dissatisfied teachers left because of the salary situation.

Prior to July 1986, many teacher education majors and graduates from the Rural Teacher Training Institutes were disappointed because the system could not absorb them, even though most were trained at great expense to the Ministry of Education as an incentive to attract a quality teaching force. Another problem was the inability of the Ministry of Education to pay its teachers on time. Obviously, there have been a large number of qualified teachers who deserted to make farms or become peddlers in villages and on streets of Monrovia. It is estimated that there are little more than 500 left to find employment with missions and other private institutions.

5.0 OPPORTUNITY FOR PROMOTION

The Department of Instruction within the Ministry of Education is charged with hiring teachers. This authority includes the fixing of terms of employment and necessary compensation. But the necessary requirements for both appointment and subsequent promotion have not always been enforced. It cannot be disguised that, although compensation and promotion are based on specific sets of criteria, nepotism, political pressure and outright corruption play influential roles in such matters.

6.0 STATUS OF TEACHERS

All public school teachers in Liberia are national employees. Since all are considered civil servants, they enjoy the rights which go with the status, and they are expected to obey public service regulations, i.e., no strikes. The main privilege is that they seem to get rooted without being classed as tenured civil servants. Once accepted by the Ministry of Education and placed on public payroll, a teacher, regardless of qualification or lack thereof, may look forward to continuous service without fear of dismissal unless charged with criminal offense or retired most reluctantly. It is even difficult to weed out the undertrained and unqualified until it is proven that the teacher in question is guilty of gross misconduct.

Public school teachers are forbidden to criticize government officials, including those in the Ministry of Education.

This, undeniably, renders teachers mute. Only the National Teachers Association of Liberia seems to be permitted to voice criticism and opinions publicly. But by and large, teachers are denied the right to speak on any issue directed to their field and the Ministry of Education.

Entrance into the teaching profession in Liberia is achieved only by graduation from one of the two rural teaching institutes, one of the nation's two colleges, and a mere high school diploma of local or foreign origin. At the start of the second semester, 1986, teachers were required to deposit with the Ministry of Education copies of diplomas or degrees, health certificates, curriculum vitae, two passport size photos and a transcript showing their last school attended. Various laws exist on the books regulating teachers' behavior. None, however, are enforced for appointment, transfer, leaves, salaries, pensions and disability allowance, although plans are now underway to remedy this situation. Currently, salaries for all public school teachers are uniform, or at least nearly so within each category of certification. In other words, all holders of Grade A Certificates get the same salary; so do grades B or C, with or without training in teacher education. (See current salary schedule in Appendix A.) No special allowance is paid to teachers according to the number of dependents, nor are special increments added to their overall salaries for efficiency, dedication, devotion, or hard work. Nevertheless, Liberian teachers hold positions of considerable security and are even admired by some rural folk.

Nearly all public school teachers are active in the sole national teacher organization. An overall organization, National

Teachers Association of Liberia (NTAL), has replaced the former National Teachers Union of Liberia (NULT) and currently is trying to direct national attention to the needs of teachers. Since its reorganization in 1986, NTAL's primary attention has been focused on the salary situations of teachers. While this is still a problem, NTAL has taken on the responsibility of providing professional training services for the untrained and under-qualified teachers. According to the March 3, 1988, edition of the *Daily Observer*, a local newspaper, NTAL requested and was duly granted permission by the Ministry of Education to establish and operate a Correspondence High School in Monrovia to enable teachers below the rank of high school graduates to qualify for High School Level Certification. (Nothing much beyond the announcement is presently known.) The organization maintains local chapters in each of the thirteen counties of Liberia.

As indicated earlier, there are 8,310 public school employees in 1,691 schools throughout the nation. Of these, 5,909 are undertrained.

The teaching profession in Liberia is a male-dominated occupation. The ratio of male to female teachers is 10:1 for the simple reason that, historically, girls were not encouraged to pursue education beyond the eighth grade. Even today the ratio of girls to boys in public schools is roughly 1:2. According to the Minister of Education's annual report, there was a total of 156,059 boys as opposed to 99,273 girls, in school during the 1986 academic year.⁶

Since actual birth records are few, it is not easy to determine the chronological age of teachers. Many are in their late thirties and about one-third are expatriates. Most of foreign teaching personnel are from neighboring countries in West Africa: Others are from America, Asia (India in particular), and Europe. A large bulk of Nationals are descendants of local rural people. (See Appendix B for a general breakdown of teachers by qualifications, region, and county of residence and Appendix D for statistical breakdown of teachers by county and sex.)

Although the prescribed language of instruction in schools, public or private, is English, the nation's language of record, some allowance is made for some local languages at the primary level, particularly in mission and Islamic schools.

7.0 A BALANCE SHEET OF INCENTIVES AND DISINCENTIVES FOR TEACHING IN LIBERIA

A stream of qualified teachers must be kept flowing into the teaching profession and through the various promotional, training, transfer channels, and eventual retirement systems designed to allocate and develop scarce human resources available to the Ministry of Education and its public schools. Even a well-selected teaching force will, invariably, require further training to aid their development. This is a continuous responsibility, for teachers are always leaving the classrooms and shortages are always developing at the primary level of education where the need for qualified teaching personnel is the most urgent.

As in many, if not most, developing countries in Africa, the most pressing problems of education in Liberia could be solved if more money were made available to the Ministry of Education for general operation and maintenance of its public school. This is not to say money is everything, but it helps keep most things under control. Teachers, like other professionals, do eat and sleep in houses and it takes money to place them in schools and keep them there. Attracting and retaining them implies incentives over and beyond their regular monthly or annual salaries.

During the last thirty years, the Government of Liberia has announced a set of national policies to ameliorate the educational system in the country. Two of these policies were the need to recruit and train qualified manpower for the primary level education and to produce local instructional materials. A few of these recommendations were tried, but not effectively implemented due to lack of funds.

8.0 INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Of all the pressing problems facing quality and relevant education in Liberia, instructional support deserves special notice, not because these materials (textbooks, curriculum guides, lab equipment, A.V. materials, etc.) necessarily guarantee quality education, but because the lack of these vital materials, along with an adequately staffed and equipped library, makes it virtually impossible to provide equality education for children regard-

less of family financial status or geographical location.

The increase over the years in student enrollment from the mid-1950s through the end of 1970s and the corresponding decrease in government appropriations has caused a tremendous shortage of instructional materials at all levels of education in Liberia. This major problem could be alleviated if the government revenue had been slightly increased and well managed. Textbooks are basic tools for teachers and students. Another major contributor to the problem of textbooks and other instructional materials is that most parents are not financially capable of supplying their children with the necessary textbooks even if these are available at the Ministry of Education and World Bank Project (now frozen) bookstores in Monrovia and in several of the county centers.

Mention must be also made of the contributions of the Liberia Primary Education Program (LPEP), a unit of the Ministry of Education, under the auspices of USAID and the Government of Liberia. Formerly called the Improved Efficiency of Learning (IEL) Project, LPEP works with 218 public schools, in 10 of the 13 counties on an experimental bases, involving 37,757 students and 1,270 teachers. These are supplied with free modules or booklets each semester. When fully implemented, this program will ease the textbook famine in most, if not all, of the public schools.

But the problem still remains. It is easy to teach the facts of science, but the philosophy and methodology is another matter altogether. The use of foreign books (almost all are outdated and sold

on the streets by textbook racketeers) not only compounds the problem, but even defeats the general purpose of education. These texts and methods are not only irrelevant socially and geographically, but are quite different from those which would be appropriate for the social and cultural backgrounds of Liberian students. The dire need for instructional materials has led some teachers to rely solely on self-produced materials that catechize instructions. These teachers lift materials from old and new textbooks and compile them in a form of catechism with questions and answers. It is known that the introduction of facts in this form raises certain intellectual problems. When the children learn only simple answers to complex historical or scientific questions they are denied the full study of history or science as structured disciplines. Thus comprehension is no longer at the level of the local environment. All efforts have to be explained and related back to an infrastructure of knowledge the child barely possesses (because he lacks the necessary social and historical backgrounds). It may be relevant to note that Liberia, like most, if not all, developing nations of Africa, is an illiterate state. The home does not reinforce academic activities. Home and school activities are entirely different. Thus it is rare to see a home library with anything more than a Bible and a few religious tracts. It is equally a very rare occurrence to see a family reading together.

It goes without saying that a well-equipped school induces both teachers and pupils to engage in the process of learning. Poorly built, ill-equipped, and overcrowded schools have led

many instructors to quit teaching especially when salary checks are delayed.

9.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The efficiency of an organization depends on how well its members are trained. Newly hired graduates from the RTTIs or one of the nation's two institutions of higher learning are expected to have completed rigorous training which include student teaching experience, while those below the level of high school education require inservice teaching both to keep them alert to the demands of their jobs and to prepare them for transfer and promotions as well as salary adjustments. Both inservice and preservice training motivates a few teachers to do a better classroom job. Many teachers, however, are concerned that the inservice and promotion ladder on which they find themselves doesn't lead upward very far. Once the program is completed and salary subsequently adjusted, there is no advancement. Many industries, business organizations, and even government agencies have differentiated, hierarchical structures. Promotion within and between divisions brings new titles, higher pay, and more interesting work. Thus the idea of being able to move to the very top induces many to put in a few extra hours over and beyond the call of duty.

The structure of education in Liberia does not present such incentives for the teaching profession. A teacher with a bachelor's degree may become a principal or a local Education Officer. Most remain in teaching until they find a way to study at the master's degree level. Many

find employment elsewhere after completion of such studies. A chance to study abroad is noncompetitive. Candidates are merely recommended for a national government, UNESCO, USAID, etc., scholarship. Thus, teaching in Liberia is either a dead-end path or a stepping-stone to other jobs outside of the Ministry of Education and its public schools. As in the case of those who enlist in various inservice programs, it is difficult to put a figure on the number of teachers who receive foreign scholarships and then quit the teaching profession because of low salary and poor working conditions.

10.0 SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Since teaching is neither prestigious nor a financially rewarding job, most local communities look at teachers with ambivalence. To a certain extent, teachers are folk heroes in rural areas. They enjoy all privileges of local communities and are often assisted by local people in the following areas:

1. Student discipline and problems of absences and tardiness.
2. Improving materials conditions.
3. Organizing social and cultural events.
4. Providing home and temporary board for newly-assigned teachers.

While this is neither atypical nor the general rule, it is characteristic of most rural communities, particularly those

who build their own schools and appeal to the Ministry of Education for teachers. It is also characteristic of rural folk who see education as a means of social mobility for their children and succeeding generations.

A growing interest in education since the end of WW II has produced more demands for schools by villagers and others concerned with the well-being of the teachers in local communities.

11.0 INCENTIVES CURRENTLY UNDER CONSIDERATION

A number of monetary and non-monetary incentives for teachers are being given serious consideration in Liberia. Last year, for instance, the Minister of Education announced that there is a growing concern for greater recognition of the role of teachers in national development programs. Accordingly, an ad hoc committee was set up to plan a Teachers National Award Day Program. Awards are considered to include certificates (or plaques) of merit plus a financial bonus, paid vacations or an observation tour of teaching methods in one of the West African nations. Other incentives are hardship allowances for remote assignments, tuition grants to cover dependents' school expenses, low-cost housing or apartments, revised retirement plan and other fringe benefits. The final outcome of these proposals is to be based on a comparative study of incentive systems in both African and non-African nations.

12.0 ANALYSIS

A part of the problem of raising teachers' educational level, of inducing and attracting qualified talents to the teaching profession, is the issue of motivation. Many teachers in the profession are there for reasons other than incentives. Education must be viewed as a vital national investment that may bring large returns in improvement of society and development of citizens, particularly the young. Nowhere in the world do primitive standards result in national progress. An educated society is a progressive society. Thus viewed, education becomes a lasting form of national investment.

The Ministry of Education must look at the problems of teacher education more broadly than only salaries. It must look at the need for change, incentives, and motivation, and then design incentive plans that promise to bring about the desired change necessary to recruit and retain qualified teaching personnel for Liberian schools. Whatever incentive programs the Ministry of Education may choose to formalize, the problems of teacher preparation, competency, and finances will have to be faced for the general good of the country.

Attention to teacher motivation is worthwhile. Principles of motivation have been formulated by learning theorists. It is, however, known that an indifferent, dogmatic teacher will change little by virtue of attractive incentives. Clearly, the expected return will depend largely upon overall levels of teacher morale. Again, it must be

admitted that little or no research has been done on this topic at present and it is difficult to formulate more than the most tentative conclusion. While the Government and its Ministry of Education raised teacher salaries last year and the average teacher take-home pay is likely to be raised again, it is quite unlikely that the differential in pay and prestige between teaching and other occupations is likely to narrow. On the contrary, the economic gap between the teaching profession and other white collar jobs may be further widened until education becomes a top priority national program for development.

13.0 SUMMARY

The story of education in Liberia is essentially the history of foreign missionary endeavors at the start of the 19th century. The first teachers were not trained professionally, but were willing to work with or without pay. Their primary motivation was to convert the "heathen" whose view of religion needed "enlightening." By the turn of the century local untrained people were recruited to teach. Out of this practice grew the notion that "anyone can teach." Hence, it was unnecessary to pay them high salaries.

Quality manpower is the most essential ingredient of quality education. It accounts for more than 90% of the budget that goes into the process of education. An equitable incentive system, coupled with regular payment of monthly salaries, would induce teachers to work without the need to moonlight or look to an outsider to award them a merit increase or even recommend promotion.

Ask anyone why he works and, invariably, chances are that he will say to make money. True, people went more from the job than the weekly or monthly payments--yet money is a very basic need. Even ministers of gospel and teachers who accept low salaries regard their pay as highly important. It cannot be disguised that monetary reward is the primary motivation even for teachers, since it satisfies low-level physical needs and also higher needs for recognition and promotion. There are many factors that salary administration may take into consideration other than monetary incentives. It should be emphasized again that the main objective is to develop a system of salary payment and stick to it. Long delays in payment is analogous to denial of justice by delaying tactics. The Ministry must be willing to invest in continued administrative vigilance in order to keep teachers on the job. Promotion of quality education depends on getting the cooperation of teachers and support staffs. This is possible only when they receive their pay on time. Without a sound system of salary administration, along with accompanying incentives, it is quite difficult for the Ministry of Education to recruit and retain quality manpower.

Until July 1986, teaching in Liberia was neither an attractive nor an honorable occupation. In principle, all teachers were required to be legally certified, but this requirement was often by-passed by virtue of nepotism or political pressures. Although salaries, appointments, and promotion of teachers were seemingly based on qualifications, political influence played a significant role in placements,

salary, promotion, and even retirement benefits. At the start of the second semester, 1986, the Ministry of Education inaugurated a program designed to make teaching attractive, as well as an honorable profession, through its new certification policy and new salary schedule for teachers. A set of incentive programs was launched at the beginning of the second semester, 1987, on an experimental basis because of funds. It includes tuition grants to teachers with a large number of dependents, housing allowance, remote or "hardship" assignment allowance, and hospital insurance. The Ministry of Education is now willing to supervise recruitment services, struggle with grievances and correct inequities and imbalances in existing programs. At present, there are few or no incentives other than wages for attracting quality manpower into the teaching field. Long delays in payment of monthly salaries even tend to make this ineffective.

Since it is a natural desire to be recognized and to have financial and non-monetary incentives for remote areas and retirement benefits, the dedicated teacher should be able to earn more directly or indirectly to know that a relationship should exist between effort and reward. A pay program that provides immediate rewards for performance can be a powerful stimulus for better teaching. The Ministry of Education must convince teachers that its new incentive systems are equitable in reflecting dedicated service if teachers are to be responsive. But it should not be inferred that an effective incentive system for performance is a cure-all. An effective incentive system should not merely reward appearance of work, but rather compen-

sate for performance over and above what is required.

Progress in any endeavor, including education, is dependent upon knowing where one stands at a given time, how far one has come, and the direction in which one is going. The Ministry of Education has the potential for focusing its attention upon the promotion of quality teaching and an equitable incentive system.

14.0 DATA NEEDED FOR COMPREHENSIVE INCENTIVE STUDY

This brief status report has attempted to give an overview of education in Liberia. It has focused upon the need for improvement through the structure of some incentive programs for teachers. The discussion has led into such related paths as cultural background, teacher training programs, recruitment and retention of teachers, salary schedule, instructional support, inequities and imbalances, and the need for an overall incentive program that will be practical and efficient. The following paragraphs concentrate on the need for further research.

Through research, the Ministry can begin the laborious process of developing a system of incentives which will provide answers to the problem of attracting and retaining a quality teaching force. The following are proposed important areas of data to be collected:

I. Current Trends

- How many teachers retire annually and how many are recruited each year?
- Is it true that the teacher payroll is padded with names of people who receive monthly pay but do not teach?
- What is the most efficient way of weeding out unscrupulous "ghost teachers" from the profession?

II. System Needs for Teachers

- Does the Ministry of Education keep an accurate record of the teacher turnover rate at the county, regional, and national levels?
- Salaries aside, what is the most significant factor influencing teacher turnover?
- Is the turnover rate higher among local nationals or expatriates?

III. Teacher Recruitment and Placement

- Is there a single agency within the Ministry, with branch offices at the county level, that is absolutely responsible for placement of teachers? Is it immune to political pressures?
- How are vacancies advertised?
- Are they competitive?

- Apart from expatriates, what Liberian ethnicity constitutes the largest block of local teachers?
- What steps should be taken to either improve or reorganize a recruitment system for teachers?

IV. Teacher Training and Retention

- It has been said that "those who can, do; those who can't, teach." Is this true in Liberia?
- Is the teaching force dominated by candidates who could not be admitted into other professions?
- What incentives does the nation offer teacher trainees?
- What is the most difficult problem the Ministry has in dealing with expatriates?
- Do expatriate teachers receive favorable treatment and/or incentives at the expense of local nationals?
- Are they subject to pension and retirement laws?
- What incentives are offered those who want to be teachers?
- What are the different categories of teaching in public schools?
- How many are full or part-time teachers?
- Is there any basis for workload allocation?

V. Teacher Income

- How many teachers moonlight?
- Is it easier for a teacher to moonlight in coastal (or maritime) counties than in landlocked counties?
- Is moonlighting tolerated in the Ministry of Education and its public schools?
- What steps have been taken to discourage or prevent it?
- Is teaching a dead-end profession in Liberia?

VI. Teacher Retention and Attendance

- Does teacher attendance vary from county to county or from one region to another?
- Is teacher supervision uniform throughout the nation?
- Do supervisors expect kickback from teachers who moonlight?

VII. National Perception of Teachers

- How does the average citizen see teachers?
- Are they respected for their sacrifices?
- Do they devote time and effort to community development?

- Are they altruistic or egoistic?

VIII. Instructional Support

- Are teachers supplied with necessary instructional materials?
- Who pays for these materials?
- Does the Ministry sanction the use of "fly-by-night" materials that catechize instruction?
- What efforts are taken to alleviate the plight of science teachers who lose equipment?
- Are teachers given allowances to defray the costs of materials they purchase for classroom use?

IX. Community Support

- What monetary or nonmonetary benefits do teachers receive from local communities?
- Should the government compel local communities to support teachers and local school establishments?
- What incentives do local communities offer teachers?

X. Miscellaneous Benefits

- Does the Ministry provide for a pension or retirement fund?
- Does the Ministry help educate dependents of those teachers who

cannot pay the costs of educating their children?

- What are the incentives and disincentives for assignments in remote or hardship areas?
- Who is likely to be assigned to remote areas?
- Does politics play an influential role in placement of teachers in remote areas?
- How could such practices be corrected?
- Do some teachers receive a better retirement deal than those who do not have the necessary political connections?

XI. Faculty Development and Intellectual Growth

- Who gets the chance to study abroad?
- What incentives are offered for attending inservice programs?
- Is promotion based on meritorious performance or political connections and/or sycophancy?

XII. Correction Strategies

- What drastic measures are necessary to correct the existing inequities and imbalances in the teaching profession?
- Should schools be closed for a num-

ber or years in order to reorganize or revamp the system?

XIII. Policy Matters

- What sort of input does the Ministry solicit from teachers and the national teacher organization?
- Do teachers participate in curriculum policies?
- Do teachers participate in recruitment services or programs?
- How do teachers see themselves socially and economically?
- What suggestions are needed from teachers in order to boost their morale and motivate them to become dedicated civil servants?

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. a. For summary recommendations and resolutions that specified the need to adapt education to the local environment, see "Liberia," in Chapter XII (pp. 290-317), *Education in Africa* (1922), a survey of the educational needs of Africa by the African Education Commission under the auspices of the Phelps- Stokes Fund and Foreign Mission Societies of North America and Europe.
 - b. The International Conference on Christian Missions in Africa held at Le Zoute (Belgium), September 14-26, 1926, owed its origin to the survey of the African Education Commission. A selection of significant speeches, recommendations and resolutions dealing with education, curriculum policy, suitable textbooks, etc., is the official report by Edwin W. Smith, *Christian Missions in Africa* (1926). Further discussions of the influence and impact of the conference on education in Africa may be found in the *Journal of the African Society*, XXVI (Oct. 1926), 63-68; *Social Forces*, III (March 1927), 483-487; and the *International Review of Missions*, XVI (Jan. 1927), 26.
 - c. The Le Zoute Conference led to the Hampton Conference of Liberian Workers held at Hampton Institute (Hampton, Va. (USA)), February 8-18. Their diligent work led to new textbooks called the African Life Readers Series which took direct method based on SEE, DO, TELL. Accounts of this important conference on Education in Liberia are discussed in A.B. Doggett's "Conference of Liberian Workers," *Southern Workman*, XLVI (March 1927), 99-100 and Mary W. McKenzie's "Liberian Conference Meets At Hampton", *Spirit of Mission XCII* (Aug. 1927), 497-498.
2. Caine, Augustus F. Annual Report to the Leg. of Liberia for the year October 1, 1967-September 30, 1968, p. 119.
 3. Boley, G.S. "An Analysis of Scholastic Achievement, Educational, Job and Income Expectations of Selected Secondary School Students in Three Liberian Counties," Ed. D. Dissertation, University of Akron, 1977.
 4. U.S. Army. Area Handbook for Liberia (Wash., D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 110-125.

5. Christy, David. *Ethiopia: Her Gloom and Glory as Illustrated in the History of Slave Trade and Slavery, the Rise of the Republic of Liberia, and the Progress of African Missions...* (Cincinnati, Ohio: Rickey, Mallory and Webb, 1857), p. 208.
6. Gongar, E.O. Annual Report of the Ministry of Education to the Leg. of Liberia for Jan. 1, 1986-Sept. 30, 1986, p. 44.

Appendix A: Salary Structure for Teachers

APPENDIX A

Salary Structure for Teachers and Education Officers per Annum (MOE, 1986)

M.Sc. (Education)	-	-	-	\$5,800
M.Sc. (Ordinary)	-	-	-	5,400
B.Sc. (Education)	-	-	-	4,200
B.Sc. (Ordinary)	-	-	-	3,900
AA	-	-	-	2,400
B Certificate	-	-	-	2,800
C Certificate	-	-	-	2,100
High School Graduate	-	-	-	1,800
Below High School	-	-	-	1,785
* Unknown	-	-	-	1,800

* Persons who have not reported or submitted their
credentials are paid on the high school scale.

Appendix A (Continued)

Science and Technology Center Teachers

M. Sc.	-	-	-	8,800
B. Sc.	-	-	-	6,000
Rent allowance (for all)	-	-	-	600

Compensation for Administrators

1. Senior Regional Supervisors	-	-	-	1,200
2. Chief Education Officers	-	-	-	900
3. District Education Officers	-	-	-	600
4. Principals	-	-	-	300

Appendix B: Number of Teachers in Liberia

APPENDIX B

Number of Teachers by County, Management and Sex, 1987

	TEACHERS	MALE	FEMALE
GRAND GEDEH			
Public	411	47	458
Mission	146	28	147
Private	58	6	64
TOTAL	<u>615</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>696</u>
SINOE COUNTY			
Public	309	64	373
Mission	84	26	110
Private	13	61	9
TOTAL	<u>406</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>502</u>
GRAND KRU COUNTY			
Public	136	11	147
Mission	4	2	6
Private	---	---	---
TOTAL	<u>140</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>153</u>

Appendix B (Continued)

	TEACHERS	MALE	FEMALE
MARYLAND COUNTY			
Public	276	85	361
Mission	93	19	112
Private	6	1	7
TOTAL	<u>375</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>480</u>
BONG COUNTY			
Public	466	98	564
Mission	198	54	252
Other	216	61	277
TOTAL	<u>880</u>	<u>213</u>	<u>1093</u>
NIMBA COUNTY			
Public	486	83	569
Mission	91	22	113
Other	84	14	98
TOTAL	<u>661</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>780</u>
LOFA COUNTY			
Public	652	36	688
Mission	214	15	229
Other	124	12	136
TOTAL	<u>990</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>1053</u>

Appendix B (Continued)

	TEACHERS	MALE	FEMALE
BOMI COUNTY			
Public	269	234	35
Mission	27	24	3
Other	14	11	3
TOTAL	<u>310</u>	<u>269</u>	<u>41</u>
CAPE MOUNT			
Public	187	175	12
Mission	12	12	--
Other	13	13	--
TOTAL	<u>212</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>12</u>
MARGIBI			
Public	534	--	--
Mission	184	--	--
Other	144	--	--
TOTAL	<u>862</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>
MONTSERRADO			
Public	1471	--	--
Mission	699	--	--
Other	623	--	--
TOTAL	<u>2793</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>

Appendix B (Continued)

	TEACHERS	MALE	FEMALE
RIVERCESS			
Public	74	69	5
Mission	6	5	1
Other	2	2	--
TOTAL	<u>82</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>6</u>
GRAND BASSA			
Public	479	--	--
Mission	105	--	--
Other	40	--	--
TOTAL	<u>624</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>

Appendix C: Distribution of Students

APPENDIX C

Distribution of Students Enrollment by County and Sex (1985-1986)

YEAR COUNTY	1985			1986*		
	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS	TOTAL	BOYS	GIRLS
GRAND BASSA	18,649	11,501	7,148	18,276	11,332	6,944
BOMI COUNTY	6,171	3,850	2,321	6,048	3,810	2,238
BONG	26,195	16,509	9,686	25,636	16,150	9,486
GRAND CAPE MT.	6,407	3,886	2,521	6,279	3,830	2,449
GRAND GEDEH	17,320	10,838	6,482	16,973	10,523	6,450
GRAND KRU	5,655	3,972	1,683	5,542	3,879	1,663
LOFA	22,931	15,750	7,181	22,472	15,282	7,191
MARGIBI	18,536	12,124	6,412	18,165	11,807	6,385
MARYLAND	12,340	7,780	4,560	12,093	7,618	4,475
MONROVIA	55,284	30,734	24,550	54,178	30,340	23,838
MONTSERRADO	20,381	11,441	8,940	19,973	11,184	8,789
NIMBA	38,267	22,537	15,730	37,502	22,126	15,376
RIVERCESS	2,159	1,474	685	2,116	1,439	677
SINOE	10,265	6,870	3,395	10,059	6,740	4,319
TOTAL	260,560	159,266	101,294	255,332	156,059	99,273

* Preliminary Figures

Source: Annual Report of the Ministry of Education,

September 30, 1986, p. 44.

Appendix D: Research Outline

APPENDIX D

Research Outline Teacher Incentive Systems Liberia

Liberia faces the problem of maintaining a highly committed, dedicated and qualified teaching staff in the school system. It is often argued that the stagnation which permeates the fabric of the Liberian schools can be attributed, in large measure, to the increasingly large number of undertrained and untrained personnel in the system. Statistics on the teaching force in Liberia confirms this: the 1984 and 1985 National Education Survey reported that 35% of the 8,390 teachers (2,401) in the Liberian educational system were said to be qualified to teach. The same report revealed that of the 8,390 teachers in the system, 5,909 were said to be untrained, which is about 65%.

Rationale. Available information on the supply of teachers in the Liberian school system has shown that the supply of teachers from the Teacher Training Institute has dropped in the last four years. Information also shows that trained teachers are not being attracted into the teaching profession. The argument has been advanced that because of the present state of the teaching profession and the present conditions of service, teachers will not be attracted to the teaching profession in the future.

This study is therefore needed because it will identify ideas and ways by which the supply of teachers can meet the demand. It will also identify reasons for the retention and recruitment levels of the system. This information is important as Liberia faces a serious financial and moral problem in the teaching profession. Alleviation of the acute shortage of teachers may be one of the answers to the many problems of Liberian education.

Overall Goal. The overall goal for the TIS research is to provide relevant data, background information, systematic procedures, policy recommendation, and analyses of alternatives so that policymakers in the Ministry of Education can select and implement appropriate strategies to strengthen the teacher incentive system. This will support Ministry efforts to achieve improved recruitment, increased retention, and effective instruction and thereby improve the quality of education in the nation's schools.

Product. Several products will be produced during and after the teacher incentives project. The expected intermediate products are:

- preliminary statement of the problem, policy issues, and research questions; inventory of system characteristics that affect teacher incentives;

- design for policy research studies on teacher incentives;
- recommended research procedure;
- sample questionnaires for collecting data on teacher incentives;
- guidelines and budget worksheets for coordination the study;
- bibliography of the literature on teacher incentives;
- descriptions and discussions of major teacher incentive strategies;
- descriptions and analyses of current incentives and disincentives in each cooperation country;
- descriptions and analyses of the perceptions of teacher incentive systems by different stakeholders;
- definition and description of critical features of teacher incentive systems;
- a procedural model for improving teacher incentive systems; and
- a glossary of terms related to teacher incentive systems.

The expected final products are:

- final report on each country studied,
- policy recommendations regarding teacher incentives for each country,
- final report synthesizing the findings from the three countries,
- policy recommendations for teacher incentive systems in developing nations,
- report and recommendations on conducting cross-national policy research studies, and
- updated review of the literature on teacher incentives.

Outcomes. The major purpose of the TIS study in Liberia is to examine and determine the extent of teacher shortage and the possible incentives that would attract and retain teachers in the profession. The study will identify and analyze ways and means by which teachers in Liberia will become more committed and dedicated to the profession.

The objectives of the study are:

- to determine the extent of incentives on individuals in Liberia to become teacher trainees, and
- to determine what incentives other than salary would attract and retain teachers in the profession.

A major objective of the IEES PRI is to improve the capacities of research institutions in the host countries. As a result of participating in this research initiative, individual competencies and institutional capabilities will improve in these areas:

- policy research design,
- data collection,
- construction of survey instruments,
- report preparation,
- policy analysis,
- project management, and
- collaboration in cross-national policy research initiatives.

Appendix E: Research Advisory Committee

APPENDIX E

Policy Research Initiative

Teacher Incentive Systems Liberia

Research Advisory Committee

1. Hon. Raymond B. Jallah
Deputy Minister for Instruction
Ministry of Education
2. Mrs. Sandra C. Monger
Director, Social Planning Division
Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs
3. Hon. Francis J. Caesar
Assistant Director - General for Social and Community Affairs
Bureau of the Budget
4. Mr. Moses K. Bah
Vice President for Administration
National Teachers Association of Liberia
5. Mr. Ben Teah Elliott
Director of Personnel
Ministry of Finance
6. Dr. Josephine Nimley
Chairperson/Education Division
Cuttington University College
Suacoco, Bong County
7. Mr. Kwretu Nepe
Director, ZRTTI
Zorzor, Lofa County
8. Mr. Josephine Porte
Director of Planning
Ministry of Education

Appendix F: Research Management Structure

APPENDIX F

RESEARCH MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

