

July 25, 1963

**Work Summary for Training Malinese Agricultural
Technical Personnel related to Tea**

Citation:

"Work Summary for Training Malinese Agricultural Technical Personnel related to Tea",
July 25, 1963, Wilson Center Digital Archive, PRC FMA 108-00888-04. Obtained by Gregg
Brazinsky and translated by Marian Rosenberg.
<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/121661>

Summary:

A report on Chinese training of Malian experts in the tea industry.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from MacArthur Foundation

Original Language:

Chinese

Contents:

Translation - English

Work Summary for Training Malinese [Agricultural] Technical Personnel [Related to] Tea

1. Policy Guidelines [for] Training [Course]:

In order to promote a friendly relationship between the two countries of China and Mali and to further develop economic and technological cooperation between both countries; in accordance with the Communist Party of China's overall foreign policy and foreign aid spirit, we [shall] resolutely implement the Sino-Malinese economic and technological cooperation agreement and Sino-Malinese Economic and Technological Cooperation Protocol by sending Chinese technical experts and technicians to Mali [for the purpose of] training Malinese technicians and for [overseeing] skilled work.

According to Mali's requirements and the Embassy [of the People's Republic of China in Mali]'s Party Committee instructions [this project is] in order to help Mali develop an agricultural economy and benefit the development of our technical aid [programs]. The aforementioned in] combination with the actual situation and possible [situations is why we have] organized [a] technical personnel training class. [This class will] train a group of Malinese in new technological skills which are extremely important for [helping] Mali have independent economic development.

2. Training Work Overview

The [technical] training [course] for Malinese tea personnel was commissioned by the Development Department for [helping move development] in the Greater Sikasso Region forward. The Development Bureau's Director of New Crops, the Regional Director, the Agricultural Skills Consultant, the Director of the Sikasso Provincial Agriculture Department and our experts formed a leading group [working together] on specific teaching [goals] and daily work. According to Mali's existing tea cultivation situation and objective conditions, teaching content [will] mainly focus on tea cultivation techniques and field management. The combined [total content of the course] on tea growing will be eight parts. So as to [properly] study critical content, [this will] include establishing new tea fields and management of existing tea fields. [In this way] each student will be able to become familiar with the key information.

This group of students [has been arranged by] the Ministry of Rural Development. [All of the students] coming to study [are from areas which are] preparing to develop tea [as a] new crop such as Sikasso and Pu-ni-ba-he-yi-da [sic]. Students have different backgrounds and different degrees [of pre-existing skills]. Some of them were agricultural technicians. Some of them were previously unemployed. Some of them are educated rural youth from villages and plantations. Because [they] come from many varied backgrounds [and have] differing levels of agricultural knowledge and French language skills, our teaching task [will be made] more difficult.

According to the characteristics of the students, our teaching method is to adopt a combination of theory and practice. A method of combining classroom lectures and practice [will be in effect]. Every aspect of tea leaf cultivation will be covered from the basics of agricultural knowledge [on up]. [Students will progress from the] shallow to the deep. [Their program will be] part lecture, part hands-on work, part study combining theory with practice so as to improve the students' rational knowledge and understanding [of the subject matter].

According to the original schedule, training courses were planned to take between six weeks and two months. As tea is a new crop in Mali, students come from a complicated variety of backgrounds with varying degrees of education, students progress has been slower [than anticipated]. In order to make sure that students

deeply understand tea production skills, [the new plan is for] training to take place for a total of five months from September 12, 1962 through to February 15, 1963.

3. Results of Training Work

The results of our training class have been remarkable. Not only [have we] promoted friendship between the two countries of China and Mali and promoted progress in [our work], but [we have also] achieved great victories in the struggle against imperialism and revisionism.

1. Political Implications: [by] teaching the Malinese technicians production skills we have had a great influence on political thought [and] given the Malinese people and government a deep impression. They deeply appreciate our sincerity. [They are grateful] that we selflessly teach them skills for developing their national economy. In the past, the French never taught them skills and technology. As the Director of New Crop Development said: "China's experts have busied themselves with a hundred tasks, [they] work tirelessly to teach us skills and develop our own skills. Our current mastery of these skills is the result of China's experts." Many students have proudly expressed: "they are Chinese experts [coming to] Mali to train the first batch of [Malinese] tea technicians." It is like this, the colonialists monopolized Mali's agricultural skills for a long time [but they] never trained [local] staff [and] their technical staff was extremely lacking in skills.

2. [With regards to] the aspect of anti-imperialist revisionism, our work style, work methods, and consistent style of hard work and responsibility [have] given them a very deep impression. At the training class graduation, the New Crops Director said to the students: "[Because] you [have] received Chinese experts' help [therefore you] already understand many technical skills, [take these skills and] apply them to real world conditions [and you will perform] tea leaf work very well. The French say that us Malinese cannot grow tea, [but] you see that tea grows very well, if the French had come to help us with planting tea, they would not say the tea plants can grow, they would only say the seeds of the tea plants did not have a chance to germinate." The Trainees Sissokotode and Qusmane Konate told us: "in the past we learned techniques from Frenchmen. The Frenchmen did not give us skills but used us as unskilled laborers. The Frenchmen often held a whip. Whomsoever did not [do as they said] was lashed on [his] body. In our current studies [with the] Chinese experts [our teachers] are patient [about explaining] the technology to us. After a few months' time we have learned a lot of things." All of this clearly shows that they have a deep understanding of the [problems caused by] imperialism.

The Director of New Crops told us: "Our country has [hosted] many foreign experts, including experts from [other] socialist countries. It seems [to me] that [experts from] your country have the best performance." He also said: "Your [experts are not only] busy with work [but] also are [helping] train our technical staff. This kind of aid is not something which just any country would do."

3. Promoting the friendship between the two countries of China and Mali: Our working methods have not only given Malinese leaders and cadres at all levels a good impression of us but have also made the masses in Sikasso aware of how Chinese experts work hard [in] constructing [projects beneficial] to others. This expands our influence and enhances the friendship between us. Student Simeon SIDIHBE said: "During the study period the expert is always full of energy. [The expert] ceaselessly [strives] to inspire students. The experts and the students' [working relationship] is quite harmonious." [This time] we have trained 9 students. Of those [students] eight of them expressed: "from this study [period] we have gained a deeper understanding of China. [If] we have the chance we must go to China to study [further]." In everyday life we are very concerned about the students' education. The students also often come to our lodgings to visit and be friendly. This has been a step further in the

development of friendship between China and Mali.

4. Promoting the ongoing development of the previously [completed] work: because the trainees are serious about learning, [they] have [all] gotten good results. Of the nine students [in the class], four of them have had outstanding results, three have had good results, while two have had acceptable results. At the same time, in studying practical fieldwork skills, four people have completely mastered the skills of tea garden management and 46 people can perform generalized work. All of the theoretical knowledge [which] they [have] studied and the practical experimental [work, when combined] will allow them to smoothly promote the development of 15 hectares of tea [under cultivation] this year. Using practical and theoretical techniques [from our class], trainee Qusman Konate is managing a 70 hectare tea plantation [starting] from arable land just sown through to seedlings [and eventually harvest]. This tea plantation is growing quite well. Trainee Kamite Jemaila studied fixed pruning and interpolation techniques. In July [he] progressed to cutting and splicing over 12,000 seedlings which [satisfactorily] meet all requirements. The problem of future development of tea seedlings has been resolved. Trainees [who have gone to the] western province of Kita to work have planned and designed a new type of tea plantation. Their planned design is in line with the requirements. In early March we went to check the work accompanied by the Director of New Crops. At that time the Director of New Crops said, with great satisfactions, "this new tea plantation plan for cultivation is very good. This is all indicative of the [satisfactory] results of their study. Now we can cultivate tea on our own." All of this clearly shows that the training work not only reinforces professional work but also that the promotion of future development had a great start [with this].

4. Opportunities

1. Conscientiously Implement Foreign Economic Aid Policy and Embassy Committee [Directives]: "Strongly support the Government of Mali's elimination of imperialist economic forces, support them [in] developing their own technical skills, develop agricultural economy, promote friendship between China and Mali" are the guidelines by which we strive to conduct the training. During the training sessions, these guidelines ceaselessly serve as an indicator of our work and help the training proceed smoothly. [These guidelines] are essential to guaranteeing that basic victory is achieved.

2. Training work should [continue] according to Mali's actual current situation. For Mali [to successfully] develop tea as a new crop, students lack of knowledge in this area [must be remedied]. Trainees studying at the same time come from different backgrounds, have different cultural levels, [and] different levels of skills. According to these differences, it is not practical to ask them to learn too fast. Lectures should go from shallow to deep. Lectures [should be combined with] practical [hands-on] agricultural knowledge. Mixing lectures with practice and patiently helping them [develop] will cultivate their interest in learning, and their passionate interest in the profession.

3. In accordance with Mali's special features: should understand their difficulties, [should] assist in overcoming difficulties, [should help] create conditions. During our training period, [we] did not require the Malian side to provide any [technical] instruments or chemicals...At required pruning times there were no pruning shears and ordinary knives had to be substituted; without wall charts diagramming plants [the instructors had to] draw many pictures of [varying] conditions of tea plants to help the students understand [Because of] the spirit [which] we [displayed] in overcoming these difficulties, the Malian government officials are extremely satisfied.

4. During the entire teaching process, we implemented [a combination of] theory and

practice, classroom teaching and field operations were combined so that students do [both] theory and practice [allowing them] to fully understand every unit [being] lectured [upon]. Complete review and going to the fields for practical operations made students proficient and skilled in technical knowledge and practical operation of a unit before continuing on to learn another unit. Individual trainees with relatively poor results were given extra lessons so that every student could be familiar with every aspect of technology [and effectively] use [that knowledge] during field practice.

1. From start to finish, the entire process of teaching and practical study has adhered to a consistent spirit of setting an example [as the best way] to motivate students. We have carried the entire training course according using pedagogical methods to move forward one degree at a time. During field operations we labored together with the students. Trainees' educational spirit is always full. No person was ever absent. For example, trainee Sissa Kotode attended lectures despite illness.

When [we] first started practical field work, some of the students were not very interested in being active participants. They sat on the sidelines and watched [but when] they saw that all of us labored together they were [emotionally] moved. Currently, at the tea plantation, we can see the trainees and the laborers working together.

5. Future Training Work Ideas

1. Consolidate and enhance the skill level of current students. Develop their ability to work independently. Train them to be able to train other personnel and workers. Expand technical skill.

2. Current workers [should receive] practical field training so that they are familiar with every single one of the technical aspects of tea plantation management. In this way [they will be able to] expand operations in the future for large scale development of tea [as a crop]. Expansion of the team of skilled technical workers [should be made] ready.

3. With the consent of the Government of Mali, [we should] continue to train groups of high level technical staff (who [already] have a basic knowledge of [both] French and agriculture).

4. [Regarding] Aspects of Teaching Technical Skills: In addition to imparting tea cultivation and tea field management techniques, we also must teach tea picking, primary processing technologies, and related tea research methodology.