

BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS MORE MOUNTAINS:

Underdevelopment in Haiti

by

Geraldine Akman

A Thesis

Presented to the University of Manitoba

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

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University of Manitoba

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UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN HAITI

BY

GERALDINE AKMAN

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements
of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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Justine

Together we climbed mountains, crossed rivers,
and explored the valleys of Haiti and ourselves

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While the dedication is specifically to one daughter, this work is in large part for all my children--Andrew, Matthew, Justine, and Gwyneth--for many, many reasons.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
LIST OF ACRONYMS	vii
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: THE HAITIAN SETTING	7
CHAPTER TWO: MEDA COCOA PRODUCTION AND MARKETING SCHEME	25
CHAPTER THREE: SURVEY DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY	51
CHAPTER FOUR: THE FARMING POPULATION--A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW	61
CHAPTER FIVE: REALIZATION OF MEDA'S OBJECTIVES	77
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS	89
APPENDIX A THE QUESTIONNAIRE	98
APPENDIX B LIST OF CRÉOLE WORDS	108
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	109

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	Page
4.1 Distribution of Household Size in the Survey Sample	61
4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents in the Survey Sample	62
4.3 Garden Size of Farmers in the Survey Sample ..	63
4.4 Percentage Distribution of Type of Labour Used for Primary Agricultural Tasks in the Survey Sample	65
4.5 Percentage Distribution Among the Seven Rural Sections of Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	68
4.6 Percentage Distribution of the Years of Residence in the Area by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	69
4.7 Percentage Distribution of Land Tenure by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	70
4.8 Percentage Distribution of Garden Size by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	70
4.9 Percentage Distribution of Cultivators of Corn and Other Crops by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	71
4.10 Percentage Distribution of Sellers of Corn and Other Cash Crops by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	71
4.11 Percentage Distribution of Market Distance by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	72
4.12 Percentage Distribution of Travel Time to the Market by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers .	72
4.13 Percentage Distribution of Mode of Transport to Market by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	73
4.14 Percentage Distribution of Type of Labour Used for Primary Agricultural Tasks by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers	74

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		Page
1	Populated Places and Political Subdivisions of Haiti	8
2	Département du Nord	55

ACRONYMS

Adult Development Institute	IDA
Banque Nationale de la République d'Haiti	BNRH
Bureau de Credit Agricole	BCA
Canadian International Development Association	CIDA
Cooperative for American Relief to Everywhere	CARE
Cooperative Jean Baptiste Chavannes	JBC
Département de l'Agriculture, des Ressources Naturelles et du Développement Rural	DARNDR
Hershey Foods Corporation	HFC
Mennonite Central Committee	MCC
Mennonite Economic Development Associates	MEDA
Non-governmental Organizations	NGOs
Office of the Organization for the Development of the North	ODN
Oriental Missions Services	OMS
Pan American Development Foundation	PADF
United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF
United States Agency for International Development	U.S. AID
World Health Organization	WHO

INTRODUCTION

In recent years external aid to Haiti has become a major source of government revenue, representing some two-thirds of the state's development budget and approximately 40% of the total budget (United States, General Accounting Office n. pag.). In addition to multilateral and bilateral aid, several hundred non-governmental organizations (NGOs) bring approximately \$40,000,000 (U.S.) into Haiti yearly. One of the major sponsors of NGO activity is the Canadian International Development Association (CIDA), which sponsored 220 projects for Haiti in 1984-85 (CIDA, Co-Operation Program 1985, 24). Despite a sizeable capital investment, the results have generally been disappointing, and Haiti has been viewed by many as a graveyard for foreign aid projects. It is difficult to assess the impact of these projects on communities and to learn from experience without baseline data. Yet, this type of information is rarely collected.

Baseline survey data are necessary both for project initiation and to measure change. Optimal conditions for development prevail where the most underdeveloped participate in the design and implementation of programs which suit their needs. Barring this ideal situation, external donors should have extensive knowledge about the community directly affected by the project. This information can be provided by baseline survey data. Furthermore, the "before and after" survey method provides a measurement of project impact on the community.

The research for this thesis was directed toward exploring the intricacies of employing the survey method in rural Haiti. Baseline data were collected for one NGO project in Haiti, the Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) cocoa project in Grande Rivière du Nord. MEDA used the knowledge gained from previous work experience in this area as a basis for the project design and implementation. In the summer of 1983, however, MEDA agreed to the collection of standardized information to facilitate the future assessment of the project. The survey had seven general sections: demographic information, production information, market function, labour utilization in home gardens, wage labour in gardens other than home, role of the Cooperative, and cocoa production expansion. At the time of data collection the project was just getting underway, and Cooperative activities were in the embryonic stages.

Development, as a long-term evolutionary process, requires many short-term steps. Thus, the MEDA cocoa project was first reviewed as one step in the development process. Program objectives were juxtaposed with project implementation and with the statistically significant survey results. Secondly, the project was reviewed in the context of more general long-term development goals.

A definition of development had to be created so that the data could be reviewed against general development goals. Definitions of development and underdevelopment vary among intellectuals, and the lack of a consistent definition, plus the qualitative nature of the criteria being examined, tend to

make precise assessment problematic. Yet if one avoids the use of social and economic indicators, appraisal of any sort becomes extremely difficult. The view of this thesis is that development is an evolutionary process which enables individuals or groups to think and act creatively in order to control those aspects of their economic and political lives which are important to them. Underdevelopment implies the absence of such creative activity and control. While this definition may appear to be abstract and "impractical", it was possible to operationalize it as indicated below.

The bulk of the Haitian population lives in conditions of extreme poverty due to a dearth of natural and human resources. Many farm families are unable to gain control over their material lives. Those who are more able to control those aspects of their economic lives which are important to them are by definition more developed than those who have less control. Thus, indicators of material wealth served as proxy measures for economic development. For example, the principal asset held by Haitians is land. Land has some symbolic significance, but more importantly, it offers livelihood, security, and social status. Therefore landownership, as a measure of material wealth, varies directly with economic development.

Farmers have differing abilities to bear risk. One expects farmers who are not land secure (renters and sharecroppers), who have smaller land holdings, and who live close to subsistence level, to grow mainly low-risk basic subsistence crops (e.g., corn).

Basic subsistence crops are low risk because they can be grown seasonally. Occasionally more than one planting per season is possible. These crops are grown for family consumption, and surpluses can be sold easily at private food stands, or at local markets. Thus subsistence crop cultivation varies inversely with economic development.

Tree crops, on the other hand, are of higher risk, as they take years to produce and, in some cases, produce fruit which is sold rather than consumed in the home. Sale crops are dependent on complex market forces, and farmers are not guaranteed a fair return for their investment. Thus, one expects farmers who are willing to commit land to non-food tree crops, to be land secure (owners) and to have enough land to grow both subsistence and sale crops, or to have non-farm income which can be used to purchase food at the market. Thus, tree crop cultivation (coffee and cocoa) varies directly with economic development.

Generally, small farmers work their own gardens, using family labour when necessary. Those who can afford to hire labour have more material wealth. Thus hiring of labour varies directly with economic development.

An alternative to hiring labour is the combite. This is a cooperative work party, and farmers who cannot afford to hire labour might exchange labour cooperatively as an alternative when necessary. Thus, holding a combite varies inversely with economic development.

Small farmers in this area who have access to land are basically immobile. When mobility in landowners does occur it

reflects greater financial resources, as any move requires capital and/or valuable skills. Thus mobility varies directly with economic development.

The manner in which one transports goods to market is yet another measure of difference in material wealth. Animal and mechanical transportation are luxuries for peasants in the area. Thus use of an animal or a tap tap (privately-owned public transport trucks) varies directly with economic development. On the other hand, walking with produce on one's head varies inversely with economic development.

These were the indicators of material wealth which served as proxy measures for economic development and were used as such in the project assessment.

Political development can be measured by voting power, as well as by other indicators. If the members of a cooperative are allowed to choose leaders from several genuine alternatives without coercion, then this cooperative population is more politically developed than members of cooperatives where elections are never held.

While it was possible to design several variables to measure political development, the political environment of Haiti was not conducive to this type of probing. The Government of Haiti is a dictatorship, and the repressiveness of the regime is most strongly expressed against political dissenters. Therefore, Haitians are reluctant to discuss politics, particularly with foreigners. Admittedly, political and economic factors are inseparable in the

development concept. However, for reasons stated, a decision was taken to focus the survey mainly on issues of economic development.

Chapter one provides brief reference to general factors which contributed historically and continue to contribute to Haiti's current state of underdevelopment. As well, in chapter one, the contemporary economic structure of rural Haiti is reviewed. Chapter two focuses on a description of the MEDA cocoa project in Grande Rivière du Nord. Chapter three describes the survey methodology, while chapter four provides a description of the survey results. Chapter five assesses MEDA's goals against the information provided in the first two chapters and the statistically significant survey results. Chapter six concludes the thesis with an assessment of the MEDA cocoa project against general development goals, suggestions for Phase II of the MEDA project in Haiti, a summary of the survey work thus far, and a brief epilogue.

Chapter One

THE HAITIAN SETTING

Introduction

Haiti is located on the western one-third of the Island of Hispaniola. This island is the second largest in the Caribbean and lies between "parallels 17° 39' and 19° 58' north latitude, and meridians 68° 20' and 74° 30 west longitude" (Logan 3). The remaining eastern two-thirds of the island is occupied by the Dominican Republic. To the northwest, Haiti is separated by the Windward Passage from Cuba which lies approximately 90 kilometres (57 miles) distant. Jamaica is located 180 kilometres (116 miles) to the southwest.

Mountains cover approximately three-quarters of the 27,750 square kilometres (10,714 square miles) of land surface which make up Haiti. The rugged terrain limits cultivatable land and compartmentalizes the nation into many relatively isolated regions. The climate is tropical. The annual mean temperature ranges from 20° C (68° F) to 34° C (94° F), and seasonal variation is usually less than 5.6° C (10° F). The cool and dry seasons coincide (January to April); rainy seasons are spring and autumn. Hurricane season runs from August to October.

The Republic is divided into five geographical areas--Nord-Ouest, Nord, L'Artibonite, Ouest, Sud. Approximately 80% of the population of over 6 million live in rural areas. The urban population is primarily concentrated in the capital of Port-au-Prince. Other principal cities include Cap Haïtien, Gonaïves, Les Cayes, and Jérémie (Figure 1).

Source: Area Handbook for Haiti, American University Washington, 1973.

Factors Leading to Underdevelopment

Saint Domingue was once the wealthiest European outpost in the New World, the jewel of the Caribbean. It was the first country in Latin America to achieve its independence, as well as the first independent black nation in the world. Known today as Haiti, it is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere.

Since World War II, Haiti, like other poverty-stricken nations, has been the target of various forms of external assistance. Assessment of current development programs gains meaning when put in a historical context. Therefore, the key factors which have contributed over time to Haiti's underdevelopment are outlined and discussed briefly.

Firstly, there was foreign interference which resulted in skewed patterns of production, an explosive political situation, and a costly war of independence. Saint Domingue (1697-1804) was basically an export colony and much of its own food was imported. It was heavily dependent on French administrative and business skills as well as French finance capital. The enormous prosperity of the island was made possible only by the perpetuation of a highly rewarding system of gross exploitation of both human and natural resources (Heinl and Heinl 10-122). The class-colour division eventually resulted in rebellion against French authority in 1771, and a decade-long war for independence which depleted Haiti's human and capital stock. Moreover, fear of renewed foreign intervention created the need for a large standing army. This absorbed much of the remaining male labour force and drained government revenues.

When direct exploitation of Haiti's resources was no longer possible, France used its political and military muscle to coerce Jean-Pierre Boyer (Haiti's president from 1818-1843) into agreeing to a crippling annual indemnity to France in exchange for full recognition of independence (Rotberg 66-67). The huge indemnity, which lasted for sixty years, plus preferential tariff arrangements insisted upon by France, decreased Haiti's control over its own financial resources and in this way curtailed Haiti's development potential.

By 1888, the indemnity to France was finally liquidated (Rotberg 86). However, now American foreign interference replaced that of the French. Capitalizing on Haiti's political and economic vulnerability, the United States invaded the island in 1915 and occupied it until 1934. The Occupation created a completely colonial context depriving the island of any opportunity for self-determination or self-development (Rotberg 109-46). Haiti continued to operate under the shadow of American influence even after the last of the marines were withdrawn in 1934. American financial advisors remained on the board of the Banque Nationale de la République d'Haiti (BNRH) until 1947 thereby retaining some control over government finances (Moore 61-67).

A second key factor leading to underdevelopment in Haiti was the general lack of constructive political activity and leadership for development purposes. The departure of the French created a political vacuum which was eventually filled by the large landowners who deserted the rural areas in favour of the cities. (Sugar plantations no longer produced expansive profits without a slave labour force.) In the urban areas, former landowners went into politics and in this way were able to transfer farming income to themselves by taxation of goods produced and consumed in rural areas. The presidency was tied solely to self

interest becoming the "juiciest financial plum in Haiti" (Leyburn 224). The conflicting interests of groups backing these presidents resulted in revolution after revolution, and the rapid turnover of leadership obviated political activity for Haiti's development. "Of the twenty-two heads of state between 1843 and 1915 only one served out his prescribed term of office . . ." (Leyburn 89).

The tradition of elite-government abuse of the general population which grew out of the post-revolutionary period was reinforced by the American presence. A constitutional government was not in effect during the Occupation. Instead a puppet government (1918-22) and a two-headed dictatorship (1922-30) controlled political events. There was no training for self-government on the American model, and treatment of the general population was repressive (Logan 130-40).

A brief period of political enlightenment occurred prior to the coming to power of François Duvalier (1957-71). Under Duvalier however, the economic and political status of the rural population worsened. Indeed, with the exception of a chosen few, the elite also suffered under this administration (Diederich and Burt 96-393).

A third major factor which played a significant part in Haiti's economic demise was the presence of physical insufficiencies combined with growing population pressure. Leyburn's brief statement made in 1941 accurately summed up the problem: "When one subtracts from the 10,000 square miles all the sterile wastes of cactus, the salt marches and brackish lakes, and the rock barrens, one realizes the inevitability of a low standard of living for the mass of the people" (13). In Haiti, mountains up

to 2,682 metres high occupy two-thirds of the area, and torrential downpours spilling off these mountains wash away crops and soil. The plains are arid, sterile and forbidding, supporting only a growth of cacti and spiny plants. Hurricanes, droughts, and hailstorms are not uncommon. The colony of Saint Domingue had a population of approximately one-half of a million when it was ranked among the wealthiest regions of the world. Today however, an estimated population of 6 million live in Haiti, giving it a density of approximately 220 people per square kilometre. Density of population on arable land is 650 people per square kilometre; and, 70% of all farms occupy 32.5% of the cultivable land (U.S. AID, FY 1984 Haiti n. pag.).

Nearly two hundred years have passed since the beat of the Vodoun drums called the slaves into revolt. The position of this thesis is in agreement with O. Ernest Moore who writes, "If Haiti has failed to progress economically, it is not because its inhabitants were lacking in unity, enthusiasm, or will-power at the start of their national career" (2). Rather, it was the combination of several factors (the key ones having been outlined), which resulted in Haiti's current state of underdevelopment. This information becomes particularly relevant when one considers that the present administration, like its predecessors, is not interested in development and that the physical deficiencies remain. Furthermore, external assistance is foreign interference albeit quite different from colonialism. MEDA's attention to these issues will be discussed in chapter five.

The Current Structure of the Rural Economy

Agricultural Land

Political leaders were unable to coerce planters back onto plantations after independence. The impulse of the common people was to acquire plots of land for themselves and produce for subsistence only. State land was sold on easy terms. However, the relative abundance of land also made the casual arrangement of squatting possible. The treatment of squatters was lenient. Because of the indifference and/or impotence of the state, peasants were able to install themselves on vacant parcels, found families, and pass on the property to their children. The absence of primogeniture furthered the eventual evolution of a minifundia-type agricultural system which for several reasons has been counterproductive in Haiti.

The majority of Haitian farms are holdings of approximately 1.4 hectares per farm (Lundahl 51).¹ Holdings are often split into several plots which may be some distance from each other. While such dispersion may be advantageous, as regional climatic conditions may vary greatly, it is clearly inefficient and problematic for capital investment in land. In 1950, only 28% of all farms consisted of a single plot around the hut. Twenty-five percent were unified holdings at some distance and the remainder were non-contiguous plots (Lundahl 52). Haitian laws of succession compound the problem, as they ensure that all children, regardless of age or sex, have rights to the property

1. 1.29 hectares equals 1 carreaux equals 3.19 acres

of their parents. Land is repeatedly being redivided into smaller and smaller plots.²

Any investment in land is risky as there are no official cadestral records in Haiti. Many small farmers are occupants without title. **In addition, some farmers lease land** from private owners, manage land for others, sharecrop on a 50-50 basis, or lease land from the state. The largest single landholder is the Haitian government. No figures are available indicating the exact size of these holdings, but guesses run as high as one-third of the total area of the country. Government-owned land is normally cultivated by tenants or squatters who, due to the general confusion regarding land titles, do not pay any rent.

The interaction between population growth and soil erosion is undoubtedly the main element leading to a continuous depression in rural per capita income. The intensive cultivation and deforestation of marginal land (which is generally higher up the mountains) by primitive methods over decades have resulted in the ruin of once fertile farmland. "Haitian peasants often cultivate practically vertical slopes, using ropes to stop them falling off their lands, with the clearly detrimental effects that this kind of cultivation has on soil fertility" (Lundahl 59). The problem is circular as a decrease in the supply of arable land

2. Some plots lie idle because they are so small that owners abandon them. Land transfer is difficult without cadestral survey; and, other farmers do not utilize the plots because of the traditional respect for property rights (Zuvekas 6).

leads to a removal of more trees which in turn leads to the decrease of arable land. Thus, the majority of the Haitian farming population now depends for its existence on soil classified as unsuitable for agriculture by the Organization of American States (Lundahl 57-58).

General acknowledgement of the long-standing problem of soil erosion and decreasing land fertility has not promoted a popular program of erosion control. The reasons are clear-cut. The demand for arable land and charcoal, the main fuel in rural Haiti, is high. As small farmers seldom own the forests where trees are cut down, there is little incentive to practise forest management. When incomes are close to subsistence, Haitian farmers probably discount the future benefits of erosion control at a particularly high rate to the point where no control dominates the alternative, where peasants jointly attempt to check erosion. As Irving Fisher is quoted in Lundahl:

Poverty bears down heavily on all portions of a man's expected life. But it increases the want for immediate income even more than it increases the want for future income. . . .

As to the rational aspect, present income is absolutely indispensable, not only for present needs, but even as a precondition to the attainment of future income. A man must live . . . (226).

This tendency is reinforced by the absence of land titles and formalized contractual agreements between owners and renters--a situation which

leaves all farmers vulnerable. Someone else may reap the benefits of one farmer's abstinence, or the planting of trees may make the land more valuable so that farmers are either evicted or faced with increases in rent.

Attempts to check erosion and restore farmland have recently been initiated by various international agencies, but successive Haitian governments have done little to resolve this problem.

Farming Technology

Flooding and drought make irrigation necessary, yet less than 10% of Haitian farmland is under irrigation. Irrigation is presently beyond the technical and financial means of individual farmers, and group efforts have for the most part been unsuccessful. Sedimentation is a common problem, and this hampers efficient drainage.

Haitians use the crudest form of plant and seed selection and do not prune trees to maximize yields. Formalized crop rotation is not practised, and only when land is thoroughly exhausted does it lie fallow for periods of two to five years. No measures are taken to restore or maintain soil fertility. Natural manure is in short supply, and crop residues are burned. Haitians do not use pesticides or insecticides. Chemical fertilizer consumption is less than one-seventh that of the neighbouring Dominican Republic (WDR 1984, 228).

Storage for crops is either non-existent, primitive, or inefficient. Again, this is beyond the financial means of most small farmers, and government advice and assistance in this area is notably absent.

Tools are primitive, making field work strenuous. The basic tool is the machète. Occasionally, the long, broad-bladed hoe is employed, but few own this implement. Plow and harrow are virtually unknown as is the wheelbarrow. Loads are carried primarily by women or men and only occasionally by donkeys. Mechanical traction is noticeably absent. Thus, capital is used only to a very limited extent. Labour is used extensively.

Haitian farmers rarely convert savings, which are scarce, into farm capital. The two principal assets are livestock and land. Animals are either held for insurance purposes or bought and resold for profit. Land has some symbolic significance but more important offers livelihood, security, and social status. A farmer acquiring more land does not invest in ploughs but instead enters into sharecropping or plaçage (polygamous relationships).

Rural Credit

Informal short-term sources of credit are spéculateurs, Madam Sara (a professional ambulant vendor whose name comes from a migratory bird that flies from place to place finding food wherever it might be), relatives, or friends. Loans are often made against a future crop, hence effective interest rates are very high. Risk of price and harvest failure rather than usury or monopolistic practices set these rates. There is little long-term borrowing as lenders find this too risky. The interest rates they would have to charge to offset this risk are exorbitant and would not be acceptable to small farmers. As for formal credit, attempts to couple credit and technological change have not produced substantial results. One important reason is that **borrowing** costs often exceed the value of output generated by the credit.

The Marketing Process

Seasonal and geographical variations result in diverse regional production and cropping practices. As well, the lack of storage facilities forces producers to sell off their agricultural surplus. Thus, the open-market system provides a functional daily outlet for the buying and selling of household necessities.

There is no evidence to suggest that exploitation in the marketing process itself is the reason for rural poverty (Lundahl 123). The most strategic person in the market system for subsistence goods is Madam Sara. As a wholesale dealer, she is responsible for establishing the link between urban consumers and rural producers. The revendeuses buy wholesale and sell retail in the market or on the streets. Strong and open competition prevails at all stages of the marketing process, among intermediaries, producers, and the products themselves. A vendor is regarded as incompetent if she returns home with unsold produce. It is likewise impractical to do so. Therefore, the vendor adjusts her prices as the day wears on to ensure disposal of all produce. The allocation of available resources is efficient as there is an intensive use of time and effort, which are abundant most of the year, and an economizing of scarce capital resources.

As for the marketing of export crops, spéculateurs may tie small farmers to them by extending credit before the harvest, but they cannot influence prices to any large extent (Lundahl 121-23).³

3. Several authors contest this thesis (see Tanzi 70-73), but Lundahl maintains that available empirical evidence refutes their claims.

Good community relations are crucial, and spéculateurs must remain competitive as price news circulates quickly. Sellers are not adverse to walking extra kilometres to gain the advantage. Exporters are few in number and at times they have been able to exercise oligopsony power. On other occasions however, exporters have been forced to compete due to the unreliability of spéculateurs.

While the marketing system is reasonably free flowing, producers are heavily exploited by government policies which affect prices. Taxes on export crops, licensing arrangements, and government monopoly pricing on basic import goods are all extractive in intent. The results are reduced farm income, and distorted and destructive production patterns (Tanzi 73).

Marketing Procedures

Goods are most often transported for long distances on the heads of peasants or on the backs of donkeys. Deterioration en route results. Routes from inland areas to the coast are undeveloped. Rivers are not suitable for transport. Bridges are few and far between, hence rivers must be crossed at selected shallow points during the dry season. Roads are poor or non-existent, so that motorized travel is minimal. There are no principal railway lines. Lack of port facilities, ships, and navigation aids--as well as shallow waters and reef obstacles--prevent intercoastal shipping and passenger service. International cargo must move by the few main ports or by the international airport in Port-au-Prince.

For most products there is no grading or standardization, and packaging is almost unknown.

Human Resources

Malnutrition and disease deplete human resources. Ninety-four percent of the rural population live in conditions of absolute poverty (CIDA, Integration of Women 18). Only 3% of the rural population has access to safe water, and there is a scarcity of medical personnel (CIDA, Integration of Women 9). There is only one physician per 30,000 people in rural areas (U.S. AID, FY 1984 Haiti n. pag.), and nursing graduates emigrate or work in areas unrelated to medicine after graduation. The basic mode of curing illness is by herbal concoctions and consultations with dokté-fey (herbalists). In 1982, life expectancy was 54 years (World Bank 1983, 148). Adults and children suffer from a variety of diseases such as malaria, tuberculosis, influenza, pneumonia, tetanus, amoebic and bacillary dysentery, and conjunctivitis. What appears to be lethargy in agricultural workers is often sickness.

In 1955, the Haitian government, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and World Health Organization (WHO) began a massive anti-malaria campaign which was abandoned in 1956 due to political chaos. In February 1961, the United States government, WHO, UNICEF, and the Pan American Sanitary Bureau attempted another campaign which was to take at least ten years. Weather-worn signs are all that remain of these attempts, and Haiti is the only malaria-positive nation in the Caribbean Sea.

Programs for health assistance can have both positive and negative effects. For example, vaccination programs, which have been technically successful, have contributed to the increase in population. If at the same time, agriculture production

is not increased, then a worsening of the nutritional situation and lowering of rural per capita income results.

As for education, the 1950 census indicated that rural Haiti had the highest illiteracy rate of any Latin American nation, with averages in the 93% to 98% range for people over fifteen years of age. The percent of rural school age children enrolled was unchanged by 1970 (Lundahl 480).

Technically, education is free, universal, and compulsory for six years from six to twelve years of age. But inadequate interest by the state has resulted in shortages of qualified teachers, poorly built schools, and lack of proper equipment. The educational process is further hindered by the poverty of most rural families. Many cannot cover the cost of clothing or books, and the opportunity cost (in child labour hours lost) is high. Malnutrition makes it difficult for children to learn, and additional hardships are created as schools may be located kilometres from the family hut.

Another impediment is the use of French, rather than Créole, as a medium of instruction.⁴ Children neither understand teachers nor have an opportunity to use French in the community. Teachers are reluctant to lapse into Créole as they are proud of their own scholastic achievement.

4. Créole is the "language of the masses", and its use is supposed to be a sign of ignorance, poverty, and inferior status.

Haitian attitudes toward education have also prevented schooling from having a significant effect on agricultural methods. The cultural assumption is that literate men do not do manual labour. Not surprisingly, a "brain drain" results, as peasants view education as a means for leaving the rural districts to seek urban employment.

Politics and the Rural Areas

Under the present constitution, the president-for-life has the right to nominate his successor, dismiss the National Assembly and Cabinet, and govern by decree when deemed necessary. There is universal suffrage for those over eighteen years of age, however elections are held irregularly and there is no mechanism for supervision of elections. It has been estimated that less than one percent of the population is politically active in any meaningful way (Tata 86). While there are constitutional guarantees against arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, political opponents are routinely jailed and tortured with no public trial.

Haiti is divided into five political départements each headed by prefects appointed by the president and directly responsible to him. The départements are divided into arrondissements and then into communes and sections rurales. The chief link between the rural areas and urban government is through the chêf de section and other government officials who collect taxes and hold power through vaguely defined authority. There is no effective representation for small farmers (Lundahl 350-52).

Lack of political power has resulted in decreased economic power. Rural Haitians are taxed in a variety of ways. There are

exorbitant export taxes on coffee, and the main burden of import duties rests on necessities consumed by the peasants, such as cotton cloth, soap, flour, fish, rice, and kerosene. Domestic production of goods purchased by the peasants is subject to excise taxes which often exceed those placed on luxury foodstuffs (Lundahl 391-96). In spite of all this taxation, barely 8% of the government's operational budget is returned to the rural areas (Tata 73).

Conclusion

As an independent nation, Haiti had a less than adequate start. Today, Haiti is characterized by a scarcity of natural and capital resources, and investment in human capital has been limited. Rural poverty has been accentuated because relatively few farmers have any political power.

In recent years there has been a decrease in agricultural exports and an increase in food imports. Thirty percent of all imports are basic foods (Tata 78). At present, the agricultural sector cannot be relied upon to feed the urban or rural populations. It can neither increase supplies of its non-food produce to the industrial sector nor increase exports substantially. It is within this context that the MEDA cocoa project is assessed.

Chapter Two

MEDA COCOA PRODUCTION AND MARKETING SCHEME

History

MEDA's involvement in Grande Rivière du Nord dates back to the early seventies when MEDA granted a project loan to a cooperative whose purpose was to provide hydro-electric energy to the area. The government took control of the project in the late seventies, and the cooperative ceased to function.

In 1981, MEDA actively sought out innovative projects which could benefit from their intervention. Coincidentally, Hershey Foods Corporation (HFC) expressed interest in collaborating with MEDA in expanding the market opportunities for cocoa producers in various areas in the Caribbean. Hershey's strategy was to improve cocoa yields and quality to assure a stable market price. Rather than create its own plantations (which is considered risky for multinationals) Hershey decided to teach good agronomic practices to present growers to improve the quantity and quality of yields (Harler 22-24). Haiti looked promising for at least two reasons. Firstly, the twenty-year monopsony in the cocoa market formerly controlled by the President's family officially ended. Open market conditions were thus created for buyers. Secondly, a major study on cocoa production for the North Department (completed in February of 1981) concluded that favorable factors, such as rainfall, temperatures, and soil conditions, existed for the cultivation of this crop. Thus, MEDA official Paul Derstine recommended that the organization aggressively explore the

possibility of an experimental project which would upgrade the cultivation and preparation techniques of cocoa as well as marketing options to small farmers (MEDA, Report July 28-August 1, 1981 1-5).

Meanwhile, at the request of former members, MEDA studied the possibility of re-establishing a fruit cannery cooperative in Grande Rivière du Nord. The Cooperative Jean Baptiste Chavannes (JBC) was first organized in 1964 (with Mennonite Central Committee assistance) for the purpose of preparing oranges and mangos for export. The enterprise was not able to mount a sustained and profitable production schedule until additional equipment was installed in the early seventies. In 1973, the Cooperative enjoyed a profitable canning season, but mechanical problems developed in 1974, and the cannery ceased to operate (MEDA, Report July 28-August 1, 1981, 5-6). In December 1981, MEDA suggested that the Cooperative reorganize itself as a cocoa production and marketing centre. As a follow up, sixteen of the former members reopened the Cooperative in January to explore the possibilities of such a venture.

By February 1982, the concept of developing improvements in cocoa production and marketing had generated local interest in the community of Grande Rivière du Nord and surrounding areas. The leadership endorsed the project and membership was now opened to anyone who did not have a criminal record. Members did not have to be cocoa growers; indeed some members were not farmers. Those interested in membership had to attend several weekly Cooperative meetings before they joined. They were then

admitted for a one dollar entrance fee and a minimum of five dollars share capital. (They also had to pay thirty cents for a notebook and thirty cents for a rules and regulations booklet.) The share capital could be paid in installments, but no dividends were paid until the members had paid all of the above in full. In early spring, preparations were made to have the Cooperative's assets (property and buildings) converted into a cocoa fermentation and marketing centre.

Cocoa Growing in Haiti

Currently, cocoa occupies about one percent of Haiti's cultivated area and accounts for about one percent of the country's agricultural exports (MEDA, COCOA 3). For Haitian small farmers who grow cocoa, it is an important cash crop providing income for the purchase of basic necessities not produced on the home farm, and for the education of children. It is also a crop that can provide collateral for short-term loans.

Cocoa is a low technology crop which does not require large capital investments in machinery and equipment. As a tree crop, cocoa provides a long-term investment for the farmer and provides an ongoing source of cash income for thirty-five to forty years. However, because it is a tree crop, the payback period for covering total investment costs to a farmer is about five years after the initial investment (provided there is no drastic drop in yield or price).

As previously mentioned, climatic conditions are conducive to cocoa production. It is labour intensive, but labour requirements are spread relatively evenly throughout the year, and net returns

per acre compare favourably with other crops. Cocoa fares reasonably well in the traditional creole gardens. Initially cocoa must be interplanted with shade and windbreak trees until cocoa plants are mature. Generally plantains fulfill this function. As cocoa trees mature, larger trees, such as coconut, are required to provide protection from storms and winds. Thus other tree crops benefit from the technical attention provided for the cocoa crop. Tree crops contribute to the botanical environment as soil holders, and the shade covering which they provide also helps to decompose matter into useful soil nutrients. There are no major disease problems for cocoa on the island, but rats are a problem, damaging up to thirty percent of the crop in the gardens (MEDA, COCOA 4-5).

Demand for cocoa in major importing countries grows slowly (about 3% a year) as both income and price elasticity for this product are low (Singh, et al. 7). Strategies for increasing cocoa production must take account of this fact.

Today, Haiti is a price taker in this market as its input to total world supply is negligible at one-tenth of one percent (MEDA, COCOA 5). Presently, Haitian cocoa production is well below recognized world levels and standards. Extensive mixes in creole gardens make it difficult to calculate yield per hectare, but "the most reliable studies estimate the average yield at 200-250 kg/ha with a density of about 240 trees per hectare. (This is in contrast to mono-cropping conditions in major producing countries where yields can be well over 1,000 kg/ha in mature plantations and tree densities are about 1,100 trees per hectare.)" (MEDA, COCOA 3). Inferior planting materials and

cultivation practices are some of the major problems cited in the French study. As well, little or no fermentation is undertaken. Thus, the export product (sun-dried unflavoured cocoa beans) receives a low price on the world market. While markets are readily available for this lesser quality, low prices act as a disincentive to peasant production.

MEDA officials concluded that Haitian farmers could benefit significantly from improved production and marketing techniques as this would result in a more favourable economic return on their labour in the cultivation of cocoa.

The Site - Grande Rivière du Nord

The Cap-Haïtien area is one of the four major cocoa-producing areas in the country (Lundahl 43). As previously mentioned, the land in this area is fertile and conducive to cocoa production. There is an asphalt highway connecting Cap Haïtien to Grande Rivière du Nord and the main highway from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haïtien is in excellent condition.

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) had worked in this area for twenty years in the areas of medical and rural development. Thus residents had acquired "development" experience and some had also familiarized themselves with the cooperative process. As well, a trained, capable leadership had evolved.

The existence of a cooperative which could be easily reactivated further enhanced this area as a choice for the model cocoa project. MEDA had recommended that a cooperative institution coordinate the individual activities of private producers. This would create direct involvement and resource commitment by small farmers in the project. As well, it was hoped that this method

would generate internal momentum so that the process would be self-sustaining after MEDA's departure (MEDA, SUMMARY 3-4).

Cooperatives in Grande Rivière du Nord have encountered many problems. Indeed, the history of cooperatives in Haiti as a whole is generally a story of failure. Thus, MEDA's choice of this institution as a vehicle for development was questionable.

Rotberg suggests that the main weakness of most producer cooperatives in Haiti is that they have been formed by the government from above (289-90). The cocoa project was certainly superimposed on the Cooperative JBC by MEDA (with agreement by the Cooperative leadership). If cooperatives are being used as ideological cure-alls (which has often been the case) they may not serve the immediate interests or needs of the producers involved. In some cases, the dynamics of cooperation will be lost. However, there are cases where dedicated top-down leadership resulted in the formation of cooperatives which have operated successfully for long periods of time. Fermanthe, near Port-au-Prince, is one such project (Rotberg 290-91).

Indeed, few cooperatives in Haiti have been formed spontaneously from below. Lundahl suggests that illiteracy may prevent spontaneous cooperative formation as books and accounts must be kept (596). Recognizing the importance of this factor, MEDA included in its proposals the provision of much technical assistance to upgrade and spread these skills within the Cooperative membership. Fortunately, the leadership of the Cooperative JBC had some of these skills.

Lundahl hypothesizes that the even population dispersion in rural areas may be responsible for the failure of cooperatives

to establish themselves. He maintains that peasants do not feel part of any well-defined community and this lack of a village social network and information structure weakens the tendency to cooperate in a formal structure (597). Rotberg also suggests that the absence of village communities "with their long-sanctioned social bonds" may be a barrier to cooperative formation (320). Neither provides concrete evidence to support his suppositions.

In some areas it may be the case that natural local leaders are lacking. Leadership may lie exclusively with the local houngan (Vodoun priest). In his contribution to Religion and Politics in Haiti, Rémy Bastien presents a strong argument which concludes that rural development is contrary to the interests of Vodoun leaders. Rural leadership also exists in the form of the chêf de section. But, this is autocratic and militaristic. In Grande Rivière du Nord however, there was strong leadership from a group consisting of small businessmen, teachers, and government officials. They were able to bring a variety of skills to the project.

It is important that a cooperative have a fairly narrow, easily understood focus. The key role of the Cooperative JBC was to provide a base upon which a cocoa preparation and marketing process could be established. Goals were clearly defined and not too complex.

Haiti has a long-standing tradition of cooperative work in the combite system. The failure of many cooperative projects to succeed in Haiti is undoubtedly due to a variety of reasons, some of which have been mentioned. There have been a few cooperatives, however, which have achieved or continue to achieve their desired objectives. Given the variables which were in place at the project's inception,

MEDA's choice of the Cooperative JBC as a vehicle for this cocoa project was reasonable.

By May, 1982 MEDA was ready to give the model cocoa project the go ahead. A formal project proposal was drafted at this time.

Project Proposal

The stated objectives of the project were:

- 1) to enhance the production and marketing of cocoa;
- 2) to contribute to the reforestation efforts in the area in order to control erosion;
- 3) to provide technical assistance, training, and information to farmers;
- 4) to contribute to the organizational development of the cooperative; and
- 5) to mobilize credit facilities/services for the use of cooperative members (MEDA, Haiti: Cocoa Production and Marketing Scheme n. pag.).

To achieve these objectives MEDA established a cooperatively-owned cocoa production and marketing centre in Grande Rivière du Nord, Haiti. The centre was to provide a range of services to member producers including a facility to ferment and sun-dry cocoa beans, and a link to international markets in a manner designed to eliminate the middlemen.

The basic steps of the project were:

- 1) secure seedstock of new high-yield hybrid varieties from international research centres for propagation in Haiti;

- 2) establish a cocoa nursery in Grande Rivière du Nord capable of producing up to 30,000 hybrid seedlings per annum;
- 3) establish a national clonal garden of 1,500 trees in Grande Rivière du Nord capable of producing 600,000 hybrid seeds per annum (within four to five years);
- 4) provide inputs to member farmers to upgrade cocoa stands so as to increase yields from 250 kg/ha to 750 kg/ha;
- 5) introduce processing (fermentation) and marketing procedures which would increase farmer returns on cocoa bean sales from 30% of the world price (estimate) to 65% of the world price;
- 6) develop managerial skills within the cooperative;
- 7) extend the concept to three other cooperative centres in Haiti; and
- 8) establish credit channels from the Bureau de Credit Agricole (BCA) and commercial banks for member farmers (MEDA, Haiti: Cocoa Production and Marketing Scheme n. pag.).

Technical and Financial Assistance

The Cooperative was directly linked to resources in the international marketplace via HFC. Their cooperation and assistance was crucial to the project. HFC volunteered both knowledge and expertise related to cocoa production and marketing. Their research was based on similar work in Belize and facilitated by their affiliation with the American Cocoa Research Institute which has research centres and specialists around the world. HFC volunteered fifty-five man days of services relating to the establishment of the nursery and demonstration farm, plant breeding, and farmer education. They recommended the appropriate formula required for the processing of cocoa beans for the industry and offered to locate markets for

the Cooperative's cocoa. As well, they provided training scholarships for project personnel for short courses in the Caribbean Region.

MEDA provided training and advisory services related to the production and marketing of cocoa. MEDA also assisted the Cooperative in mobilizing financial resources essential to achieving the goals of the project (a capital base was established for financing the Cooperative's purchase and preparation of beans). Technical assistance was also given by technicians from the Dominican Republic.

Initially, a proposal was made to attempt to affiliate with other tree planting programs in order to benefit from their technical and financial resources in the establishment of the nursery and clonal garden. Specifically MEDA isolated a project called "Agroforestry Outreach" (implemented primarily by United States Agency for International Development [U.S. AID], Pan American Development Foundation [PADF], and Cooperative for American Relief to Everywhere [CARE]) for this purpose. However, the Director of the PADF responded negatively for two reasons. Firstly, "Outreach" funds were to be used for actual tree extension, and MEDA requested funds for a clonal garden which was considered to be infrastructure. Secondly, "Outreach" funds were designated for private sector programs and MEDA was dependent on the Government of Haiti for implementation at this time (MEDA, Report April 15-22, 1982, 2).

MEDA also contacted a Protestant Missionary Organization, Oriental Missions Services (OMS) who had an extensive rural development program in the North. OMS had been established in

this area for more than twenty-five years and operated in fifty-two small communities. Their project was soil conservation/reforestation. Contact was also made with an associate of the Oblate Fathers who had recently formed the Association of Coffee Cultivators in Haiti. This Association represented seventeen coffee cooperatives in south-west Haiti. They were exporting coffee to Europe and Japan and suggested that it would be possible to include cocoa in their activities. It appeared that these and other NGOs could be called upon, if necessary, although their resources were limited (MEDA, Report April 15-22, 1982 1-2).

MEDA officials proposed that the Bureau of Agricultural Credit (BCA) provide the necessary credits for this project. The BCA is a semi-autonomous institution set up in the late 1950s to grant credit to small sociétés (8-10 persons) of Haitian small farmers. BCA had the legal authority to extend credits for agricultural schemes, plus it had the required infrastructure and a good track record for extending loans to similar projects in this area. Their services extended to include individual farmers once they became affiliated with the project.

Efforts were also made to acquire the services of the Ministry of Agriculture (DARNDR) and the Office of the Organization for the Development of the North (ODN). Originally, the project was undertaken as part of a general promotional program by the DARNDR to encourage tree-crop production by small farmers. Major financial and technical support (42.5% of the project costs) was supposed to be supplied by the Government of Haiti through the Agricultural Ministry, the BCA, and the ODN (MEDA, Haiti: Cocoa Production and Marketing Scheme Appendix B). Much of the promised

assistance was never delivered; instead, government shakeups in key personnel and legalities, such as export licenses resulted in barriers which the Cooperative had to overcome.

The project was designed by MEDA staff and HFC with the participation of Cooperative JBC leaders and representatives of the DARNDR.

Project Implementation

In the summer of 1982, MEDA formally initiated the three-year cocoa project in conjunction with the Cooperative JBC.

Official authorization for MEDA to operate in the country had not yet been granted when the project began. Several key contacts in the Government, the Director of the Division of Agriculture, the Director for the Bureau of Agricultural Credit, and the Director of the Organization for the Development of the North (all very supportive of the project), had been removed from these posts. Government shakeups are common in Haiti. It was at this time that the Government of Haiti formally absolved itself of all involvement previously agreed upon.

A meeting was held with the Director General for the Department of Agriculture who suggested that MEDA and the Cooperative JBC (which did have authority to operate) enter into a formal working agreement. This agreement could then be ratified by the National Council of Cooperatives for the purpose of legalizing all program-related activities. This procedure would not allow for the expansion of the project to other cooperatives so eventually MEDA prepared a joint submission to the Government for the registration of their program along with that of MCC. Authorization of this joint proposal was negatively affected in

June 1983 by a Presidential Decree related to the registration process of NGOs in the country. It was not until October 1984 that MCC was granted a new official contract with the Government. MCC would provide a legal umbrella for MEDA in Haiti until such time as MEDA could achieve its own status. In June, 1985 MEDA began to take steps to gain its own recognition to operate in Haiti.

Activities were undertaken to put the Cooperative Center in operational order by early December 1982, in time for the cocoa harvest. Mainly the buildings and property had to be cleaned and a wall constructed to keep out unauthorized persons and livestock. The Center contained 1,162 square metres of land, a large building (186 square metres), a smaller building (81 square metres), a storage bin, a 15W diesel-powered generator, a water system complete with well, and a 22,727 litre water reservoir.

Seedstock

MEDA made contact with the Director of the Cocoa Department in the Dominican Republic to arrange for the purchase of hybrid cocoa seeds for export in December to the Cooperative in Grande Rivière du Nord. However, the nursery was not ready to receive the seeds until June 1983. At this time, the Dominican Republic technicians visited and donated 21,000 hand pollinated hybrid cocoa seeds to the project.

Nursery

In September 1982, the nursery commenced its activities with a small experiment using local cocoa seedlings and various applications of fertilizer. The first transfer of plants to

farmers was scheduled for the May/June 1983 rainy season but due to delays the first young seedlings were only ready for transplant in the October/December season. There were 21,000 generally healthy plants in fall. However, more than one-quarter of these were not used. Farmers gave several reasons for not picking up their orders. Some farmers opposed transplanting seedlings in the month of November, loans were not available from the BCA in time for planting, field preparation was incomplete in many cases and plots did not have the required shade for cocoa seedlings, dry weather conditions hampered the stages of transplanting (MEDA, Programme Report 1983, 4). Cooperative administration suggested that future nursery stock be planted in phases making plants available to farmers from October to December.

The 16,000 seedlings that were transplanted did not fare well. Many seedlings broke en route to planting sites from the Center. Field preparation had been inadequate, particularly shade pre-requisites. In July 1984, the central nursery facility was not being used. Fall planting would still take place, but plans were underway to decentralize the nursery system with small nurseries being set up closer to farmers' fields. While these nurseries did not operate under the optimal conditions experienced in the Cooperative nursery (e.g., absence of wind protection and uniform shade cover) this method was much more cost efficient and increased the survival rate of transplants.

Approximately 15,000 seedlings were produced in six regional nurseries in 1984. (The capacity of the Central Nursery was to have been expanded to 45,000 seedlings.) Not surprisingly,

extension workers complained that nursery production was far below demand. Mainly this was due to two easily corrected factors--shortage of nursery bags, and a shortage of seeds from the Grand Pre Clonal Garden.

Clonal Garden

In the summer of 1983, plans for a clonal garden were put on hold due to the complexity of such a project. Equally important, investigation of the seedstock available through the recently discovered clonal gardens in Haiti indicated that these gardens had the desired mix to provide high-quality, high-yielding, disease-resistant seeds. This was verified by the Department of Agriculture and an HFC scientist. The Grand Pre Clonal Garden, planted in the late 1950s, was located only five miles from the Cooperative Center. There were other productive gardens in the south of Haiti. Thus, for the time being, seeds of adequate quality could be obtained from present gardens. Furthermore, seeds were also available from the Dominican Republic.

Inputs To Improve Production Techniques

The search for an Agronomist for the project began as soon as it became clear that the Department of Agriculture would not be supplying one. A Project Agronomist, Jacques Dolce, previous Director of the ODN, was secured in October 1982. Dolce had excellent credentials, having held many key positions in the North Department since the early sixties. He was highly respected in the North Department and very much admired by the small farmers.

In the summer of 1982, preparations were made to employ several farmers from the area with proven leadership capabilities

to become extension workers (encadreurs locaux). Their purpose was to introduce the new technological packages to residents in their areas. They would serve as a link between the technical specialists and producers. All members in good standing were eligible to use this resource.

The six extension agents appointed in the fall of 1982 were supervised by the Project Agronomist whom they met with every Monday. Aside from their work with project farmers, extension workers also assisted with cocoa processing at the Center and management of the demonstration farm (to be discussed).

In February 1983, seven Haitian technicians took part in a training session at a cocoa facility in the Dominican Republic. Seminars focused on the implementation of improved cocoa technologies. This training experience paid major dividends for the project. The extension team returned with enthusiasm and immediately scheduled visits with farmers to begin cocoa regeneration.

In April 1983, the first in a monthly series of short courses related to improvements in cocoa production was given by Project Agronomist Dolce. Seminars in special technical aspects such as pruning, planting hybrids, fertilization, harvesting techniques, and rat control were held throughout the remainder of 1983 on the first Monday of each month. Approximately thirty participants attended each.

In June a three-man team from the research station in the Dominican Republic came to the Cooperative for a follow-up visit. They assisted the Project Agronomist in identifying the three dominant cocoa clones which were found in the Grand

Pre Clonal Garden. They also visited several gardens in order to review cocoa regeneration techniques and principles which had been taught in the February training course.

Rat extermination was attempted on some fields with good results, but clearly large-scale efforts would be necessary to keep this problem under control. MEDA decided to subsidize this effort in 1984 for one year. One thousand carreaux were to be covered six times. Farmers were expected to handle some of the costs.

In the course of the project, numerous other inputs were documented. A twenty-page "how to" manual for cocoa cultivation was developed by the Agronomist and translated into Créole. This was a first of its kind. As well, a technical training booklet to be used as a guide for farmers was created by MEDA staff. As mentioned there were seminars for member farmers and seminars for extension agents. There were also training sessions for the Cooperative management in administrative functions, record keeping, and finances. There were five visits by the HFC staff scientist from 1982 to 1985. A demonstration farm was established, and by 1985, 60,000 quality seedlings had been planted in member farmers' fields.

Training of technicians continued into August 1984 when four Haitian leadership personnel attended a two-week seminar (provided for by scholarships from HFC) in Belize.

In order to assist members in implementing the new techniques, nursery seedlings were sold at cost, and rat poison, fertilizer, and insecticides were subsidized.

Fermentation

In the late fall of 1982, an initial fermentation process was carried out successfully. The procedure was not complex. Pods were broken open and the wet beans were placed in large wooden boxes to ferment for five days. Beans had to be turned over daily. At the end of this process, the beans were dried on trays (layos) and then stored for shipment. By April 1983, fermentation had been discontinued. Apparently, the increased return did not justify the added cost.

Marketing

A crucial part of the project was the Cooperative's direct link to HFC. HFC does not normally make direct cocoa purchases of any size but viewed the transaction as a special project. They agreed to buy all of the planned project output for a two-year period. The pricing formula, negotiated between HFC and MEDA, was tied to the futures price in the New York Coffee, Sugar and Cocoa Exchange (MEDA, Report February 15-18, 1983 n. pag.). Thus project farmers experienced increased incomes immediately due to the elimination of middlemen alone. This was perhaps the most important factor in getting the Cooperative firmly established in the community. For when the dividend payments were made to members after each shipment, Cooperative membership and cocoa bean deliveries to the Center increased dramatically.

The Cooperative set a first shipment goal of 9,090 kilograms for June 1983. A group from Port Margot became involved in spring to assist the Cooperative JBC in meeting its projected goal. The first shipment was sent in August and contained 100 bags (6,000

kilograms) hence it was somewhat short of the anticipated amount.

When the dividend (ristourne) was paid out in late fall, the quantity of cocoa purchased in the month of November doubled from the amount gathered in the seven months prior to the first shipment. Voluntary labour by Cooperative members was necessary to buy, dry, and sort the beans.

The first shipment was collected in a seven-month period. It involved 59 farmers and amounted to 6,000 kilograms. The second shipment was collected over a two-month period. It involved 239 farmers and amounted to 18,000 kilograms (MEDA, UPDATE 2). Speculation that HFC might not want to handle this increased volume led to the investigation of an alternative market source. A European firm with an office in Port-au-Prince expressed interest in this export product should the link to HFC be severed or an additional outlet be required.

Meanwhile, in Grande Rivière du Nord pressure from the Cooperative had forced spéculateurs to raise prices at one point to a high of 83% of the world price (MEDA, Report June 17-23 2). Competition was high to drive the Cooperative out of the marketplace. One export house was sending spéculateurs into the mountain areas offering cement and tin for roofs as incentives to obtain the cocoa.

Problems in marketing arose when it was discovered that the second shipment had a weight loss of some 455 kilograms. The first shipment also suffered weight loss, but it was felt that this was due to the inexperience of the Cooperative in purchasing beans. Occasionally wet beans were purchased for a dry bean price. The Administration speculated on the possible contributing factors

which would account for the weight loss of the second shipment. Firstly, there were major delays in the shipment's arrival to HFC. However, shipments from Belize gained moisture in transit. Secondly, the bags had not been pre-weighed in Grande Rivière du Nord. They had only been weighed in Port-au-Prince. Therefore, the only record the Cooperative had was the weight of cocoa purchased. In future all bags would be weighed at the Cooperative before shipment. Finally, the bags could be "bled" in customs and also en route to Port-au-Prince. Thus, the bags would have to be rechecked for weight upon arrival in Port-au-Prince and just prior to export.

Managerial Skills

Initially two key men, the President and the Treasurer, were appointed the task of setting the project into motion. Three Cooperative members were assigned the job of preparing the Center for operation. Bookkeeping chores were relegated to an Assistant Secretary, who was also a local school teacher. A MEDA advisor assisted in setting up and monitoring this function and another MEDA member volunteered to assist the Cooperative in business matters during the first harvest period in January 1982. In November 1983, this member returned to audit the Cooperative's books and help refine the accounting procedures. At this time steps were taken to make the Cooperative self-sufficient, and the project's ongoing records were separated from MEDA's short-term support. The Cooperative Manager was able to provide up-to-date records of financial activities on request. There were no grave weaknesses and no mismanagement.

Cooperative Development

The original project proposal designed by MEDA contained no proposed strategy for cooperative formation and development. MEDA assumed that the project would be implemented by cooperatives already established in Haiti.

Sixteen individuals re-established the Cooperative JBC in January 1981. These officers were originally elected to their posts by the Fruit Canning Cooperative which closed by the mid-seventies. The leadership of the Cooperative was composed primarily of townspeople, and the council included persons who were not cocoa producers. New elections were never held.

Members met each Sunday for cooperative education. (Attendance ranged from 100-300 members and potential members.) This included matters such as Cooperative administration, Cooperative benefits, and Cooperative procedures. Those interested in joining had to attend weekly Cooperative meetings for about one month before being admitted.

Credit Channels

Securing credit became a project constraint when the major source of planned credit, the BCA, became temporarily unavailable after the government shakeup previously mentioned. Several new sources were approached such as the Haitian Development Foundation, the Adult Development Institute (IDA), and the ODN. While their responses to the project were positive, funds did not materialize from these institutions.

In February 1983, U.S. AID offered a grant to MEDA to cover funds which were immediately necessary for the processing,

assembling, and shipping of the Cooperative's first export of beans.

Agreement in principle was reached with the BCA in April 1983 for credit extension to farmers. MEDA would extend a loan to the BCA (from CIDA generated funds) for one year. They in turn would develop and administer a credit service to project farmers specifically for cocoa improvement. The Agronomist and extension workers selected member farmers to receive this credit. BCA agreed to pay MEDA interest at an annual rate of 3% on the loan. The funds would be loaned to farmers at BCA's established interest rate of 14%. Interest was payable in advance as was an additional 2% service charge. Credits were short-term not exceeding twelve months in duration (MEDA, Report April 16-19 n. pag.). The first advance of credit money to farmers came in the period of October to December. One hundred and thirty-five member farmers, organized into thirteen Société Agricoles de Credit, and seven individuals, received a total of \$19,630. At the end of November 1984, 90% of the money due had been repaid and reloaned (MEDA, COCOA 15).

Demonstration Farm

When plans for the clonal garden were set aside, the Cooperative focused instead on a demonstration garden. Agreement was reached to purchase 1.29 hectares (one carreau) of land which was across the river from the Cooperative Center. The land had some slope so experimentation with conservation techniques was possible (e.g., running bands of cocoa along slopes intercropping with other subsistence crops).

By September 1983, the garden had been cleaned and new varieties of cocoa were being planted under existing shade.

The strategy was to underplant in old plantations using the new hybrids. The demonstration garden afforded farmers the opportunity to view new technologies in a garden similar to their own. Using this **example**, farmers could theoretically increase yields immediately on their old trees (by pruning) while the young trees were getting started using the existing shade. (Eventually the old trees would have to be removed for the new trees to yield properly.)

Approximately 180 cocoa seedlings were planted on the farm in October 1983. Banana and other shade trees were planted prior to this in order to provide shade coverage. By January 1984, the garden showed good evidence of the effects of proper management. Old trees had increased their yields, and new plantings showed excellent progress due to adequate field preparation and proper planting. It appeared that this demonstration plot would be useful in displaying the superiority of the new techniques, but farmers would have to be encouraged to visit the garden to observe the improvements.

Subsequent Cooperative Extension

In March 1983, MEDA signed a funding agreement with U.S. AID for the purpose of extending the cocoa marketing project on a national scale.

A delegation of farmers from the Port Margot region (members of an OMS-supported tree planting cooperative) attended the first short course given by the Project Agronomist. Plans were made to extend MEDA-generated credits to this cooperative in order to allow the OMS cooperative to begin its own purchasing activities.

In September, project emissaries from MEDA and the Cooperative JBC visited two new groups in Ti Bouk and Pilate. These groups were to operate under the "umbrella" of the Cooperative JBC as they did not have formal status on their own to operate. They would operate independently in their day-to-day activities but would export as a group.

In November 1983, the position of educator/trainer of newly emerging cooperatives was created. The man hired for the job was the President of the Cooperative JBC. By May 1985, there were six cocoa cooperatives involved in the MEDA project. These were Grande Rivière du Nord (established in January 8, 1982), 700 members; Dame-Marie (established in May 1984), 237 members; Chambellan (established in August 1984), 179 members; Anse d'Hainault (established in October 1984), 127 members; Milot (established in October 1984), 60 members; and Ti Bouk (established in October 1984), 48 members.

Summary

The MEDA cocoa project was innovative and focused on rural development where assistance is most needed. Care was taken not to encourage major overhauls in gardens. Instead, a few reasonable changes were introduced into the traditional system. The crop was labour, not capital, intensive and was within the capability and realm of acceptable risk for small farmers. Thus, resistance to innovation (the result of peasant experience both with fickle markets and worthless projects) was reduced.

Basic problems in the agricultural system, such as soil erosion, plant diseases (there are no major cocoa disease

problems on the island), and natural disasters (cocoa fares relatively well under adverse conditions) were addressed. Improved plant and seed selection as well as cultivation and cropping techniques were introduced. Major emphases of the project were dissemination of information and upgrading of the skills of leaders, technicians, and members alike.

Fermentation goals were not achieved, but improved marketing procedures were instituted. MEDA coordinated the credit channels for project implementation and established a source of credit for Cooperative members participating in the project. By spring of 1985, the Cooperative JEC was firmly established and as planned, the concept had expanded to other communities in Haiti.

Chapter Three

SURVEY DESCRIPTION AND METHODOLOGY

Objective

A descriptive survey was designed in the spring and summer of 1983 to gather information about the economic lives of small farmers in the general area of Grande Rivière du Nord. The purpose of this general survey was to provide baseline data to assess the development impact of the cocoa project after completion.

Questionnaire Design

Various ideas were gleaned from discussions with underdeveloped country specialists in the disciplines of economics, anthropology, and agriculture, as well as those familiar with survey design at the Institute for Social and Economic Research, University of Manitoba. A review of the pertinent literature did not reveal a model survey which could be duplicated. Therefore, the questionnaire required an original design. Questions were constructed from general literature about Haiti.

The survey (located in Appendix A) has seven general sections: demographic information, production information, market function, labour utilization (in home gardens), wage labour (in gardens other than home), role of the Cooperative, and cocoa production in future. Also included is a table of food and cash crops under cultivation.

The questionnaire format was designed to maximize efficiency during the surveying procedure. Questions were simple, brief,

and to the point. A table was included to organize demographic information, and anticipated replies were included on the form to facilitate recording procedures. As well, there were check-off lists for crops under cultivation. Blanks were left ("other") to allow for additional information. Care was taken to avoid questions which were antagonistic, provocative, or offensive. Occasionally, different measures (responses from different sections) were established to test for reliability in responses. Sections were interspersed in such a way as to keep respondents interested. The survey was compact and fit nicely on a clipboard. Several survey forms could be transported by backpack along with other essentials. Finally, copying was one-sided so that the back of each sheet remained blank for additional notetaking.

Questions pertaining to money and education appeared to make the pre-test respondents uneasy. (One was very slow to answer these questions, one directly lied as was verified later, and one left in what appeared to be disgust.) Thus, it became clear that a few questions had to be eliminated and that revisions were necessary. While it was considered indiscreet to ask direct questions about income and expenditures, there was no noticeable resistance to "indirect" quantity questions.¹

1. There is no written or oral tradition of recording quantifiable information such as yields per season, men hired, wages paid, and so on in Grande Rivière du Nord. Therefore, data collected from more specific questions would be questionable.

For example, the questions "What do you pay male labour?" and "What do you pay female labour?" became "Do men and women receive equal pay here?" and "How is pay stratified?". The information gathered in this way was general rather than specific. Other questions in the questionnaire were combined to speed up the interviewing process. A few questions were added where appropriate and words changed to capture the concept in Créole (see Appendix A).

It is conceivable that a questionnaire could be designed to address even sensitive issues such as education. For example, most residents have varying degrees of primary school education. The school system is not complex. A review of the skills which are acquired in each year would lead to a general set of questions such as the following: "Are you familiar with this book?", "Do you remember this number table?", "Have you ever seen this map (any illustration commonly used at some specified level)?".

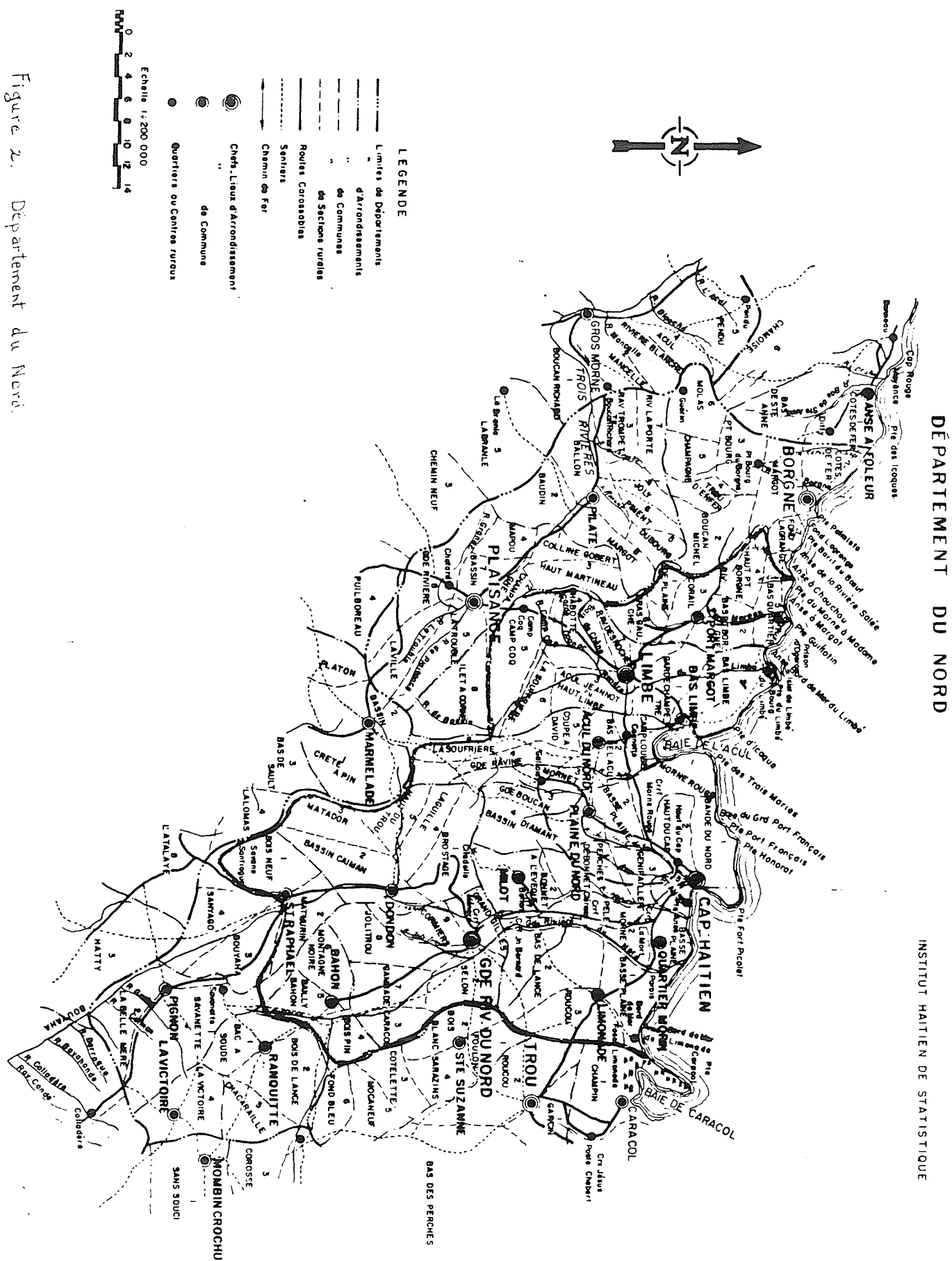
The survey was originally drawn up in the English language and then translated into French. While French is the official language of this country, most Haitians only speak Créole. Therefore, the survey had to be translated into Créole. This was not a simple task as written Créole does not exist in a standardized form. Instead, a variety of "phonetic" forms are used. This task was done in Port-au-Prince with the assistance of the Project Advisor. In Grande Rivière du Nord both French and Créole versions were given to the interpreter who came up with yet another (local) Créole version (i.e. the fourth draft). Lengthy discussion followed each change in the questionnaire

in order to assure that the Créole question matched the English question conceptually.

Survey Population

The survey population was composed of the residents of the sections rurales (Grand Gilles, Cormiers, Selon, Caracol, Gambade, and Jolitrou) surrounding and including Grande Rivière du Nord. A random sample of 52 members and 52 nonmembers was chosen from lists provided by extension workers and the secretary of the Cooperative. It was agreed in the **economics department** at the University of Manitoba that a sample population totalling 100 would be manageable and produce results which would have some statistical significance. A slightly larger number was chosen to ensure that close to 50 surveys per group would be completed. Respondents were selected by the use of a random number table. The membership list was not 100% accurate. On occasion a member's name showed up twice on the lists. As well, membership was always in transition. New members joined weekly, some migrated to urban areas, and some left the country permanently. Approximately ten names were chosen which were "unsuitable" (i.e. moved to Port-au-Prince or New York, name appeared twice, had no garden). At these times the sequence was continued on the random number table and the next appropriate number was chosen.

Finalizing the list of respondents took several days. Evenings were spent choosing names--days were spent trying to situate them. Area address was not specified on the membership list, but the extension workers were very helpful in identifying members and describing the location of the homestead.



Choosing a sample population of nonmembers was even more challenging. Official records of the general population did not exist. Census data are notoriously inaccurate. Supposedly there was a census taken in the months before my arrival, yet no one in the area knew anything about this census. In Port-au-Prince recent census data were not available. There were neither detailed aerial maps nor explicit survey documents. Eventually, extension workers were asked to submit general lists of small farmers in their area who were not members. Lists included names of those the extension worker knew personally; knew casually from the market, religious events, and so on; or heard of by word of mouth. Consequently, the list was biased. Nonetheless, this method did result in a selection of respondents who were well distributed throughout the general area of Grande Rivière du Nord. Again, a random number table was used, and four or the original list had to be re-chosen. (One woman refused to answer in the absence of her husband and would not say if he would be returning, one was now a cooperative member, one was unknown to anyone, and one no longer lived in the area.)

To test for reliability, the team surveyed a few random huts outside the non-member group to see if their replies coincided with those of the sample. There was enough consistency to suggest that the sample was sufficiently representative.

Survey Procedure in the Field

The surveying team consisted of the interpreter, Jean-Claude (a young Haitian male who is a native of this area), my teenage

daughter Justine, and myself. A few times we were accompanied by an area guide who would remain apart from the group during the interview. Jean-Claude interviewed the respondent while I recorded the answer. For the first two weeks, Justine wrote descriptive notes about the households we visited. In the evenings these notes were compared to the corresponding surveys, and we did not spot any glaring contradictions. Her presence facilitated the challenging process of gaining the confidence of the respondents. I believe our non-threatening appearance (mother and daughter) contributed greatly to the ease with which we obtained each interview. It certainly assisted our mobility on the island as there were security checkpoints everywhere.

The questionnaire was administered in Créole through the interpreter. Interviewing techniques were discussed in detail for several days. Jean-Claude was instructed to keep all interviews consistent. A few practice sessions were conducted in the field during the pre-test. Once the survey itself began, standardized questions were adhered to, and answers were recorded as given. The simple, direct questions were usually understood by the respondents. If there was confusion, questions were explained on the spot. The interview became routine, only introductions and farewells changed. Informal discussions usually took place after the interview.

We wore modest clothing and hairdos and tried to remain clean, neat, relaxed, and friendly--values shared by most Haitians. By routinizing methods, behaviour, and appearance, we attempted to reduce bias in the results. Probing when necessary

may have affected responses, but attempts were made to keep probing neutral.

The pre-survey preparation including the "dry runs" took two weeks. Official surveying began July 11, 1983 and ended August 4, 1983. This was the summer season. Weather conditions were mainly dry so we were able to cross rivers which would be impassable during the rainy season. Fortunately we were able to reach all survey areas on most days. It is conceivable that some responses would vary slightly were the interview season to change (examples would be those questions related to agricultural production, food supply, marketing).

Surveying began as early as 6:00 a.m. and ended anywhere from noon to 4:30 p.m. depending on the workload and area being sampled. Interviews took approximately one-half an hour. The daily average was four to five completed surveys, and various factors affected this number. A few of these variables were: transportation difficulties (waiting two to three hours for a tap tap, motorcycle breakdown); the accessibility of the respondent (it could take hours to "track down" one respondent); and the availability of Jean-Claude. Homesteads which were isolated in the mountains often took two hours to reach. However, once the clouds were beneath us, we canvassed the region thoroughly for other respondents on the list. These days were very, very long but we usually filled out more surveys than the average.

We travelled by tap tap or motorcycle where possible; most of the time we moved from hut to hut on foot. While the use of a car would have facilitated movement from one area to another and speeded up the survey process, this form of transportation

was rejected. First, the more common, slower mode of travel allowed for a better understanding of rural life in Haiti. Second, it appeared to promote closer rapport with the local population. Finally, most huts can only be reached by footpaths, so eventually one has to leave the main arteries and walk the rest of the way.

Haitians are generally mobile--men can have more than one home due to placage, and women frequent the markets several days a week. As well, work in family gardens and wage labour usually occurs some distance from the home. Taking into account the mobility factor, plus the open nature of the Haitian family unit, we decided to accept as a respondent any mature, lucid family member who was a permanent resident of the chosen household. However, contact was usually made with the person whose name was chosen or his/her spouse rather than with another family member.

Mainly respondents were interviewed at the family hut. On several occasions, however, it was necessary to interview respondents at their present situation, i.e., on a mountain path, while waiting for a tap tap, while minding a food stand, outside a work place, at the market, and at prayer service. Despite numerous contingency plans, we were often left high on a mountain or low in a maze of creole gardens, having found no one at the specified hut. On these occasions we were forced to return another time. The last day was spent searching out those members and nonmembers who had not been located on previous visits. The decision not to use a car had to be reversed. We criss-crossed the area from early morning to late afternoon seeking the few

remaining respondents. Persistence paid off. Of the total questionnaires, all but two were completed. Thus, the interview method resulted in a near-perfect return rate.

The respondents were generally friendly and helpful. Most appeared to answer honestly. Some joked, teased, and exaggerated initially, but then settled down to straightforward responses once the formal interview began. Some replied more intelligently than others, but the consistency of the survey results suggested that the questionnaire and interview method provided reasonably reliable data.

Processing the Data

Computer work on the surveys began in June 1984. A codebook was designed which described the location of variables and the code assignments given to the attributes composing those variables. From June 15 to July 20, surveys were coded and data recorded on data sheets. All surveys were rechecked. The remainder of the month was spent inputting data on the computer, reviewing the data, and correcting mistakes where necessary. By August 1, the data were clean and ready for a test run.

The remainder of the thesis was blocked by spring 1985, and work began again on the survey results. All variables were run against Sections Rurales and then against Cooperative Membership. Breakdown into location was not useful for meaningful statistical analysis as the sample was too small, and cells yielded insufficient data. However, because the information would be useful for the Cooperative project, it was delivered to MEDA. As it turned out, the data gathered in the baseline survey provided information for a preliminary assessment as well as a future assessment of project impact.

Chapter Four

THE FARMING POPULATION--A DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW

The survey results produced some insight into the lives of small farmers in the general area of Grande Rivière du Nord. This information has been divided into two parts--general observations and observations specific to the member and nonmember samples.

General Observations

The area surrounding and including Grande Rivière du Nord is densely populated. Households have a median number of seven occupants representing a wide range of relationships.

TABLE 4.1 Distribution of Household Size in the Survey Sample

Total Current Residents	Frequency of Observations
2	2
3	8
4	11
5	10
6	15
7	12
8	16
9	10
10	6
11	3
12	2
13	1
14	2
20	1
Total= 99	
Missing= 03	

Some households are composed of extended kinship groups while others are "boarding-house" or cooperative arrangements among unrelated adults and children. There also exist many combinations of the two.

Seventy percent of the respondents were male, and this figure coincided with the number of male-headed households. Respondents ranged in age from 19 to 88.

TABLE 4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents in the Survey Sample

Age	Frequency of Observations
< 29	13
30-39	21
40-49	18
50-59	20
60-69	20
> 69	6
Total= 98	
Missing= 04	

The population is relatively stable. Eighty percent of those surveyed had been living in the same rural section for more than ten years. This area is one of the most fertile agricultural zones in Haiti. Gardens in the lowlands were lush despite severe drought on other parts of the island. Higher up the mountains however, crops were generally poor as there was little shade protection from the summer sun. Farmers complained

that their cocoa seedlings died when planted because there was neither shade protection nor water to get them started. The nearest river or stream was often one or more miles from the homestead, and wells, cisterns, and holding tanks were non-existent. Landholdings of the survey population were equally distributed between the lowland and mountain areas.

Forty-five percent of the survey population had land holdings equal to or less than the national average of 1.4 hectare (1.29 hectare=1 carreau). Fifty-two percent had holdings larger than the national average.

TABLE 4.3 Garden Size of Farmers in the Survey Sample

Garden Size (Carreau)	Observations	% Distribution
<.5	7	7
.5-1.4	39	38
1.5-2.4	21	20
2.5-3.4	16	16
3.5-4.0	7	7
>4	9	9
do not know	3	3
		<u>100%</u>

Sixty-seven percent of the survey population were land owners, 11% were renters, 20% were combination owner/renters, and approximately 2% were sharecroppers and combination owner/sharecroppers.

All small farmers grew basically the same agricultural products. Staple crops, such as beans, corn, manioc, plantains, bananas, and sweet potatoes, were cultivated year round, while supplements such as peanuts, taro, squash, and rice were grown seasonally. Trees were common--particularly mango, avocado, breadfruit, and a variety of citrus. In the five-year period prior to the survey a shift from rice to corn occurred for approximately 10% of the small farmers interviewed. Slightly less than one-third of all those interviewed produced enough food on the home farm to feed the family at subsistence level. Twenty percent said it depended on the season, and fifty percent could not grow enough on their land to feed the people who ate at the homestead regularly. Additional food was obtained through selling and buying at the market and by wage labour. Some farmers stated the family simply ate less.

Surplus food crops (corn, beans, and plantains) are marketed, becoming important cash crops. Traditional export crops such as tobacco and sisal are rarely grown. Only 25% of the small farmers interviewed reported coffee and cocoa as major cash crops. Yet, 73% of these farmers grew coffee and 82% grew cocoa. Of the group growing coffee and cocoa, 68% had access to larger parcels of land (more than 1.29 hectare) and 76% were landowners (15% were owner/renters and 9% were renters).

Production and sale of cash crops was predominantly a female activity. Approximately three-quarters of households surveyed stated that females decided which cash crops to plant, the remainder claimed the decision was made by males, or jointly by males and females. In contrast, when asked who decided which food crops were to be planted, two-thirds of the respondents claimed it was a male decision; the remaining third said the decision was female or both sexes. All

marketing however, is essentially controlled by women.

Most women frequented local markets within 15 kilometres of their homestead. Some women interviewed travelled more than 30 kilometres to reach the larger markets. It was common for women to spend more than two hours getting to markets depending on the initial starting point and mode of travel. Three modes of travel prevailed--human, animal, and mechanical. Income as well as the availability of animals or public transport determined which method a woman chose. Many women walked to market, fewer than half used animals (sometimes owned but usually borrowed) and/or public transport.

Labour utilization in family gardens was diversified among household members. Preparing the soil, planting, and weeding were predominantly male tasks for 49% of the households surveyed. Thirty-six percent used all family labour (male/female/children), and 15% used workers who were not in the family unit for these tasks. Harvesting, on the other hand, was done by the family unit in 67% of the homesteads. Solely male labour was relied on in 23% of the households; and 10% of the farms surveyed used labour outside the family unit for this purpose.

TABLE 4.4 Percentage Distribution of Type of Labour Used for Primary Agricultural Tasks in the Survey Sample

Type of Labour	Cultivating and Planting	Harvesting
Family Labour (M)	49	23
Family Labour (M/F/C)	36	67
Outside Family Labour	15	10
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Most respondents (85%) hired labour for wages outside the family unit to assist in field work. All hired men, and 40% also hired women. Children are rarely hired. Only one-third of the respondents offered information concerning the stratification of wages between men and women. Of these, three-quarters paid equal wages to males and females while one-quarter paid men more than women.

Cooperative labour parties (combite) were widely practised in this part of Haiti. (There is no money exchange in a combite, but the "host" is expected to supply food and drink for the day.) Ninety percent of the respondents held cooperative labour parties. Field workers were generally male; females were responsible for preparing the feast. The number of participants varied greatly from a few men to over 30 men per combite. Among those who hold these cooperative labour parties, more than two-thirds have one per season (on average). Another 15% have these parties once monthly, and some have them bi-monthly.

While most small farmers hired outside labour, only 17% worked for wages in the fields of others. About one-third of these were full-time workers, the remainder worked part-time or casually. Thoughts about the availability of wage work of this type varied. One-half stated it was always available, and more than one-third said there was never work.

Cocoa is a traditional crop in the area of Grande Rivière du Nord. Most small farmers surveyed had some cocoa, and three-quarters of these farmers claimed they have grown cocoa for more than 10 years. Yet only one-quarter of the respondents included it as a cash

crop. Sixty percent had recently expanded production. Most of the expansion was in the form of replacement of plants that died, but several farmers had planted more cocoa in the same garden or on new land. Those respondents abstaining from cocoa cultivation gave reasons such as insufficient land, land loss, unsuitable land, lack of money or credit, and no seedlings.

The Cooperative JBC was in the process of collecting its first shipment of cocoa beans and one-quarter of the respondents had sold their beans to the Cooperative. The remainder sold their cocoa to spéculateurs which was the traditional method of disposal. Many sold their beans to spéculateurs at the market but several were able to sell to spéculateurs at their homestead. Wet pods had been transported to the Cooperative primarily by foot. Approximately one-third of the sellers used animals or public transport.

Most farmers surveyed had expectations or hopes of increasing cocoa production in the future. About one-half of these respondents would use their present gardens to do this (replace old stands, cultivate present stands, plant new cocoa), approximately 40% intended to obtain more land for this purpose. In order to expand in present gardens, some existing food crops would have to be replaced. Most farmers said they would replace plantains with cocoa. Other crops to be replaced included mango, avocado, and oranges. Farmers were very interested in planting more cocoa in order to increase family income.

Information about the Cooperative flowed into the countryside through various channels. One-half of those interviewed received their information through the extension workers; others got word

through neighbours and/or members. Nearly everyone surveyed wanted the Cooperative to expand beyond the cocoa project. The most popular suggestions were fruit conservation, coffee cultivation and marketing, general cultivation for all crops, and road construction. Respondents stated that members, foreign agencies, and the Cooperative leadership were responsible for initiating new projects. The government was seen as having no particular role.

Cooperative Members and Nonmembers--Highlighting the Differences

The relative affluence which was apparent in some of the homes of the member sample was not obvious in the homes of the nonmember sample. Subtle and not-so-subtle differences in house construction, furnishings, clothing, and general health were observed.

Several variables were run against Cooperative membership to test for statistical significance. The standard cutting point of the P value equal to or less than 0.05 was employed in assessing whether there is a significant relationship between the two variables, hence a basis for rejecting the null hypothesis. The results which were found to be significant are emphasized by the inclusion of their P value.

TABLE 4.5 Percentage Distribution Among the Seven Rural Sections of Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Rural Section	Members	Nonmembers	% Distribution
Grande Rivière du Nord	19	5	24
Grand Gilles	6	10	16
Gambade	4	10	14
Selon	7	8	15
Jolitrou	10	9	19
Cormiers	2	5	7
Caracol	1	4	5
Total Sample	49	51	100

The differences in the distribution of members and nonmembers is mainly due to the location of the Cooperative JBC. The Cooperative is situated in the village of Grande Rivière du Nord, hence it attracts a larger portion of its membership from this population. Caracol and Cormier, on the other hand, are a great distance from the Cooperative, and membership in these sections is smaller in number. (Jolitrou however is also far from the Cooperative, but this section had a particularly energetic extension worker who had generated enthusiasm for the cocoa project.)

The population was generally stable, but more of the member sample had mobility than the nonmember sample. Indeed, of the total respondents who had been in the area for fewer than 10 years, three-quarters were members.

TABLE 4.6 Percentage Distribution of the Years of Residence in the Area by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Years Residence	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
< 10 years	75	25	20
> 10 years	<u>43</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>80</u>
Total Sample	49	51	100

P=0.0095

Members and nonmembers also differed in land tenure and in the size of gardens which they cultivated. More of the member sample (57%) own land outright, compared to the nonmember sample (43%). Within the member sample, 78% are outright landowners

compared to 59% in the nonmember sample. (The two sharecroppers were omitted from this computation.)

TABLE 4.7 Percentage Distribution of Land Tenure by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Land Tenure	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
Owner	57	43	69
Renter	55	45	11
Owner/Renter	<u>25</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>20</u>
Total Sample	51	49	100

P=0.0378

Fifty-eight percent of the member sample had more access to larger parcels of land compared to 42% of the nonmember sample.

TABLE 4.8 Percentage Distribution of Garden Size by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Garden Size	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
≤1 carreau	41	59	46
>1 carreau	<u>58</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>54</u>
Total Sample	51	49	100

P=0.0880

There was a significant positive relationship between nonmembers and corn grown relative to the total sample population. More of the nonmember sample (60%) grew corn compared to the member sample (40%).

TABLE 4.9 Percentage Distribution of Cultivation of Corn and Other Crops by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Corn and Other Crops	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
All Other Crops	64	36	38
Corn	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>62</u>
Total Sample	49	51	100

P=0.0165

Why the discrepancy? Table 4.10 demonstrates that 77% of the nonmembers count corn as a cash crop compared to only 23% of the members.

TABLE 4.10 Percentage Distribution of Sellers of Corn and Other Cash Crops by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Corn/Other Cash Crops	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
All Other Crops	60	40	71
Corn	<u>23</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>29</u>
Total Sample	49	51	100

P=0.0008

As for the cultivation of other specific crops, 10% more of the nonmember group cultivated peanuts than the member group. While close to one-half of the nonmember sample cultivated rice, only one-third of the member sample did likewise. There was a noticeable difference in the cultivation of coffee--86% of the members grew coffee compared to 61% of the nonmembers. Also,

89% of the members grew cocoa compared to 77% of the nonmembers.

Proximity to the closest markets was measured by distance and time. It was discovered that the member sample (57%) was closer than the nonmember sample (43%) to the most common market in use in the area. Moreover, within the member group, more respondents were closer to markets than not (62% compared to 38%). This trend was reversed for the nonmember sample.

TABLE 4.11 Percentage Distribution of Market Distance by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Distance to Market	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
≤ 3 kms.	57	43	52
> 3 kms.	<u>38</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>48</u>
Total Sample	48	52	100

P= 0.0661

Not surprisingly, those within reasonable walking distance to market were 74% members as opposed to 26% nonmembers. Those at a greater distance were 67% nonmembers as opposed to 33% members.

TABLE 4.12 Percentage Distribution of Travel Time to the Market by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Time to Market	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
≤ 45 minutes	74	26	40
46 minutes to > 2 hours	<u>33</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>60</u>
Total Sample	47	53	100

P= 0.0001

Members and nonmembers also differed in the manner in which they transported goods to market. More nonmembers (58%) walked and carried produce on their heads than members (42%).

TABLE 4.13 Percentage Distribution of Mode of Transport to Market by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Mode of Transport	Members	Nonmembers	Total Sample
Head	42	58	81
Animal and <u>Tap Tap</u>	67	33	19
Total Sample	47	53	100

P 0.0544

There was a difference in the use of labour in gardens by members and nonmembers. For the processes of cultivation and planting, 78% of the nonmember sample use all family labour while only 22% of the member sample do likewise. Members appear to make up the difference by using labour outside the family (87%). Only 13% of the nonmembers use labour outside the family for these tasks. The member sample uses slightly more male family labour than the nonmember sample and uses this type of labour predominantly while nonmembers are most inclined to use all family labour.

As for the harvest, again nonmembers rely more heavily on all family labour (76%) than do members (47%). Use of **labour** outside the family has decreased, but 80% members use labour outside the family compared to 20% nonmembers.

TABLE 4.14 Percentage Distribution of Type of Labour Used for Primary Agricultural Tasks by Cooperative Members and Nonmembers

Cultivate Plant	Member	Non Member	Total Sample	Harvest	Member	Non Member	Total Sample
Family (M)	58	42	49	Family (M)	63	37	27
Family (M/F/C)	22	78	36	Family (M/F/C)	37	63	61
Hired Labour	87	13	15	Hired Labour	80	20	12
Total Sample	49	51	100		49	51	100

P=0.0001

P=0.0130

Most farmers agreed that the amount of labour hired per season varied greatly depending on the crop, weather, season, and available funds. However, very general replies led to the construction of a body of information which indicated that:

- a) Members use slightly more male labour days than nonmembers (5817-5329=488).
- b) Members use close to twice as many female labour days as nonmembers (1285 compared to 695).
- c) Ninety-eight percent of all nonmembers take part in cooperative labour parties compared to 82% of the members (p=0.0063). Nonmembers hold more cooperative labour parties yearly than members (337-276=61) (P=0.0091).

All members interviewed (with the exception of one) planned to either increase or begin cocoa production. Twenty percent of the nonmember sample, on the other hand, showed no interest in cocoa expansion.

Of those intending to expand this crop, 27% of the nonmembers planned to use the same garden compared to 21% of the members. Conversely, 19% of the member sample would plant on new land compared to 7% of the nonmember sample.

Members were more interested in projects such as fruit conservation, and coffee cultivating and marketing, while nonmembers felt road construction was necessary. Members and nonmembers equally credited foreign agencies and members with project initiation. Of those who stated that Cooperative leadership (president) had this power, however, 70% were members and 30% were nonmembers.

Summary Interpretation of Results

In many ways, Grande Rivière du Nord is representative of all rural Haiti. For example, the area is densely populated and residents are basically immobile. Soil erosion, while not rampant in this area, was a serious problem in mountain regions. Many families were not able to produce enough on the home farm to feed the residents at subsistence level. Thus, they engaged in a variety of tasks in order to gain additional income to supplement their caloric intake.

As an exception, Grande Rivière du Nord is one of the more fertile agricultural zones in Haiti. It is a major cocoa-producing area, and landholdings are slightly higher than the national average. A reasonably good highway links this area to Cap Haitien and from there to Port-au-Prince in the south.

The analysis of statistically significant variables led to the conclusion that Cooperative members have more material wealth

than nonmembers. The differences between the two groups are highlighted in the **following** results. Members have more access to land and are more often landowners rather than renters or sharecroppers. They are more able to cultivate high risk cash crops and are less involved in the cultivation and sale of basic, low-risk subsistence crops such as corn. More members utilize animals and/or mechanical means to get to market rather than walking. Members are better able to hire labour and partake less frequently in cooperative labour parties. Finally, members are more mobile.

The results reported in this chapter will be used to evaluate the MEDA cocoa project against its own proposed objectives and to assess the project in its initial stages against general development goals as outlined in the introduction.

Chapter Five

REALIZATION OF MEDA'S OBJECTIVES

A review of the MEDA cocoa project within the context of its specified goals reveals its strengths and weaknesses.

Seedstock was provided first by the Dominican Republic Department of Agriculture, and thereafter by the Grand Pre clonal garden in northern Haiti. The Dominican seed was of proven quality, but the Grand Pre seed, while a hybrid, was not guaranteed to be the best alternative available. Assessment of the seedstock will only be possible in the long-term when trees are mature. At this point the savings incurred by the use of local seed will have to be weighed against the long-term productivity difference of the cocoa trees planted in Year I and Year II.

The central nursery, while very successful in its production of seedlings, was replaced by six decentralized nurseries to facilitate the process of transplanting to members' fields. The quantity of seedlings produced in this manner decreased substantially (one-quarter) from Year I to Year II at the time when demand for seedlings had increased.¹ Temporary shortages resulted, but transplants did have a greater survival rate (MEDA, Report June 17-23 3).

1. Factors responsible for this decrease were: uneven bag size, use of local seed, absence of wind protection, and less than adequate shade cover.

Another benefit was that technical training and experience were diffused to several technicians maintaining gardens rather than one or two men at the central nursery.

Plans for the establishment and maintenance of a clonal garden were set aside because of technical complexity, cost, and brief life of the project. It was estimated that it would take two years to secure and prepare a suitable site, planting would take place in the third year, seeds would be available by the sixth year, and results from the outplanting would not be available until the ninth year. However, as the Grand Pre and other local gardens are nearing the end of their productive life, small farmers might have problems procuring replacement seed stock in the future. If this becomes the case, it is conceivable that many will revert to using their own inferior seed rather than pay for imported seed of higher quality.

Project farmers had ample opportunity to avail themselves of the training, advisory services, and material inputs provided by the Cooperative. Initiation seminars were held for new members, and additional seminars in pruning, fertilization, and rat control were provided for all members. Extension workers were very accessible to farmers as each agent lived in the section rurale he serviced. Relatively uncomplicated production techniques were applied to approximately 150 hectares belonging to project farmers² (MEDA, COCOA iv).

2. These procedures included removal of trees and vines of no economic value, pruning, improved harvesting methods, proper land preparation, and replanting with new hybrid varieties.

The new techniques were not always fruitful, because the intervention of extension workers was occasionally inappropriate. (On-site input from Project Agronomist Dolce and MEDA advisors was minimal.) Pruning, furthermore, would only increase yields for a maximum of two years on old trees.

Extension workers claimed that they ended up doing much of the pruning work rather than training farmers to do the work themselves. As a remedy they suggested more educational sessions and/or "some form of recognition to area farmers achieving cocoa production goals . . . to stimulate and reinforce additional farmer participation" (MEDA, Report July 26, 1984 4). No follow-up on this recommendation is documented.

While significant, the actual importance at the farm level of the creation of a cocoa production manual written in Créole is questionable when viewed in the context of a basically illiterate population.

Theoretically, the training, advisory services, and material inputs should result in increased yields which would be measurable. However, MEDA was not able to collect baseline data to provide comparative figures for future assessments. MEDA found that "collection of meaningful production data in Creole garden conditions is difficult. . . . Useful data could be collected only by lengthy (and costly) studies" (MEDA, COCOA 8-9). Nonetheless, as this information is essential to the measurement of project input effectiveness, perhaps a method should have been

devised to measure improvements in yields (at the very least on the 150 hectares mentioned).

Fermentation procedures, while not complex, were discontinued for several reasons. Firstly, HFC advised that large fixed volume was required for uniform fermentation. It would take a few years for regular supplies to become established. Secondly, the scale required suggested that regional not local fermentaries were best suited for the task. Location for such fermentaries could only be determined once volumes from different areas were ascertained. Thirdly, more research and the development of the technical capacity to handle this aspect of the project were required. Finally, the economics of the procedure had to be re-evaluated as farmers had to deliver wet heavy pods to the Cooperative (difficult to impossible when many walk to market) or the Cooperative needed a collection service (very expensive). Yet the price for fermented cocoa was only five to seven cents (U.S.) per dry pound more than for unfermented cocoa. The decision to eliminate this process may have been hasty nonetheless, as the problems posed were not insurmountable and this was an important aspect of the project. Greater returns to cocoa farmers are still possible by this procedure.

Cooperative leaders were given training in administrative functions and record keeping. This job was facilitated by the fact that Cooperative JBC leaders were literate and accustomed to using numbers.³ Unfortunately, this type of training was not

3. Several were former school principals and/or teachers, one was a businessman, one a former congressman, and one a speculator.

offered to the general membership, thus this input may be lost if these men leave the area.

Credit was extended to some project farmers, but differential access to this source created discord among members. Loans were made to 135 members in total (seven individuals and 13 credit groups--société agricoles de crédit). As there was no follow-up on this program there was no guarantee that credit went to cocoa or even to agriculture. Credit linked to technological change has not produced substantial results in the past. Thus, it would be interesting to examine the impact on farm production of these loans.

Project extension took place as planned in five other cocoa producing areas of Haiti. The benefits of this were increased volume for shipment and a dispersion of monetary gains to more small farmers in the country. Unfortunately, the physical capacities of MEDA personnel were stretched to the limit. Hence the expansion was costly to both the model project in Grande Rivière du Nord, where problems were not being resolved, and to cooperative development generally. Furthermore, additional infrastructure and hired personnel were now necessary. Thus the relatively simple project became more complex, and it may be more difficult to manage after MEDA's departure.

Work done in cooperative development has been minimal. The Cooperative JBC was already recognized and licensed to operate in Haiti before MEDA's arrival. Other new cooperatives required and received assistance from MEDA in drafting statutes and completing procedures for recognition as cooperatives.

Initially, MEDA assumed that the NGOs contacted would provide, or had already provided, the function of forming and developing the cooperatives. However, when this service was not provided by other NGOs, MEDA built cooperatives from the top down with little community support and no educational input regarding cooperative principles. Undeniably, this was the weakest aspect of the project, particularly as project success depends on the feasibility of the cooperatives.

Operations of the Cooperative JBC were primarily economic. The Cooperative collected small quantities of cocoa from small farmers, and processed, stored, bagged, and exported this cocoa in bulk. Accurate records were kept, and dividend and interest payments were equitably distributed. The Cooperative supplied member farmers with technical services, material inputs, and educational seminars pertaining to cocoa. General business meetings held each Sunday informed members of Cooperative activities, but decision-making votes were never taken.

The council of the Cooperative JBC was composed of former leaders of the fruit-canning cooperative. Initially they agreed to revitalize the old cooperative, yet despite the change of venue and membership, new elections for leaders were never held. Most council members were not cocoa growers; some were not farmers. The president of the Cooperative JBC viewed himself as answerable to MEDA rather than the general membership of the Cooperative. These feelings must have been reinforced by his appointment to the position of MEDA regional coordinator mid-way in the project.

Recognizing the essential weakness of this aspect of the program, MEDA was prepared to concentrate greater efforts to fundamental cooperative development in Phase II (1985-89).

Theoretically, cooperatives provide for equitable political power and material distribution. As previously mentioned, however, cooperatives that are merely ideological tools have failed in Haiti. If MEDA wants to continue using the cooperative institution as a vehicle for development, the association must devote itself to the arduous task of teaching and promoting cooperative principles among project members. Or, MEDA can choose another solution, such as small corporations, for the cocoa project.

While not successful in every proposed goal, the cocoa project in Grande Rivière du Nord did produce economic benefits to the community. Project farmers received a greater share of the world price--from 27% to 35% (estimated) at project start to 60% during the project. MEDA advisors have suggested that as long as the Cooperative continues to operate efficiently and the world price is at least \$1.00 per pound, this figure is maintainable (MEDA, COCOA 9).⁴ Indeed, the price paid to all cocoa producers in the area increased in excess of world price increases when the monopsony of the speculators was broken by the Cooperative. Thus

⁴. During the project, price per pound ranged from \$0.91 (U.S.) to \$1.17 but averaged \$1.00 per pound for the life of the project.

all small farmers benefitted from higher cocoa prices. Project farmers also received dividend payments and interest on share capital. Occasionally the dividend payments were timed to coincide with periods of financial need (in fall when school started) and in this way became a source of "forced savings". For some, access to BCA loans increased investment opportunity; for others work at the Cooperative Center provided additional income. Extension services (pruning, seedlings, rat poison etc.) increased production potential for farmers using these inputs. The Cooperative received income for education, reserve, and capitalization. An average of six cents per pound was set aside from each shipment for this purpose.

Theoretically, the project also addressed the issue of soil erosion and cultivation of other crops in the creole gardens. While it would be extremely difficult to grow cocoa trees where soil erosion was at its worst (in the mountains where there is no shade or water), other areas would definitely benefit from these trees.

MEDA estimated that the primary beneficiaries of the project were the 1,400 members of the cooperatives and their families (6,500 people) with spin-off effects to 40,000 others in the communities (MEDA, COCOA 15). While the number benefitting directly is perhaps too low, the multiplier is probably overly optimistic. Nonetheless, the project did have a positive economic effect on many Haitians in these communities.

There were also negative effects from the project. The profits which were realized through the Cooperative project were in large part due to the elimination of various layers of middlemen who

traditionally operate between the producers and exporters. The lost income to these Haitians undoubtedly affected their families (and others) adversely. Renters and sharecroppers may also have been victimized by the project if land values escalated with cocoa prices. Higher rents and expropriation may have resulted. There is no documentation concerning this issue.

The manageable size, uncomplicated technology, and basic structures of the cocoa project in its first stages favoured its continuation after MEDA's departure. However, after the country-wide expansion, chances for longevity decreased. Administrative capacity was stretched, and "grass roots" development faded. Decision making became completely centralized in Port-au-Prince, and adequate communication from field to office was never developed. Thus, as problems arose, they were not resolved. More trained, salaried administrative personnel were now required as well as additional infrastructure. Project expenses escalated. How would the project proceed once subsidies, grants, and MEDA were removed? Suggestions such as levies on dry cocoa, volunteer labour, cooperative associations, somehow did not seem adequate.

Finally, the higher the profile of the project, the greater the chances of government interference. The government controls export permits for cocoa, licences to operate, and levying of taxes. A dramatic increase in the price of any of these will affect the project negatively.

Goals Versus Statistically Significant Results

The baseline survey, while only one part of a full evaluation procedure, brought to light a contradiction in MEDA's goals. MEDA claimed to be "committed to the establishment of . . . enterprises

that will benefit the neediest segments of the population" (MEDA, COCOA 33). The cocoa project in Grande Rivière du Nord, on the contrary, attracted farmers who had more material wealth than nonmembers. Thus, MEDA's attempts to promote large-scale redistribution of income was not entirely successful. Indeed, some local spéculateurs for example, rather than being eliminated from the cocoa scene, have profited from the Cooperative by becoming members.

At best, the poor farmers were touched by positive "spread effects". For example, the breaking of the monopsony position traditionally held by spéculateurs in the marketing of cocoa allowed for a greater share of the world price for all producers in this area. Possibly the information regarding the cultivation of cocoa disseminated throughout the area by word-of-mouth. Additional wage labour may have resulted from increased cocoa yields in members' fields. At worst, the wealth gap widened, and some small farmers were forced from parcels of land which were turned over to cocoa production.

Conclusion

While the assessment of the MEDA cocoa project against its own project goals may appear harsh, in fact the project had much to recommend it.

The MEDA project neither promoted radical changes in gardens, nor did it encourage a major shift to the production of cocoa. Project advisors were sensitive to the fragile material existence of many small farmers as well as to farmer resistance to projects which implement dramatic changes.

Investment was in individuals rather than infrastructure.⁵

Project emphasis was placed on the education, training, and technical assistance of participants as well as the provision of access to the necessary linkages for small farmers in the marketing of cocoa.

Once in motion, the project was designed so as not to fuel recurrent cost problems. Project advisors estimated that approximately \$0.03 per dry pound would cover the costs of the Cooperative Center operations (MEDA, COCOA 13).

Corrective measures were applied to the long-standing problems in the agricultural system such as soil erosion, traditionally poor seed and plant selection, and inferior cultivation practices. The Cooperative provided adequate processing and storage facilities for members' cocoa beans, and tools for pruning. Cocoa is a labour intensive crop, thus it is appropriate in an agricultural system where labour is used extensively and capital hardly at all.

The factors which have helped to contribute to Haiti's current state of underdevelopment were addressed. Firstly, extreme care was taken to strike a delicate balance between assistance and interference. The goal was to provide autonomy to the Cooperative as soon as possible. Secondly, MEDA had skilled, qualified, and concerned personnel trained in the development process to provide constructive leadership to the participants. Thirdly, the project offered remedial inputs and information for the growing

5. Capital investment was limited to scales, fermentation boxes, drying and storage facilities, and materials for accurate record keeping.

problem of Haiti's physical insufficiencies.

Thus, numerous worthy goals were achieved in the brief project period, often under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. Unfortunately, the need for MEDA project personnel to be accountable to donor agencies whose mandate comes from citizens whose political, economic, and cultural values are different, may have created pressures to accomplish more than was necessary or possible given the time and human constraint.

The final chapter provides an assessment of the project against general development goals and offers some suggestions for the future of the project.

Chapter Six

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter concludes the thesis by reviewing the MEDA project in the context of the definition of development as outlined in the introduction. General observations and the variables which served as proxy measures for economic development were used for this assessment. As MEDA was unable to accomplish all development objectives in Phase I, some suggestions are offered for Phase II of the project. In addition, a summary of the baseline data is provided, and the methodology is reconsidered for future research and projects in Haiti.

Realization of General Development Objectives

Development is an evolutionary process which enables individuals or groups to think and act creatively in order to control those aspects of their political and economic lives which are important to them.

By design, the MEDA cocoa project addressed the development process fully. The Cooperative could provide participants with an opportunity to acquire and use the skills which would result in increased political and economic power. In practice, however, the project failed to provide political control to project participants. The Cooperative functioned principally through top-down control by MEDA and the local elite endorsed by MEDA. Members neither chose the project nor did they partake in the decision-making processes of the Cooperative once program activities began. Under these circumstances, there is little

chance that the Cooperative will become autonomous.

The baseline survey avoided political issues generally (for reasons specified in the introduction). However, questions regarding the role of the Cooperative revealed that members attended meetings enthusiastically. Seventy percent of member respondents attended meetings--of these 60% went regularly. Only 23% never attended. Therefore, one cannot claim that members were not interested or anxious to participate in the activities of the Cooperative.

As for economic development, the Cooperative project demonstrated that by thinking and acting creatively small farmers could gain more control over the production and marketing of cash crops. Members acquired direct knowledge about international markets, more sophisticated marketing procedures, and improved farming techniques. MEDA did not encourage a shift to cash-crop cultivation but focused on improving the quality of cocoa production and marketing procedures, so that with little risk farmers would see greater returns for their labour. These gains were particularly important because one-half to two-thirds of survey respondents were unable to grow enough food in their gardens to feed the residents of the home at subsistence level. Additional income was required to purchase food at the market. Traditionally, cocoa and other cash crops provided some of this income. Indeed, most farmers surveyed had some cocoa in their gardens. Income from cocoa could also be used for school fees. Thus, the project grew out of a need that already existed in the area.

Women, however, were largely excluded from this development

process. Despite survey results which indicated that the production and sale of cash crops is largely a female activity, only 25% of the membership was female. Women owned and managed their own fields; many were heads of households. Yet, there were no female extension workers, and women were not gainfully employed at the Cooperative. Survey results indicated that members were inclined to hire female labour. Thus, as the situation exists, women will benefit from the project only if member farmers increase their yields and hire more labour.

Along with the exclusion of women there was a failure to incorporate the poorer farmers into the project, some of whom wanted to join, but could not afford the Cooperative fees. The statistically significant results in chapter four demonstrated that members of the Cooperative had more material wealth than nonmembers. Members owned more land. They were more involved in the cultivation of tree crops and less inclined to grow and sell subsistence crops. On the one hand, member farmers hired more labour than nonmember farmers. Alternatively, they participated less in cooperative labour parties. Members were more mobile and had more access to animal or mechanical transportation than nonmembers. In the Haitian setting these are indicators of material wealth and as such they reflect economic power, or, a measure of control over one's economic life. Thus, using the definition of development outlined in the thesis one can conclude that the project, upon initiation, clearly appealed to those community members who were relatively more developed. Furthermore, if the project continues to relate primarily to this sub-group, and if the project is successful in promoting development, the

wealth gap among residents in this area will increase.

Conceptually, the MEDA cocoa project is a vehicle by which most small farmers in the general area of Grande Rivière du Nord could gain more control over their economic and political lives. In actuality however, the project did not fully achieve these goals. The potential remains for the realization of these development objectives in Phase II of the project (1985-89).

Future Project Plans

MEDA has stated its intention to concentrate more on cooperative development in Phase II. This organization may also want to address certain other problematic issues which have surfaced in the initial project assessment.

Firstly, there are the distributional aspects of the project. These include a widening of the wealth gap and possible redistribution of land which could result in an increase in the landless poor. It does not have to be the case that the beneficiaries of the cocoa project are the relatively more developed community members. Those who would like to participate could be given the opportunity to do so. For example, these individuals could exchange labour for cooperative shares. Dividends could be credited to these farmers before shares have been paid in full thus becoming share capital.

Secondly, women have been excluded from work opportunities and positions of authority in the Cooperative. As the project is appealing more to males, women may lose their traditional

control of the income derived from the production and sale of cocoa. MEDA may want to encourage more female participation in this development program.

Thirdly, to the present, MEDA advisors have not encouraged major overhauls in the traditional system. This is to their credit. However, as the project becomes more firmly entrenched in the community, and farmers become more motivated by the financial gains, careful thought will have to be given to the advantages and disadvantages of the replacement of food crops by cash crops in present gardens.

Finally, MEDA may want to outline and begin to implement those activities which are necessary for the cooperatives to achieve autonomy. If, after MEDA's withdrawal, the cooperatives are not able to function (ceteris paribus) then project farmers may be worse off than at project initiation as income expectations will have changed.

Summary of the Baseline Data

The baseline data collected in the general area of Grande Rivière du Nord provided information concerning the lives of small farmers in these communities which was valuable not only for use in the MEDA project assessment but also for future projects in this part of Haiti. Furthermore, using these data, one could now repeat the survey and measure project impact. A review of some of the facts gathered relating to cocoa production and the Cooperative demonstrate how a relatively simple survey can contribute to project assessment.

Baseline results showed that the project, although externally imposed on the community, fulfilled a need and coincided with an interest which already existed in the community. As well, the area was well suited for this venture. The chosen territory had a relatively stable farming population in which 80% of the respondents lived in the same rural section for more than a decade. Landholdings were slightly higher than the national average, and 67% of farmers surveyed were landowners, while another 20% were combination owner/renters. Most cultivated cocoa and of these three-quarters had grown cocoa for more than ten years. Farmers were very interested in increasing cocoa production to supplement family income. Indeed, approximately one-third planned to obtain more land for this purpose.

Survey data also revealed potentially contentious issues. For example, promotion of a cash crop instead of subsistence crops was questionable when two-thirds of small farmers surveyed claimed to be unable to produce enough food on the home farm to feed the family at subsistence level. Furthermore, the data indicated that many farmers who planned to increase cocoa production intended to plant more in gardens already in full production. Indeed, two-thirds of these farmers disclosed that they would replace plantains with cocoa. Unlike cocoa, plantains serve a dual purpose in that they are important both as a subsistence and a cash crop, and are an integral part of the Haitian diet. Consequently, encouraging a major switch to cocoa production is dubious under these circumstances.

The question of the role of women in the development project came to the forefront when data showed that women controlled the

production and sale of cash crops in more than 75% of all households surveyed. Some women owned and managed their own fields, many women were heads of households. Clearly women have a major function in a cash-crop project.

The project was designed to address the problem of soil erosion. Yet, it was discovered that survey respondents were evenly dispersed on the plains, on the lower part of mountains, and higher in the mountains. While the area was generally one of the more fertile parts of Haiti, the gardens higher in the mountains were often poor due to soil erosion and lack of shade and/or water. Cocoa could not be planted in these areas. Therefore, as a reforestation program, the cocoa project was limited from the start.

Finally, the baseline data indicated that at the onset, the project attracted a subset of small farmers in this area who had relatively more material wealth. Proxy measures for material wealth which were used to come to this conclusion were, as outlined in the introduction: landownership, cultivation of tree crops rather than subsistence crops, ability to hire labour and participate less in cooperative labour parties, mobility, and access to mechanical and/or animal transportation as opposed to walking. It is conceivable that if no action is taken to counter this trend, the project will result in a widening of the wealth gap among community residents and may or may not result in land redistribution in favour of wealthier farmers.

Comments on the Questionnaire and Methodology

The survey results were helpful in the project assessment, and it was evident that even more information could be gathered.

For example, the questionnaire could include indirect questions concerning the formal education of respondents as well as their present/past affiliation with other projects, groups, cooperatives, and information sources. More specific data regarding the ownership of tools, machinery, donkeys, horses, cattle, goats, chickens, cats, and dogs would be serviceable. As for landholdings, a more comprehensive report on number of gardens, distance apart, size, tenure, type of production on each, distance from the nearest water source, distance from public transport service, use of fertilizers and insecticides, future plans for all crops, and, yields of cocoa measured in bags or baskets per season would assist in future assessments or project implementations. However, quantifiable information is not generally recorded in the rural areas, thus answers to some of these questions may not be very accurate. While it would be helpful to gain more knowledge about the working habits and consumption patterns of household members (distribution of labour hours per week, additional sources of income, commodities utilized on home farm), these data are difficult to collect as it is considered indiscreet to ask questions about income and expenditures. The request for more factual information may alienate the respondents. As it stands, the original survey questionnaire provides a base upon which other questionnaires can be designed in future. Furthermore, the survey procedure can now be repeated at the project's completion, and differences in the results will help measure project impact on the community in the general area of Grande Rivière du Nord.

Two principal challenges remain for others who are interested in repeating this survey procedure in Haiti. The first concerns

the difficulty of obtaining census or other relevant data so that a random sample of farmers can be chosen. Possibly, specialists in the various social sciences, who are familiar with this country, could devise a solution which would satisfy the general requirements for such samples. The second challenge is the demanding terrain of the Haitian countryside as this methodology requires that respondents be interviewed primarily at their huts.

The data collected were useful for the assessment of the cocoa project in Grande Rivière du Nord, and are a contribution to the existing knowledge of rural Haiti.

Epilogue

Dèyè mòn gè mòn--beyond the mountains more mountains--is an old Haitian proverb. In the context of present-day Haiti, it symbolizes the numerous constraints which must be overcome so that Haitians can gain control over those aspects of their political and economic lives of importance to them. This will be a very slow process. If the process is initiated externally, time must be allowed for the participants to internalize the new concepts and to become involved in their own development or development as defined will not occur.

As the Haitians encountered during the course of this survey were resilient, resourceful, full of humour, and hardworking, NGO projects, properly designed and implemented, could assist these people in their attempts to confront these barriers.

Appendix A

Grande Rivière du Nord
Summer Survey 1983

I.D.# _____

Location: Section Rurale _____
Habitation _____

Interviewer:

The purpose of this survey is to collect some information about the day-to-day activities of the farmers in this area. The activities we are interested in are those which pertain to the cultivation of crops. For example, we will ask questions about which crops are being grown, methods of cultivation, and purpose of these crops. We are particularly interested in the crop "cocoa", thus will ask questions about this crop and about the Cooperative Jean Baptiste Chavannes which is presently concerned with the processing and marketing of this crop.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1) Normally, how many people stay here together? _____

Do you mind if we record the names of these people? yes no

2) (if the respondent replies no to the above question) What is your name please? What is your position in the family?

3) May we have the names of the other people who normally stay here together? We would also like to record their sex and age.

[education level was deleted]

NAME	SEX	AGE
Respondent		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

1) How long has your family (ancestors and present family) been living in this area?

a) 1-5 years b) 6-10 years c) more than 10 years

Interviewer: These questions are about your garden.

[additional questions 2-4]

2) How many carreaux?

3) Where is it located? a) lowland b) lower part of the mountain
c) high in the mountain

4) What is your relation to the land you cultivate?

a) owner b) renter c) sharecropper (or combinations)

5) What crops are you growing this season? (June/July/August)

6) During the fall what crops do you grow? (September/October/November)

7) During the winter what crops do you grow? (December/January/February)

8) During the spring what crops do you grow? (March/April/May)

9) What are your most important crops for food?

10) Were these your main food crops five years ago? (or use an event to indicate this length of time) yes no

[combine]

11) (if no) What were your most important food crops?

12) Do you sell any crops? yes no

13) (if yes) Which provide the most income?

14) Were these your main cash crops five years ago? (or use an event to indicate this length of time) yes no

[combine]

15) (if no) What were your most important cash crops?

16) Do you grow cocoa? yes no

If yes ask questions 17-21

17) How long have you been growing cocoa?

a) less than one year b) 1-3 years c) 4-10 years d) 10 years

18) Have you recently expanded your production? yes no

19) (if yes) Why?

- a) price increase for cocoa
- b) price decrease for other crops
- c) land acquisition
- d) land loss
- e) technical problems
- f) influence of the Cooperative
- g) others _____

20) Have you reduced your production of cocoa or stopped growing it? yes no

21) (if yes) Why?

a) price decrease for cocoa

b) price increase for other crops

c) land loss

d) technical problems

e) plants died)

f) trees died)

[additional information]

g) other

22) (if respondent does not grow cocoa) Have you ever considered growing cocoa? yes no

23) (if yes) Why did you decide not to grow this crop?

a) insufficient land

b) lack of credit

c) land was unsuitable

d) infrastructure problems

e) lack of seedlings

f) others _____

24) Who decides which food crops are to be planted each year? M F BOTH

25) Who decides which cash crops are to be planted each year? M F BOTH

[note: These crops may overlap. This question was asked to ascertain who controls the production of cash crops.]

MARKET FUNCTION

- 1) Do you produce enough food on the farm for the people who normally eat here? yes no
- 2) What do you do if you have a surplus?
 - a) sell at the market
 - b) sell to a speculator
 - c) sell privately on the farm
 - d) trade privately
 - e) trade at the market
 - f) others _____
- 3) How do you obtain your food if you do not grow enough to subsist on?
 - a) buy at the market
 - b) buy from a food peddler
 - c) buy privately from other farmers
 - d) trade privately
 - e) trade at the market
 - f) others _____
- 4) What is the distance to the market? [added - closest to furthest]

- 5) How long does it take to travel to each? [closest to furthest]

- 6) How is produce taken to the market
 - a) head
 - b) animal
 - c) truck
 - d) tap tap (privately owned public transport trucks)
 - e) others _____

If cocoa is a cash crop ask the following questions

7) After the last cocoa harvest, how was your cocoa sold?

- a) at the market
- b) to the speculator
- c) to the Cooperative JBC
- d) others _____

8) (if sold to a speculator) Did the speculator come to the

home or did the transaction take place at the market? [additional question]

9) (if cocoa is taken to the Cooperative) How is your cocoa taken to the Cooperative?

- a) head
- b) animal
- c) truck
- d) tap tap
- e) others _____

10) (if the person sells to the speculator) What was the payment arrangement with the speculator?

- a) immediate cash
- b) payment in the future
- c) advances
- d) others _____

11) When crops are sold, what do you use the **income** for? [deleted]

LABOUR UTILIZATION

Interviewer:

We are now discussing the home farm only. Thankyou for your patience thusfar. We will proceed as quickly as possible through this next section.

[A table which focused on the days in the year that specific garden tasks were performed for the two most important food crops and the two most important cash crops was deleted. The table was too complex.]

- 1) Who in the family unit prepares the soil? M F Children
- 2) Who in the family unit plants? M F Children
- 3) Who in the family unit weeds? M F Children
- 4) Who in the family unit harvests? M F Children
- 5) Do you pay people who are not in the family unit to work in
the garden for you? yes no

(if) yes then ask questions 6-12)

- 6) How many men do you hire? _____
- 7) How many days per man per season? _____
- 8) How many women do you hire _____
- 9) How many days per women per season? _____
- 10) How many children do you hire? _____
- 11) How many days per child per season _____

[These responses have to be viewed as very general approximations because they depended on many variables which constantly changed such as crop, season, weather cash flow, and so on.]

[Six questions were deleted here. These were: What are the men paid? Does this amount change by the crop? Repeat for women and children. The following two questions (12-13) were inserted in their place.]

- 12) Do men/women/children receive equal pay? yes no
 - 13) (if no) How is the pay stratified? _____
 - 14) Is there any cooperative labour (combite) practised here? yes no
- If yes ask questions 15-17

15) Are the workers male? female? children?

- 16) How many labourers participate in the combite?
- 17) How many times a year do you hold a combite?

} [additional questions]

1) Of the people who normally stay here, do any work for wages on
someone else's farm? yes no

a) 29 or less b) 30-99 c) 100-199 d) 200 or more

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

a) all the time b) most of the time c) some of the time d) never

8) Are there other things you would like to see the Cooperative doing? yes no

9

9) (if yes) List. _____

10) Who would decide to start this project?

a) Cooperative leadership b) government c) foreign agencies

d) members e) local government f) others _____

COCOA PRODUCTION IN FUTURE

1) Do you plan to expand your cocoa production? yes no

If yes ask questions 2-6

2) How do you plan to do this?

a) plant more cocoa on new land

b) replace old stands

c) replace existing food crops

d) replace existing cash crops

3) (if food crops are replaced) Which food crops? _____

4) (if cash crops are replaced) Which cash crops? _____

5) Where would you increase production?

a) lowland b) lower part of the mountain c) higher in the mountain

6) Why do you want to plant more cocoa

a) less labour

b) more income

c) less stealing

d) market prices

e) Cooperative promotion

f) Others _____

Interviewer:

Thank respondent for the time and effort in assisting with
this questionnaire.

CROPS UNDER CULTIVATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

CORN

BEANS

MANIOC

PEANUTS

SWEET POTATOES

BANANAS

PLANTAINS

SQUASH

YAMS

TARO

BREADFRUIT

RICE

MILLET

MANGO

PAPAYA

AVOCADO

FRUITS

SPICES

COFFEE

COCOA

SUGAR CANE

SISAL

COTTON

ESSENTIAL OILS

TOBACCO

Appendix B

CRÉOLE WORDS

arrondissement	subdivision of a departement
chêf de section	rural administrator or sheriff
combite	cooperative labour party
commune	subdivision of an arrondissement
département	province
doktè-fey	herbalist
encadreur locaux	extension workers
habitant	a farmer
habitation	a farm
houngan	Vodoun priest
machète	long, all-purpose work knife
Madam Sara	female wholesale dealer
plaçage	system of polygamy practiced by some Haitians
revendeuse	female trader---buys wholesale and sells retail
ristourne	dividend
section rurale	subdivision of a commune
société	agricultural work group
société agricoles de credit	agricultural credit group
spéculateur	middleman
tap tap	privately owned public transport trucks

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