

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : THE FILES

DATE: April 18, 1978

FROM : Richard B. Scott, Program Analyst

SUBJECT: Letter to Mr. Ferogh from Mr. Grader, drafted 16 April 1978, on "AID Project No. 306-0149 Central Helmand Drainage Project-Phase II Project Implementation Letter NO. 2."

This memo is to explain briefly my nonconcurrence with the subject letter as a member of the Helmand Drainage Project Implementation Committee, and to record an objection to moving forward with Phase II project implementation under present conditions. For more detail on the subject reference should be made to my past memos and those planned for the immediate future that will relate to various aspects of project implementation.

The subject letter is in two parts. The first is notification that now that the GOA has met the Conditions Precedent and the project funding can, therefore, move forward. In my opinion, the GOA has not met the Conditions Precedent relative to having a viable system for organizing and managing the hand-labor aspects of the project nor has any incentive system been worked out for the laborers.

Part two of the letter supports the conclusion to which I have come in its analysis and suggestion for a joint evaluation of the situation. I disagree with the statement made, however, on Page 2 of the letter, second paragraph, that states that there is some system presently in operation. As we know, the individual in charge of the hand-labor aspects of the project within HCC has been recently assigned to the Kajakai Gates Project and a new man, an unknown quantity, has been assigned. As of 11 April to at least 15 April 1978, there have been no workers at work under any system. To counter this observation, someone might argue that since Phase I work has been completed there is no occasion for the hand-laborers to be at work. The same could be said about the heavy equipment work of the project, but that work continues as if Phase II were in action. The planning and design work for Phase II is well ahead of the actual construction and is continuing.

This week an attempt will be made to initiate a new system of organizing hand-labor in the field. It is a system suggested by the SCS team. And

the suggested system, if it functions, should involve the local farmers more in the construction of drains on their own land. But the point is that as far as operations are concerned, the project is no closer to having a viable system for managing hand-labor than it was two plus years ago. The project has more experience now than at the beginning of Phase I with the problems of recruiting and organizing the hand-labor. But the cumulative effect of this experience within the GOA has been minimized by the transfer of the responsibility of this activity from HAVA to HCC and by the movement of personnel in and out of the responsible unit. And that experience is basically with the use of daily wage laborers frequently under conditions that do not lead to maximization of production nor bring any special benefits to those who are working.

The GOA has demonstrated, to me at least, its disinterest in the hand-labor aspect of the project for reasons I have outlined and analyzed on previous occasions. The Condition Precedent that the GOA will have a viable system for the organization and management has not been met and to conclude otherwise is to turn a blind eye to the fact. Given the importance of this aspect of the project relative to the project beneficiaries and the construction of on-farm drains, it is my opinion that it is a mistake to move ahead with the project funding. At some point this issue will have to be faced with the GOA. The GOA will need to decide to implement or to drop this aspect of the project. Until this decision is clearly reflected in action, not words and diversions, it would seem in contradiction to sound project management for USAID to move forward with the heavy equipment purchasing aspects of the project.

Recommendation: A re-drafted letter, not of implementation, be sent to and discussed with Mr. Ferogh which outlines the problems of the hand-labor aspects of the project as well as other organizational problems of which both USAID and the GOA has been aware of for the past several months, e.g., the organization or disbandment of HAVA, pointing out that the Conditions Precedent have not been met and until they have the project can not go forward. Immediate action is required on the part of the GOA; action that the GOA has not faced up to in the past, nor has USAID insisted upon. Time and delay is on the side of the GOA in terms of the requirements to obligate money and the desire to have operational projects. It should not be assumed that the GOA is unaware of the tactics of delay nor the end results about to occur given the present USAID course of action. A confrontation at this time, while perhaps distasteful and a bit late in the process, could be most effective for future project implementation.

cc: AD/DP, RARogers
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