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18723

DP/ID/SER.A/1413
21 November 1990
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ASSISTANCE TO THE GARMENT
TRAINING COURSE IN SUVA

SI/FIJ/89/801/11-01

FIJI

Technical report: First mission*

Prepared for the Government of Fiji
by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization,
acting as executing agency for the United Nations Development Programme

Based on the work of J. McComiskey,
garment technologist

Backstopping officer: J.P. Moll,
Agro-based Industries Branch

United Nations Industrial Development Organization
Vienna

* This document has not been edited.

CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION
- II. CONDITIONS IN FIJI
- III. EQUIPMENT
- IV. SECOND MISSION
- V. CONCLUSION

APPENDICES

- 1. BOARD OF DIRECTORS - GARMENTS FIJI LTD
- 2. LIST OF PERSONS MET
- 3. REPORT FROM J McCOMISKEY TO GARMENTS FIJI LTD

I. INTRODUCTION

The assignment to Fiji was to be split into two missions of 6 weeks each, 10-12 weeks apart. The Terms of Reference were as follows:

A. FIRST MISSION

- i. Review of the Centre's buildings, facilities, equipment and staffing plans and make recommendations on these.
- ii. Advise on the layout of both the training and production units.
- iii. Prepare specifications for additional equipment needed to complement what has already been acquired.

B. SECOND MISSION

- i. Review again the now complete installation and advise on its adequacy.
- ii. Prepare a draft training manual to cover the training of
 - Sewing Machinists
 - Pattern Cutters and Graders
 - Sewing Machine Mechanics
 - Production Supervisors

My first mission was to commence on 4 July 1990 by visiting UNIDO in Vienna for 1 day and then continuing on to Fiji.

I was to remain in Fiji until 15 August and carry out the activities of First Mission (above).

II. CONDITIONS IN FIJI

Upon arrival at the Garment Training Centre, Suva, Fiji on 10 July 1990, I was met by the Board Members. (See Appendix 1).

The situation was that the Board had hired an Australian Consultant - Mrs Kath Berry, who is a lecturer in the Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education, Adelaide, Australia

Mrs Berry had organised the Training Centre into classrooms using equipment already supplied by the Taiwan Government in a building already constructed. Three classes were in progress at various stages of training.

This situation meant that my Terms of Reference were no longer relevant.

Training Courses had been structured as follows:

PHASE 1	-	Basic M/C Training on Flatbed machine
		" " " on " with U/Bed trimmer
		" " " on 3 Thread O'Lock machine
		" " " on 5 Thread Safetystitch machine
		" " " on Buttonhole machine
		" " " on Buttonsew machine

Phase 1 lasts 12 weeks and incorporates making simple items such as aprons, table mats, children's pyjamas and tee shirts and chabas.

PHASE 2 - Using the skills from Phase 1 and after one week in a factory, to produce more complicated garments as men's shirts, and trousers. Also one week in knitted garments to make polo shirts.

Phase 2 last 10 weeks.

The concept was, however, that all trainees should complete both Phases 1 and 2 which I felt was not realistic based on the requirements of the Clothing Trade in Fiji.

After discussion on my role, it was agreed that I should work with Mrs Berry to help expand the training manuals in subjects such as:-

Work Study
Cutting Room Training
Method Development

Mr Shantilal Solanki, General Manager, Garments Fiji Ltd asked for my assistance in organising administration and preparing for the building of a Production Unit on the same site with a view to financing the Training Centre.

NOTE. The Fiji Government had stated that the Training Centre must be self-sufficient after 3 years.

III. EQUIPMENT

The Training Centre had been supplied with equipment by the Taiwan Government. All excellent equipment, but additional specialist equipment to make specific garments is required, e.g. Trouser Making - Waistband machine.

Also because of the final size of classes i.e. 15 trainees, several basic machines are required. I established a list of machines required and this was passed on to the Board through the General Manager.

Many commodity items were required and these were purchased using the funds from UNIDO.

IV. SECOND MISSION

Due to the conditions, the Terms of Reference of the Second Mission were also no longer relevant and after discussions with the General Manager and the Board of Directors, it was agreed to postpone the second mission until an appropriate time, to be decided, in 1991 to help with the setting up of the Production Unit. This is, I feel, the most suitable course as Mrs Berry was to be at the Training School until the end of December 1990 when her input would finish and the Training Centre would then be run by the Fijian staff.

The Fiji Government will, therefore, contact UNIDO and arrange the second mission as above.

V. CONCLUSION

Although it was quite a shock to see the Training Centre up and running, it was pleasing to see how well it had been set up.

Provided the Training Centre is flexible enough to meet the needs of the industry (see Appendix 3), then it can serve a very useful purpose to the Garment Industry in Fiji.

My thanks to all those in Fiji, including Mr Fernando Vincente of UNIDO in Suva and his team for their help and friendliness during my stay in Fiji.

APPENDIX 1

BOARD OF MEMBERS

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Managing Director
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SELECTION COMMITTEE

Mr Kamal Basha
Mr Ranjit B Solanki
Mr Mark Halabe
Mrs Sofia Dean

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF PERSONS MET

UNIDO

(a) VIENNA

Ms Sippl, Appointment Clerk

(b) SUVA, FIJI

Mr F Vincente - Country Director South Pacific Region

UNDP - SUVA

Mr G R Soper - Assistant Resident Representative

E.E.C. - SUVA

Mr J De Kok - Economic Counsellor

FIJI GOVERNMENT

Dr F Wainiqolo - Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Fijian Affairs

Mr Hari Ram - Permanent Secretary for Education

Mr L Rokovada - Deputy Secretary for Trade and Commerce

Mrs Rupe - Principal in Department of Trade and Commerce

FOREIGN AMBASSADORS

At the official opening of the Training Centre, Ambassadors from U.K., U.S.A., Taiwan, Japan, Australia and New Zealand.

GENERAL

Many representatives from the Garment Industry and Commercial business from Fiji, Australia and New Zealand.

REPORT ON FIRST MISSION OF A TWO MISSION
ASSIGNMENT BY J. McCOMISKEY REPRESENTING
UNIDO

DURATION - 6 Weeks (Including Travelling).

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- a) Review the Centre's buildings, facilities, equipment and staffing plans and make recommendations on these.
- b) Advise on the lay-out of both the training and production units.
- c) Prepare specifications for additional equipment needed to complement what has already been acquired.

On arrival at the Training Centre on Monday 9th July, 1990 it was immediately apparent that my Terms of Reference were null and void as the Training Centre was up and running.

My duties, therefore, became to help Mrs. Berry with the further promotion of the Training Systems and Schedules which she had already installed and to assist her in further developments.

The other thing was to allocate the US\$25,260 for the Training Aids. This has been done in conjunction with the Training Centre Management and Training Staff and been submitted to UNIDO in Vienna for approval. (At the time of writing no reply has been received.)

CONCLUSION

The Training Centre has been set up very thoroughly and professionally with the option that the trainee can come out at various stages. I do feel, however, that perhaps this 12 weeks of Phase I followed by 10 weeks of Phase II is not exactly what the Garment Industry wants.

A series of starter courses, to give basic skills on whatever the Industry requests, should be run alongside the existing courses. There are 2 reasons for this.

- 1) Not enough people will qualify from the Centre. A maximum of 240 per year.

- 2) The industry, I suspect, does not want all top trained Machinists. The industry wants more operators than Machinists, nor can it afford to pay all operators at higher hourly rates.

The training staff which have been recruited have a lot of talent and given the right leadership from Management they should perform their tasks extremely well.

The Training Centre and the Garment Industry are not close enough at this stage of the project. I would suggest that the Training Centre will only flourish and be of immense assistance to the Industry if there is a lot of input by Industry. The Training Centre must cater for the needs of the Industry over a wide variety of subjects which will be designated by the Industry.

SECOND MISSION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- a) Review again the now complete installation and advise on its adequacy.
- b) Prepare a draft training manual to cover the training of:
- i) Sewing Machinists.
 - ii) Pattern Cutter/Graders.
 - iii) Sewing Machine Mechanics.
 - iv) Production Supervisors.

As these Terms of Reference are also null and void and bearing in mind the intention to build and operate a Production Unit on the same site, I would suggest a postponement of the second Mission until 1991 at a time when you are ready to proceed. At that time the second Mission can be called on and also any further technical input required (Plenty of notice would be appreciated).

THANKS

My sincere thanks to all at the Garment Training Centre from the Board of Directors who gave me such a warm and friendly welcome, to all members of the staff who have been so friendly and co-operative. To Mrs. K. Berry in helping me adjust to the situation and last but not least, my sincere thanks to Mr. Shantilal Solanki, General Manager, for all his help and assistance, particularly when I was ill for a few days.

I wish everyone associated with Garments Fiji Ltd every success for the future and feel certain that the Training Centre will be of great benefit to the Garment Industry in Fiji.