

USDA CSREES Higher Education Challenge Grant Trip Report

Required Output of Each Faculty Member and Student Traveling on Grant Funding

Outline

1.0. Title Page. (Use name of Grant, name of granting organization, dates of visit, your name, title, and institution, and school and department within the institution)

New Paradigm for Application of Discovery-Based Learning: Implementing Bottom-up Development with Participatory Process and Whole System (Holistic) Thinking

Report for January 2009 visit to Mali
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Visit January 6 – January 21, 2009

2.0. Executive Summary (1 page summary of the highlights of the visit)

The major objective of this visit was to assist the Mali Agri-Business Center with establishing accounting policies and procedures and developing a method to track expenditures. The resulting documents are Appendix 1 (Draft Accounting Policies and Procedures) and Appendix 2 (Excel Spreadsheet for tracking expenditures).

The Policies document includes reports, policies and accounting documents. Reports covers activity, planning, financial and annual reports. There are policies covering visits to Mali, visits to US, gifts to villages, trip reports, reimbursements, cash receipts, and information about who to contact regarding specific villages. The accounting policies list the documents/information needed for invoices, expense reimbursements, orders and cash receipts. The Center needs to review this document regularly to ensure it is current and applicable. This document has been shared with all Center members via email and USB drive.

The excel spreadsheet has 3 worksheets – one tracks expenditures from the New Paradigm grant that apply directly to members of the Center; another worksheet is for the Center's own bank account; and the third is a report that is populated with summary numbers from the other two worksheets. These documents have been shared via email and USB drives. The excel spreadsheet is also on Google Docs so that people can update and view the current status of the accounts. To use Google Docs, you sign on using a gmail account (this is free). This allows for easy sharing of information even if the file is quite large. It also greatly enhances transparency as people can view the complete information at any time.

My other responsibilities included assisting with the MBA team, taking responsibility for two French students after Dr. Shams left for Borko with the Sociology team, and managing details for the Bamako team. In this role, I took notes for the 2-day strategy meeting with Center members and had the French students translate the mission and vision. I accompanied the MBA team on their visits and offered input and gathered further information.

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4.0. Objectives of Visit

My objectives for the 2009 visit were to aid the Mali Agri-Business Center in setting up their accounting policies and procedures and assist the other faculty. Specifically, I planned to

- 1) Ensure the Center is incorporated and has a bank account with clear signing authority and appropriate controls.
- 2) Establish policies and procedures for the Center to receive and disburse cash.
- 3) Establish policies and procedures for the Center to report back to the grant and to its constituents about its activities.
- 4) Establish procedures to record and track expenditures - this would include how they could handle marketing of the quality control kit for Shea.
- 5) Help the Center think about revenue generating activities.
- 6) Assist Dr. Ernest Owens' team of four MBA students.

5.0. Accomplishments of Objectives (By objective, what was accomplished?)

- Objective 1 Bank Account: – we were not able to establish a bank account because the organization first needs to be registered. There are 2 significant issues that are holding up registration. First, all members of the Center are government employees and, as such, are restricted from certain private activities. Second, the Center members' employers report to two different ministries. IER reports to the Minister of Agriculture and IPR reports to the Minister of Education. The Center will determine how to go forward with registration.
- Objectives 2, 3 Policies and Procedures: Belco Tamboura, Abdoulaye Camera, Sidy Ba, and I developed a set of draft accounting procedures for cash, tracking expenditures, and reporting. See Appendix 1 for the draft. This document covers reports, policies and accounting documentation. The reports area covers activity, planning, financial and annual reports. The policies area covers visits to Mali, visits to US, gifts to villages, trip reports, reimbursements, cash receipts, and information about who to contact regarding specific villages. The accounting documentation area lists the documents/information needed for invoices, expense reimbursements, orders and cash receipts. The Center needs to review this document regularly to ensure it is current and applicable. This document has been shared with all Center members via email and USB drive.
- Objective 4 Tracking Expenditures: Abdoulaye Camera and I developed an excel spreadsheet to track expenditures. See Appendix 2 for the initial spreadsheet. The excel spreadsheet has 3 worksheets – one tracks expenditures from the New Paradigm grant that apply directly to members of the Center; another worksheet is for the Center's own bank account; and the third is a report that is populated with summary numbers from the other two worksheets. These documents have been shared via email and USB drives. The excel spreadsheet is also on Google Docs so that people can update and view the current status of the accounts. To use Google Docs, you sign on using a gmail account (this is free). This allows for easy sharing of information even if the file is quite large. It also greatly enhances transparency as people can view the complete information at any time.
- Objective 5 Revenue Generating ideas: The Center addressed revenue generating ideas in their work with the MBA students under Dr. Ernest Owens direction. I attended all of their meetings and offered assistance where applicable.
- Objective 6 Assisting other faculty: I acted as the organizer for the team in Bamako. This involved exchanging money, organizing meals and supplies, looking after the apartments, tracking expenses, and other unexpected items such as a sick student.
- In addition, I took responsibility for two French students when Dr. Ashley Shams had to unexpectedly accompany Dr. Susan Smith-Cunnien to Borko. The original plan was for Mme. Thera to accompany Dr. Smith-Cunnien to Borko and for Dr. Shams to stay in Bamako with 2 students. The other 2 French students would accompany the Sociology team. However, Mme. Thera could not stay for the entire visit and Dr. Smith-Cunnien needed another faculty member to assist. Fortunately, I was staying until Dr. Shams returned to Bamako. During the 10 days for which I was responsible, the French students:

- a. accompanied the MBA team and acted as interpreters where appropriate;
- b. translated materials such as the Mission and Vision for the Center;
- c. visited cultural sites around Bamako such as French Cultural Center and Museum of Bamako, National Museum, and the Zoo;
- d. shopped for food including fruits and vegetables from market vendors; (this required use of their French, learning their way around our neighborhood, and interacting with market vendors)
- e. visited the library at the university; (this involved taking taxis on their own, negotiating taxi fares, and describing where they wanted to go)
- f. shopped in the artisan market for jewelry for Ada Gusti. (this involved identifying necklaces and earrings that will be attractive to US buyers and negotiating for a good price as well as using their French)

6.0. Journal (a daily log of what was done, visits, meetings, cultural experiences, other things related to visit objectives or helpful information for the faculty and students who will follow you here to Mali or to the US.)

Monday, January 5, 2009

The Sociology and French students met with Susan, Ashley and Jane to discuss final trip plans. Several students had collected donations of school supplies and Fatimata (a Malian living in St. Paul) had given us clothing donations to take. We weighed the suitcases with these items and readjusted so that no suitcase weighed more than 50 lbs. We also discussed any final questions and issues. Everyone seemed eager for the journey to begin.

Tuesday, January 6, 2009

We met at the airport at 2:00 p.m. for a final check that everyone's bags were less than 50 lbs each before all were checked in. All but Agalya were given boarding passes for all 3 flights meaning we didn't have to check-in again. We were all checked in by 3:00 and through security in time to get some food. The group consisted of:

Faculty: Ashley Shams, Susan Smith-Cunniën, Ernie Owens, and Jane Saly

French students: Sibi Lawson, Cindy Clarke, Danielle Lecorps, and Erin McCloskey

Sociology students: Luis Rangel-Morales, Nate Minor, and Andrea Jauli

MBA students: Austin Campbell, Jeff Stewart, Nathan Myrold, and Agalya Jayachandiran.

As we waited for the flight to Detroit, Nate Minor began his video recording of the trip. He had borrowed professional recording equipment from the Journalism department and he will publish the video record as well as a story in the UST magazine. Austin Campbell had some candies shaped like Lego bricks. These are from TheCheeseShop.com. There were no issues with the flight to Detroit.

Wednesday, January 7, 2009.

Arrival in Paris was better than expected. Our plane was attached to the gate so we could walk right off the plane into the terminal (the same terminal for our next flight). We did not have to take any buses or clear customs. Agalya had a transit-only visa and could not go through customs. In addition, Agalya needed to check-in for the Bamako flight as she was only given boarding passes for the 1st two flights. As we had already cleared the security area, she was not allowed back to get her boarding pass. Instead, the security guard took her passport and ticket and got her boarding pass for her. That meant a few nervous minutes but probably was quicker than clearing security and waiting in line.

People got food, napped or walked around. The time passed quickly and we boarded the flight for Bamako. The flight was full and both Ernie and I were upgraded to business class!! That was a first for me. The seats recline almost completely and I was able to sleep for much of the flight. The food was very tasty.

We arrived in Bamako 1 hour late and took some time to clear customs. In the baggage claim area, there were only approved airport porters so it wasn't quite as intense as prior years. We hired 1 porter to take our heaviest bags. My pink bag's rolling handle was broken during transit.

We were mobbed when we finally got our bags through the security clearance. We found Belco Tamboura and our bus driver waiting patiently for us. We loaded up and left for the apartments. We had some CFAs from the previous year so we were able to tip the porter 4,000 CFA and the bus driver 10,000 CFA but had no other funds for the unofficial porters who jumped in to help load the bus. Next year, we should try to keep smaller bills for this. Or we should exchange a small amount in the airport.

Abdoulaye Camera met us at the apartments. We did not have as many apartments as we had hoped. Instead, we had 1 3-bedroom and 2 2-bedroom apartments with a total of 8 beds. This meant Ernie and Austin each got a small bed and the rest of us shared beds with one person sleeping on a couch. This was supposed to be fixed the following day. Everyone was asked if they minded sharing a bed and all agreed and adapted to this situation. The group as a whole was very adaptable and went along with our circumstances.

Thursday, January 8, 2009

Ashley and I went out to buy 2 baguettes for 600 CFA (still with CFAs we had brought with us). I had brought instant oatmeal and apricot jam. Breakfast was baguette and apricot jam.

We arranged to meet Belco at 8:30 a.m. with the bus to take us to Sotuba. Abdoulaye had left the phones for us with the guard. However, we didn't have any phone cards. So we waited for a long time. We found out later that there was a problem with insurance for the bus. While we waited, we exchanged cash with the ECObank right below our apartments at a rate of 465.

Belco arranged for the IPR bus to be at our disposal. The cost is 300 CFA per kilometer plus gas or 500 CFA per kilometer for all. We agreed to the 500 CFA per km including all gas and other costs. We estimated the total kilometers and total cost at 480,000 CFA and compared that to our estimate of cars from Karen for Zantiebouyou and Sanambele of 478,000 and decided that this was the same cost but more comfortable. Good to have all of us together.

By the time we were finally ready and the meetings had been rearranged, we went to Sotuba and met the Virginia Tech team – faculty - Don, Art, and Rick; and students – Dana, Leah, Katie and Krishna. The director of IPR, M. Mamadou Traore and M. Alou Badra Cessi DRPIA (an expert and promoter of bees) joined us at 2:00 p.m.. Mme. Gamby was still in a meeting. Belco introduced each group of us and explained what our role was. The director welcomed us and asked what they could do to help the Center. Ernie mentioned that lack of internet access was hampering the interaction between the Center and the US teams trying to help. IPR has 2 rooms with internet access – 1 for faculty and 1 for students. IPR annex in Bamako has a real problem with their internet. Mme. Gamby arrived just before we finished and welcomed us to Mali.

We exchanged phone numbers with Virginia Tech and agreed to meet for dinner at 6:30. The US and Malian groups spent some time discussing their mutual issues.

Susan, 2 students, and I took the bus to visit Karen Crabbs and make the final payment for the trip.

The apartment manager only had one more apartment with no furniture so we elected to keep the arrangements and double up for 3 days. When the Sociology group left on Sunday, there would be a bed for everyone. In addition, when they returned to Bamako, the MBA group and I would be gone and there would be a bed for everyone at that time as well.

Dinner at LaCampagnard with Virginia Tech.

Friday, January 9, 2009

The MBA team took the bus to Sotuba at 8:00 a.m. We met with Belco Tamboura, Keriba Coulibaly and Abdoulaye Camara to discuss the strategic plan and specifically Shea, Beeswax, Seed Potatoes, and Evaporative Cooler.

Lunch at La Gamelle and back to Sotuba.

Morning discussion was about Shea and afternoon discussion was about Beeswax.

We split up for dinner. The MBA students went off to work on the mission and vision statements and the rest went to Hong Mai (Vietnamese restaurant).

Saturday, January 10, 2009

The MBA team took the bus to Sotuba at 8:00 a.m. and met with Belco, Keriba, Abdoulaye and Aissata Thera. We began the discussion with the vision and mission statements (see notes on Strategic Planning). Then, we discussed Seed Potatoes.

Lunch at Aissata's for 1:00 p.m. The bus had picked up the Sociology team and we all visited Aissata's home. We met her husband and children and a few other relatives. They served a delicious meal of rice, sauce, peas, and chicken.

We returned to Sotuba without Aissata and continued with a discussion on the Evaporative cooler. We finished at 5:00 and returned to the apartments.

Ashley had arranged a dinner for the entire UST group and any center members who could join us. We went to San Toro and had a set menu for 19 (95,000 CFA including tip). All agreed the dinner was very good. We had a gingembre-hibiscus drink, a selection of brochettes de capitaine, brochettes de boeuf, and chicken accompanied by couscous, fonio, carrots, plantains, and onions.

During the day, we purchased cases of water for the Borko group and some supplies for the apartments.

Sunday, January 11, 2009

The Borko group left at 7:00 a.m. and the Bamako group slept in until 9:00 or 10:00. We left for the market at 11:00 and spent 2.5 hours shopping. All seemed to enjoy the experience (and purchased several items!). We went to Le Relax for lunch for 40,000 CFA (10 people). The food was not very good and a few people felt ill afterward.

We returned to the apartments for a quick break and then went to see the Niger. Sibi Lawson and Erin McCloskey were very tired and elected to stay at the apartments. The rest of us visited Belco's "unfinished" home in Kati. It is lovely and spacious with a beautiful view from the roof. It will be very lovely when finished. We also toured his business next door. Then we returned to look at the Niger and Belco found 2 boats (canoes) to take us out on the Niger for a brief voyage. It was dusk and very lovely. This would be a good experience for anyone if it can be arranged.

It was late when we returned to the apartments and all were on their own for the evening. Ernie and I shared some Lentil soup I had brought with me.

Monday, January 12, 2009

We planned to leave for Zantieougou at 7:00. We were not ready until about 7:15 and then we had to return for a lost item. We also stopped to buy croissants which took some time. We arrived at Le Loft about 8:00. We had quite a bit of traffic and picked up M. Ousmane (marketing manager for Coprokazan). I sat beside him and asked questions about exporting.

- Sales in Bamako – they use a petite vehicle to transport Shea every 5 days.
- When they sell to Canada, it is sent it Via Air France. Client pays and they don't know the costs.
- Organic Shea is not possible around Zantieougou due to high pesticide use in the surrounding area.
- Organic would be possible in forest area where there is no other cultivation.

(This conversation was almost entirely in French and Erin McCloskey assisted me in translating. However, I was able to handle most of the conversation on my own. I have been studying French and it has really paid off.)

We arrived at 11:00 and met for introductions.

- Coprokazan
 - o Mah Kone – president
 - o Mariam Ouattara – operations manager
 - o Korotomou Mariko – production manager
- 5 men producing beeswax
- Mah Kone welcomed us with "you came from your home and you come to your home" (Malian welcome)
- We first talked about Beeswax and went to the field to see some beehives.
- Virginia Tech split off with Beeswax people to conduct a survey.

MBA group met with the 3 women managers and Fomba Ousmane (marketing manager)

- Members sell nuts to coop
- Coop produces and sells Shea
- Estimate they have 30% of Malian market
- Want to produce 100 tons (this includes all grades) in about 4 years.
- 2008 production was 30 tons, 2007 was 17 tons
- 2009 have already produced 40 tons of nuts this year
- What are issues they see in future?
 - o Water may not be sufficient
 - o Nut drying facilities need to be increased (and installed in villages)

- Need more workers (may ask members to work more rather than add members)
- Would like to have help with operations and planning.
- Asked what did our students do about Shea
 - Ernie responded that they documented the process and outlined some of the challenges
 - The report is available through the internet and Ernie will make sure that Fomba Ousmane can access it. But it needs to be translated.
- Belco asked how they would like to work with the Center?
 - They asked what happened to the Shea testing kit. Apparently, Kate told them it was for them but Belco took it to Sotuba to test lots of batches. One kit has tested 40 and can test up to 60. The other is being saved for now. Belco and Kate demonstrated the kit in June.
- Agalya asked why they thought it would be difficult to increase members.
 - They started as a union but that didn't work. Now they are a coop. There are not enough current members working. So rather than add more members, they wish to get more members working. This means training more members in the high quality process.
 - Many members just sell nuts to the coop
 - To get more members working, they might decentralize and set up production in the villages.
- Center should plan to start selling kits.
- Questions about the export market
 - 90% of production sold in Mali
 - 10% export to Senegal
 - Very small % to Canada
 - People buy in Mali and take it to foreign countries. This is included in the amount sold in Mali numbers. Estimate about 2% of domestic market is going external.
 - Big issue for direct export is transportation costs
 - Buyer pays for product in advance, arranges and pays for transportation (use email for request)
 - Domestic demand is increasing.
- Plan to produce biologique (organic) for foreign market but this requires a separate facility
- 2 types of Shea (ordinary and improved). They sell improved and set their price.
- Shea nuts – pay 500-550 /kilo
- Workers are paid 1500 per day
- Price in Bamako 750 CFA for 250 gm jar
- Price in Zantiebougou – 1200/kilo in sachets
- Packaging costs
 - Jars – small 100, medium 300, large 1000
 - Sachet – small 10, large 15
- Grinding machine is not expensive

Nathan Myrold was not feeling well and spent the day sleeping in the bus. We had a lovely lunch of chicken, frites, peas, and onions. Then, we all purchased some Shea and headed back arriving at 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 13, 2009

Nathan Myrold was still ill with sweats, headache, diarrhea, and muscle aches. He had started a Cipro regimen on Monday evening. The MBA team went to the meeting with the Shea groups and Belco and I stayed with Nathan. There was a naturopathic doctor in the apartments who saw Nate and asked for tests for Malaria and Typhoid. We found a lab as well and they took blood samples to test. We returned to the apartments, purchased some potatoes, rice and salt. I stayed with Nathan while Belco joined the Shea meeting still in progress.

We hired a woman (Asa) to wash the sheets and clean the apartments. (10,000 CFA for all 3 apartments and sheets) I boiled some potatoes for Nathan and he slept. When the group returned from the Shea meeting, I joined the group and Erin and Sibi stayed with Nathan.

The MBA group went to LaGamelle for lunch and returned to the apartments to pick up Daniel Coulibaly and the Virginia Tech group. We visited a honey processing facility.

Wednesday, January 14, 2009

The MBA team left at 7:30 to visit ENI. Sidy Ba and 2 IPR students joined us there. We met with the director, Momadou Senago, Ibrahim Traore, Arona Coulibaly and Daouda Coulibaly. We had introductions and the director reiterated how pleased they were with the cooperation between ENI and UST. We expressed that we were happy to be here and learn what they had accomplished with the cooler.

We visited the thermal lab where they showed us the cooler that has been tested. They have put in a different fan and a stronger motor. With the new fan and stronger motor, you can feel the cooling effect for a larger area. It does consume more energy. There is a measure – coefficient of performance – relation of energy consumed / cooling effect.

Tests have been completed on the current cooler and a report with data is available. A mechanical engineering student is working on how to manufacture the cooler in Mali. Some minor problems identified are:

- There was no system to monitor water uses and needs
- There was some leakage
- Sharp edges

In 2006, Amidaire contacted ENI to conduct a study how to promote and disseminate coolers. They government recommended that evaporative cooling systems be produced in Mali. There was only 1 manufacturer and it didn't seem to work. Study is available from Camille, Belco or Sidy.

New fan was made by ENI. Need to import parts for the fan & assemble in Mali. The case can be made in Mali. Only the motor and parts for the fan need to be imported.

They really like the beverage cooling. This is a distinct advantage over other models. The collaboration between ENI and UST has brought many ideas together. And the resulting cooler has more features so it has real potential in the market.

The current cooler is being used in a law classroom. And there is one in a mosque.

Timing going forward:

- In June, we will have data from the mechanical engineering student re manufacturing.
- Next, develop and prove a prototype (need funding for this)
- Get patent license (ENI or center?)
- Begin manufacturing (Center finds a Malian manufacturer and works out an arrangement)
- ENI will act as R&D and will develop improvements and test prototypes. The Center will be responsible for developing the business side.

Sikasso government contacted ENI about using evaporative coolers for storing table potatoes. Sikasso area produces most of the potatoes consumed in Mali. The potential for this market is very large. They are working on adding evaporative cooling to air pocket technology to achieve even better cooling.

Another advantage of the system is that you can use the fan alone or with the pump. The screens use fou which is readily available in Mali. The current cooler is the same basic structure as the one in Kangaba. That one gets better cooling by pulling the air underground. One problem is that the air pulled in is very dusty. They are investigating a mesh screen to reduce dust that clogs the fou.

Final product will be used in many areas as the government is trying to promote use of evaporative coolers instead of air conditioning as they use less energy.

Comparison with A/C:

- The initial investment cost is similar but operating costs are much lower. The cooler uses less energy to run and the maintenance is easier and less costly.
- Cooler is more comfortable for Malians because the contrast is less. A/C cools too much.
- A/C is also dehydrating and Mali is already very dry. So the cooler helps add humidity and this is most important in the hottest season. Dehydration is also a problem during Ramadan.

Previous issues with evaporative coolers

- They were not successful in an earlier introduction because people didn't understand how to use them
- Users should keep door open so the air can circulate. Otherwise, it will become too humid.
- A/C sellers and maintenance companies tried to make people think evaporative coolers were bad for you.
- Issues in use:
 - o Stagnant water

- Wet fou can grow bacteria
- Thus users need to know how to use (i.e. replace fou regularly)

Lastly, they demonstrated a similar cooler with multiple-setting fan. They have connected it to a water tap to measure water usage.

USAID:

We arrived at the Embassy at 10:15 and finally got through security by 10:50. Jeanne Harmon had expected us at 10:30 but we thought the appointment was for 11:00.

Met with USAID:

- Jeanne Harmon
- Gaoussou Traore
- Mamadou Augustin Dembele
- Halima Ouattara-Ayanou

Jeanne explained that her area was responsible for economic growth based on Agriculture. US government has recently put more attention to agriculture. They also have interest in stewardship of land linked to tourism. Food security is also important. This can be defined as food on the table or as a link to economic growth.

Each student introduced themselves. The USAID people were interested in Borko and the seed potatoes. They didn't know why Borko. Also interested in Beeswax and happy to hear Center is working with Virginia Tech.

Asked how Center is getting private sector involved. She reiterated that her concern is sustainability. Her perception is that the center still feels like a grant to get a grant and a donor-driven dynamic. She wants to know how the project will move towards private development.

Sidy talked about the cooler that is being developed to be marketed. But they will need some funds to build a prototype.

Jeanne asked what the government agency they work through. The Center is connected to both the Ministry of Education (through IPR) and the Ministry of Agriculture (through IER). She mentioned that the first grant was the train the Malians and the second grant should be to get the center started. We explained that the second grant (USDA grant) is to support Center with US students conducting studies. They don't have specific grant for operating funds. Yacouba Sontore realized the current grant doesn't have funds to actually produce something concrete.

USAID also asked if the Center has pursued collaboration with other groups – Dutch contractors, PCDA, the Canadian project, IIG, ICEM. They also expect the Center to sell itself as sustainable – start preparing reports of their progress, include financial reports. Take a report next time if they visit USAID.

USAID plans over a 5-year period. They don't do short-term, ad hoc funding. They believe resources are available but Center has to find the right collaboration.

USAID is pushing Center to be successful. This means becoming sustainable and independent of donor funding. Look to collaborators for seed funding.

Thursday, January 15, 2009

Visited Dioila at the invitation of Mme. Konte with Balla Dembele (marketing in Bamako).

- The MBA team were shown the process they use at Dioila while Belco, Somaila Fomba, and I arranged for a lunch for later.
- The entire production process is mechanized. They use stone grinders to grind the nuts and have a Dutch mixer for the washing stage. They produce “white” Shea Butter because the market is demanding that. However, they believe “yellow” is better and that “white” has lost some of its qualities. The “white” looked like a creamy pale yellow to me so I am not clear what “yellow” Shea looks like.
- They are working on a process to make the Shea softer or more creamy rather than hard.
- The inside grinder is very slow. They think the problem is that the feeder (or hole) is not large enough. Power doesn’t seem to be the problem.
- Dioila is a union of 25 member Coops. The Coops sell seed to the union. Union processes into Shea Butter and sells in Bamako and elsewhere. Any left-over (proceeds of Shea over payments for nuts) is distributed to Coops based on volume of nuts sold to Union.
- Project Karite is a partner with SNV (Netherlands aid organization). They gave each of the 25 member Coops 600,000 CFA to buy nuts to start the process.
- SNV trained members in quality process in 2008.
- Project Karite also does some training. It will end in 2009 so Mme Konte is looking for other partners. A Malian/Italian won some funding from the World Bank and he may continue to work on Shea.
- Issues
 - Water – there is not enough water to increase production substantially. It is from a tube well with a pump. Sometimes it takes 2 hours to pump enough water for a batch. This has been a problem since initial installation.
 - Transport of Shea nuts – use a donkey cart or motorcycle truck (they had one there)
 - There is only 1 machine for each stage of the process. If 1 breaks down, the whole process has to stop. Maintenance is also a problem – there aren’t enough people who know how to repair the machines.
 - Power – have only 3 phase power and want 4 phase. It is very costly. Also, power is intermittent – sometimes shuts down.
 - Trees are aging and disappearing. Production from each tree varies by year
- We all purchased Shea Butter or soap. The organization gave us a gift of soap.
- Lunch was good – chicken and fries.
- We returned about 7:00 p.m.

Friday, January 16, 2009

MBA group worked in Sotuba. They discovered that wireless internet was available in large conference room.

Jane, Erin and Sibi spent the day visiting sites in Bamako:

- Visited the French Cultural Center. There was an exhibit about Freud and psychoanalysis. Erin and Sibi translated the material for Jane.
- Walked over to L'Olympien restaurant for lunch. It's pricier than LaCampagnard but located in the heart of the downtown and had very good food.
- Walked up to the Cathedral but it wasn't open.
- Walked up to Musee de Bamako. There was an exhibit with some artifacts, photos and explanation of the history of Bamako. Again, Sibi and Erin translated for Jane.
- During our walks all around downtown Bamako, we saw many shops and people selling a wide range of items everywhere – curbs, on the street, in kiosks, and in shops. It was teeming with people and activity. We saw only 1 or 2 other foreigners walking.

We took a group of 14 for dinner at Amandine. (7 from UST, 4 from Center, 2 IPR students and the driver) Service was very poor – food was very slow, arrived cold and took a long time to be reheated. But it was good to celebrate with the Center.

Saturday, January 17, 2009

At 9:30, MBA group went in the bus to check-in with Air France.

At 11:00, they returned and the group all left for Katibougou. We had Belco, Keriba, Sidy, Abdoulaye, Aissata, and visitors Fatimata, Steve, their 2 children, and Fatimata's sister. Adama met us at IPR.

Upon arrival, we met in a classroom with a large group of IPR students. Most of them had to stand. Belco introduced the Center and the UST team. Then, we fielded questions. The first question was whether there were any opportunities for students to study in the US. They also wanted to know if they could get involved in the activities of the Center and when the Center would be operational.

Next, we toured Adama's lab where we saw the facilities and the mini tubers. They tried to transport plants last year with little success. So they decided to work with mini tubers as the seeds. These are much hardier and easier to transport. Adama and Aissata are working on developing cost analysis for the process.

Next, we had a lovely lunch at Belco's house. After that, we visited the village association where women were making Shea. There were 3 women beating (la ballitage) the dark chocolate mixture. At one point, another woman added what looking like a hot coal to the mix. When asked, they said it was a hot stone and they used it to heat up the mixture to help thin the mixture. This would reduce the need for water in the process. We also visited a natural rock formation that resembles a camel ("camel mountain").

We arrived back at 6:30 and said good-byes. Ernie, Belco and I went to LaCampagnard to work on the internet. We were able to Skype with Florence before Ernie had to leave for the airport. Florence gave me instructions about what she wanted me to do in Sanambebe.

Sunday, January 18, 2009

We arrived in Sanambele at 11:45. I did not plan this visit very well. Initially, the idea was to find out if villagers in Sanambele needed help with accounting. However, once we decided to visit Sanambele, Florence Dunkel and Ada Giusti asked us to deliver some items to the village. This then became the focus of the trip and I lost sight of the original purpose. In addition, I didn't contact the village to let them know about the trip and its purpose. Belco was very kind to accompany me even though I had not spent time discussing the trip with him and he didn't know what was planned. Lastly, I delivered a computer. This gift really should have had more input from Malians and more fanfare from the giver. The giver would have been able to do this much better than I and I believe it would have been better received. In addition, I believe I put Belco in a difficult position by asking him to accompany me and to translate. The villagers will see him as part of this gift and it may affect his ability to work with them in the future. In retrospect, I believe I made several errors and should not have made this trip.

Despite our arriving without prior notice the villagers were very welcoming and accommodating. A large number of men and women joined us at the former chief's home.

Karin Coulibaly and Bouurema Coulibaly gathered the men and women to meet with us. Among the women was Hawa Coulibaly. I learned a new word in Bambara from one of the women. The word is torasite (I have no stress – it is a response to how are you?).

After introductions, I asked how things are going and what has happened since the last visit. They responded:

1. The library for the school is finished.
2. For malaria prevention, they now have more bed nets. About half of the village now have nets. Many were provided by Plan Mali.
3. The 90,000 CFA that Florence gave to 21 women was distributed among them and they started small businesses. 5 of the women had surplus from their business and were able to buy more bed nets. When asked if the bed nets have made a difference, they couldn't quote numbers but they felt it was very important to protect the children.
4. They also reported on the 20 soccer balls that Florence brought. Many children are playing with them. This made a difference to their play.
5. Plan Mali built a nursery beside the school. About 80 children are using the nursery.
6. Plan Mali also provided classes for 25 women from the village. The teacher is a villager person and all instruction is in Bambara. They train 2 hours M-F for 5 months. They are learning to write, about health issues, how to communicate in meetings and with NGOs. This just started on Jan 9th so they don't know how well it will work. However, they showed great enthusiasm. One woman says that she hopes she will learn a lot, especially about health. Karim Coulibaly said it was very important because few people have been to school.

Concerns:

1. They asked if we have mosquitoes. I responded yes, but we have been able to combat malaria because our mosquitoes don't live as long and it takes a longer time for them to become infected.
2. There was a case of meningitis 2 months ago and they would like help combating this as well. I told them we also have this disease and it is carried by mosquitoes.

3. They mentioned the need for a dispensary for medicine. If someone needs medicine there isn't anywhere to get it quickly.
4. They showed us the hand grinder and said it wasn't working. The middle (spiral) portion is not working.

Phone Numbers:

Florence had requested permission to phone them directly. They supplied the following phone numbers:

Solomani Couliby	7547 2848
Bourama Couliby	7460 7840
Lasina Couliby	7892 6774
Boazimou Couliby	7880 6417 (the writing for this name & number is not clear. The number could be 7880 6447, or 7880 6477)

We then had a lunch of rice and peanut sauce – very tasty. We toured the library and they documented the gifts. I showed them how to turn the computer on and off and how to plug in the power supply for recharging. Someone should arrange for computer training. We also toured the nursery school. It is a large fenced-in yard with swings, slide, teeter-totter and a broken wheel-go-round. There is a covered area with short tables and chairs as well as a large container that might hold water. It is right beside the library.

We said good-bye and returned to our apartments by 4:00 p.m. I paid Belco for the IPR vehicle 1,588 km at 500 CFA per km for a total of 794,000 CFA. We deducted the gas and other payments for a net remaining of 428,500 CFA. This totals about \$1,675 for 11 days and 3 long trips (Zantieboucou, Dioila, and Sanambe). It is quite expensive but it allowed us to take numerous others on these trips. Belco, Keriba, Sidy, Abdoulaye, Aissata, 2 IPR students, the Zantieboucou marketing manager, the Dioila marketing manager, 3 Virginia Tech people, and occasional other guests joined us on the bus at various times during the 11 days.

Erin, Sibi and I went to Le Rebalais for dinner (restaurant is L'Albatross). They specialize in gallettes and crepes and it was delicious and similar in price to LaCampagnard.

Monday, January 19, 2009

I worked with Belco while Erin and Sibi stayed near the apartment. Belco had expressed concern about them taking taxis by themselves so I didn't let them visit the Flash library on Monday morning.

Belco and I worked on policies for reporting and for visits. Sidy joined us towards the latter part. Then we joined Aissata to view a testing of the Shea test kit. (see pictures) The tests were performed on 2 different Shea products. One was pure Shea butter and the other was a mixture. The acidity test showed different results for the two products and appeared to work well. With the rancidity test, there did not appear to be any change. Aissata will document the test and report to the student who developed the test.

Sidy and I went to lunch and discussed the possibility of applying for the \$50,000 HED grant. Sidy said IPR has already agreed to work with a Utah State group applying for this grant. We then worked on more of the documentation.

For dinner, Erin, Sibi and I went to LaChaumiere (beside Le Rebelais). The servings were large and tasty. None of us could finish our dinners. It was a little pricier than La Campagnard.

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

I worked with Abdoulaye on the accounting system. We agreed on a simplified method of tracking transactions and I created a simple report that will pick up the summary numbers from the tracking worksheet. Abdoulaye felt comfortable with excel and we documented some of the steps. We then went to LaCompagnard where I showed him how to use Google Docs. I uploaded the simplified excel file and shared it with him. He was able to sign in and see the document. His plan is to test his knowledge by showing Sidy how to do it. That way he has some backup in Mali.

Sidy took Erin and Sibi to the National Museum, the Zoo and Point G. They were very appreciative of this outing as they had been getting a little bored.

Erin, Sibi, and I went to the market and bought carrots and onions for dinner. We also visited the bakery and bought 2 baguettes and 5 desserts. I then used a soup starter and added potatoes, carrots and onions. I made rice and served it Malian style. It was ready when the first Borko group returned. They were hungry and happy with the meal – especially the bread and dessert.

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

We all went over to Air France so I could check in. My bags were each 23 kg! I was very surprised that I didn't have to shift anything around. Then, we went to the French Cultural Center in which there is a lending library. We tried to find the Broadway Café for lunch but had no luck. So we went to the bakery and had a very nice lunch.

We went to a Tom & Jerry film night that was announced at the French Cultural Centre. It was outside behind a basketball court. The projector was set up in the back of a van and the projection screen was against the netting on one side of the court. There were stacks of chairs and people just grabbed one and arranged them in rows. It was fun to sit there with Malians watching the cartoons. Our driver took us back to drop off the others at the apartment and then took me to the airport.

7.0. List of Persons Met (type complete name with correct spelling, their title, organization, e-mail, other relevant information)

The Business group has met with the following people: (I didn't meet with the Shea group as I stayed with an ill student)

- Mme. Gamby, IER
- M. Mamadou Traore, IPR
- Center Members
 - o Belco Tamboura
 - o Keriba Coulibaly
 - o Abdoulaye Camera
 - o Aissata Thera
 - o Adama Berthe
 - o Sidy Ba
- Zantiabougou
 - o Ousmane Fomba – marketing manager, Bamako
 - o Mme. Mah Kone – president
 - o Mme. Mariam Ouattara – operations manager
 - o Mme. Korotomou Mariko – production manager
 - o 5 men about Beeswax
- Virginia Tech Team
 - o Faculty Don, Art, and Rick
 - o Students – Dana, Leah, Katie and Krisha
- ENI
 - o Moussa Kante, director
 - o Arouna Coulibaly (cooling specialist)
 - o Daouda Coulibaly (cooling specialist)
- Beeswax
 - o M. Alou Badra Cessi DRPIA (an expert and promoter of bees)
 - o Daniel Coulibaly
- USAID
 - o Jeanne Harmon
 - o Gaoussou Traore
 - o Mamadou Augustin Dembele
 - o Halima Ouattara-Ayanou
- Dioila
 - o Soumaila Fomba – Ministry for Promotion of Family Women and Children (Rep)
 - o Madame Mariko Kadidia Sangare – Shea Union Yiriwa (Head of Production and Supply)
 - o Madame Coulibaly Mamou Togola – Shea Union Yiriwa (Marketing - Dioila)
 - o Madame Mariko Bintou Doumbia – Shea Union Yiriwa (Vice President)
 - o Hamidou Diallo – Shea Union and Benen Yiriwa (Technical Director)
 - o Balla Dembele – Project Karite (Marketing Agent - Bamako)
- IPR students
 - o Ibrahim Hamadoun Toure – IPR/IFRA (Student – Agronomie)
 - o Mamadou Sanogo - IPR/IFRA (Student – Agronomie)

- UST Business Team
 - Faculty – Ernie Owens and Jane Saly
 - Students – Agalya Jayachandiran, Austin Campbell, Nathan Myrold, and Jeff Stewart
 - French Students – Sibi Lawson and Erin McCloskey

8.0. List of Professional Items Given and Received (for example: lap tops, memory sticks, CD's, DVD's, documents either in hard copy or in machine-readable format, posters, Shea quality testing kit, grinder part etc.)

A laptop computer donated by Ada Giusti was given to the school in Sanambele.

A **draft version** must be completed before leaving the country. The electronic version of the draft report is given to: 1) Dr. Kadiatou Gamby; 2) leader of the Mali Agribusiness Entrepreneurial Incubator Network (Belco Tamboura); 3) the US project director (Dr. Florence Dunkel); and 4) if you are not at MSU, your own institution's Principal Investigator (P.I.) for the project you are on. A hard copy and / or electronic copy of the Title Page and the Executive Summary are given to USAID-Mali Accelerated Economic Growth Group (AEG).

A **final version** with suggested corrections or additions from those who review the trip report is due to the US project director (F. Dunkel), 3 weeks after returning and before travel reimbursement documents will be processed.

Please make use of the header (already created using the header function) by entering the current date every time you update the trip report document. The location of the file, and the name of the file, will be automatically printed on the hard copy you print for your records.

APPENDIX 1

Accounting Policies and Procedures (DRAFT)

REGISTRATION:

- Issues:
 - IER is within Ministry of Agriculture
 - IPR is with Ministry of Education
 - Private activities may not be allowed for government workers and all members of Center are government employees
- Questions:
 - What does the Center want to do?
 - Does Center just go with IER for registration?
 - Does the Center want to include IPR and what does that mean for registration?
- Activities:
 - Contact Center members to determine whether just IER or both IER and IPR.
 - Need signatures from both organizations
 - Need to determine what process to go through. Contact directors of each organizations
 - Contact ministers

Internet

- Abdoulaye has information and will follow-up and get internet started
- Abdoulaye has confirmed with Orange that money has arrived and the internet will be installed as soon as possible. And they have agreed to one year of service.

Document spending to date

- Grant \$1000
- Spending of UST grant is documented in Bob's excel spreadsheet

REPORTS:

Issues to consider for these reports:

- Who is responsible for preparing the reports?
- Who will monitor the completeness and timeliness of the reports?
- Where will you keep a listing of the reports?
- Who gets the reports?

Activity Reports:

1. Agri-Business Center will prepare an activity report every 4 months (a term).
2. Executive summary of overall accomplishments.
 - a. Report for each activity area: description of activities, accomplishments, issues that arose and resolutions and proposed changes.
 - b. Report on overall administrative Center issues and accomplishments
 - c. Compare accomplishments to plan

Planning Activities

1. Each term the Agri-Business Center will prepare a plan for the following term (a term is 4 months).
 - a. It will take into account issues and suggestions from previous term.
 - b. It will include activities to be conducted during the following term.
 - c. It will include financial implications from the changes.

Financial Reports

1. Agri-Business Center will prepare a financial report every 4 months.
 - a. January, February, March, and April report due in May.
 - b. May, June, July, August report due in September
 - c. September, October, November, December report due in January.
2. This will include a summary report for the Center as a whole:
 - a. Beginning Balance
 - b. Money coming in (from business venture or specific funding)
 - c. Money going out
 - d. Ending Balance
 - e. Compared to plan
3. There will also be a report for each activity area listing:
 - a. Total Revenues (from business ventures)
 - b. Total Direct Expenses (by activity area)
 - c. Net Contribution to Center

Annual Report:

- Agri-Business Center will prepare an overall financial and activity report for the year ending December 31. The report will be due in February.

POLICIES:

Visit to Mali policy – For any visit by Americans that involves the Agri-Business Center or its members working with the visitors.

1. Agri-Business Center will determine what type of information/work is needed from US students and will communicate their request 8 months before trip.
2. US teams will evaluate request and attempt to structure student trips to accommodate such requests.
3. Formal request sent to Agri-Business Center should include objectives for trip, initial itinerary and plan. This is due to Agri-Business Center 6 months before visit.
4. Draft trip report to host just before leaving country. See trip report requirements below.
5. Final trip report to Florence and Belco within 30 days of return.

Visit to US policy – For any visit by Agri-Business Center members using funds from US donors.

1. As part of the planning process, the Agri-Business Center may determine a need for someone to travel to the U.S.
2. Formal request should be made to Florence Dunkel and Ashley Shams and include objectives for the trip, initial itinerary and plan. This should be submitted 6 months in advance of the trip.
3. Then, the request sent to the host country.
4. Draft trip report to host just before leaving country. See trip report requirements below.
5. Final trip report to Principal Investigator and Agri-Business within 30 days of return.
6. Trip reports are due to Center within 30 days of return.

Gifts to Villages when accompanied by Agri-Business Center members

- U.S. visitors should go through the process to notify all affected parties. In particular, they should consult with Agri-Business Center members about gifts for Villages – especially large gifts such as a computer. When Center members accompany and interpret for U.S. visitors, the villagers see the Center as part of the gift-giving and any consequences affect the Center's ability to work with villagers in the future.

Trip Reports:

1. Daily journal of activities
 - a. date, activity, names and contact information of who met
 - b. daily expenses
2. Executive summary outlining accomplishments compared to objectives.
3. Other reflections/observations – about personal growth, advise for future trips or projects.
4. Detailed expense analysis with itemized list of expenses and summary of totals by category. This should be compared to the budget amounts.

Policy about reimbursement

1. submit request for expenditure to Agri-Business Center (should be requested before expenditure is made)
2. Agri-business Center approves expense. At least 2 signatures from Center members are required.
3. Belco forwards approved copy of request to principal responsible for funding (via email, Google docs?).
4. Principal investigator and person responsible for accounting have to approve before expenditure is made.
5. After approval and expenditure has been incurred, submit reimbursement request with receipts (see expense reimbursement above for format of receipts). Agri-Business Center uses Center funds to reimburse.
6. At the end of the quarter, principal investigator sends the total of all reimbursements for the term to the Center.

Policy about cash receipts

1. Anyone who sells kits (or other items) tracks their inventory of kits.
2. At end of the term, they show the total kits received less total sold equals total kits in inventory.
3. When a sale is made, they collect the money, give the person the kit and a receipt (from a book of receipts). The seller keeps a copy of the receipt.
4. When they are next in Bamako, they deliver the money to ?? and copies of the receipts so the amount can be deposited. They need to do this quickly so that the Center has the funds it needs to pay for other items.

Policy on information about villages:

1. Sanambele is Abdoulaye
2. Dioila and Zantieboucou is Belco
3. Borko is Aissata
4. ENI is Sidy

ACCOUNTING DOCUMENTS

Issues to consider:

- Who will be responsible for accounting documents? Where will they be kept?

Invoice:

1. date
2. supplier of service/product
3. contact information about supplier (address, phone number, location)
4. amount of service/product
5. cost per unit of service or product provided
6. total value
7. signature of seller.

Expense reimbursement

1. date
2. name of person requesting reimbursement
3. contact information re person
4. method of payment requested
5. type of expense (gas, mileage, accommodation, translation)
6. purpose of expense
7. supplier
8. amount
9. invoice (or other document)
10. signature of requester

Order information

1. date order placed
2. name of person/client placing order
3. contact information for person placing order
4. other contact information (who will supply order)
5. type of service/product
6. number of units ordered
7. price per unit
8. total order
9. date requested for completion of order
10. method of payment
11. method of delivery
12. signature of person placing order (or email trail)

Receipt of cash

1. date
2. name of purchaser
3. type of service/product
4. number of units purchased
5. price per unit

6. total sale
7. name & signature (who received the money)