

THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

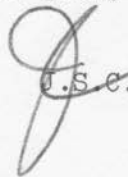
TO: ACB

FROM: JSC

DATE: 4 October 1975

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Pursuant to the request made in the EFD meeting I attach a brief summary of what I understand to be (on reflection and on perusal of the record) the considerations which constituted the rationale for going into Zaire.

  
J.S.C.

cc: RKD

709 UD  
Program review

ELEMENTS IN THE RATIONALE FOR SELECTION OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF ZAIRE  
AS AN EFD UNIVERSITY

Retrospectively viewed, there were at least eight interrelated considerations which explain the final decision to launch an exploratory EFD program in Zaire. These are summarized as follows:

1. Very substantial previous interest and involvement stretching from 1956 through 1970. During that period a total of \$1,310,000 had been appropriated and allocated, the bulk of which was for medical and nursing schools in Lovanium University (now the Kinshasa Campus of UNAZA).

The most recent appropriation before the EFD decision was for \$160,000 for staff development in Lovanium University. There were almost a hundred Zairois members of staff, many of them currently occupying high positions in UNAZA at the present time who received some form of partial support for the accelerated completion of their advanced degrees. This appropriation covered the period 1967-1970.

2. Strong Expression of Interest by Zairian authorities for RF Involvement

As the last appropriation (1967-1970) was nearing an end, representations were made from various authorities in Zaire, for a renewed RF involvement. These representations, coupled with the general consensus that the RF programs in East Africa and Nigeria were entering their terminal stages because ~~some~~ ~~in~~ a decade ~~more~~ of involvement was approaching completion, led to an officer visit (ACB, JJM and JSC) in October 1970.

The officer visit of October 1970 led to essentially a suspended judgment pending further exploration and monitoring of the evolving situation in higher education in Zaire, and particularly the efforts being made to rationalize the development of three separate universities (a Protestant, a Catholic and a State university) at the three poles of the country (Kinshasa, Kisangani and Lubumbashi).

In February 1971, a special visitation was made to Yangambi regarding possible agricultural involvement, but judgment was again withheld for further monitoring of the situation--the main concern being the fragmentation of the system of higher education.

In November 1971 JSC had visited both Lubumbashi and Kisangani and presented a report on the implications of the radical reform in higher education represented by the abolition of the three previous universities and the creation of a single unitary National University of Zaire with three campuses based on the principle of functional specialization and economizing of ~~means~~ resources. The officers recommended further exploration, and provided funds for this purpose.

These explorations led to an official request from Citoyen BISENGIMANA, Director of the Office of the President of Zaire, for RF involvement. This in turn led to a Review Team and a recommendation that an EFD (UDP) program be initiated, but further exploration was stressed before concrete programmatic commitments were made. This led to a series of Consultative Groups (in univ. Adm., in Agriculture, and in Medicine).

Thus, the feasibility and the opportunities and constraints of a program in Zaire ~~was~~<sup>are</sup> almost continuously explored between the period November 1971 and June 1972. At the meeting of the Trustees in June 1972 a decision was made to initiate a program.

3. Strong receptivity for a neutral Donor Agency to become involved.

The very nature of the radical reforms in higher education in Zaire in June 1971 was to welcome new forms of external assistance to enable Zaire to create a distinctively new and ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Zairian system of higher education based upon a set of goals which stressed the need for practicality and for an applied orientation in the curriculum. The RF was viewed as one such agency that could assist in this radical break from the ~~inherited~~ Belgian model.

4. Maximum Opportunity for Innovation and a Creative Developmental impact

The reforms referred to above created an unfettered sense of creativity and innovation in restructuring the Zairian system of higher education. In many respects the revision in the curriculum in several fields which followed the creation of UNAZA ~~demonstrated~~ ~~the validity~~ the validity of the assumption of wide opportunities in curriculum change. In other sectors still strongly dominated by Belgian expatriate personnel (Agriculture and Medicine) such innovation proved not to be possible at that time; further explorations must be made was the decision in these fields.

5. A national resource base potentially strong enough to support a first-rate University.

The size and the potential wealth of Zaire (judged to be in potential the richest country on the continent north of the Republic of South Africa)--its economy being based on a diversified mineral and agricultural production--provided some assurance that given the political will and a realization of the economic potential of the country there would be a resource base to support a strong university system which could in due course become self-sustaining.

6. A potential center for a regional impact

From the creation of Lovanium university in the mid 1950s it attracted a significant number of students from neighboring countries, including particularly Rwanda and Burundi and Angola; ~~but~~ from other neighboring countries as well. Its potentiality of having a broader regional impact in the development of high-level manpower was comparatively high; certainly -higher than any other Francophone country outside of Dakar.

7. An ~~Unstated~~ Untied Francophone Country

From the beginning of the UDP efforts were made to identify at least one Francophone country in Africa, as at least half the continent is Francophone. Earlier explorations led to a negative decision regarding all countries under French influence because of the tight control over higher education exercised from Paris and the absence of a receptivity.

As the terminal phases of the programs in Nigeria and in East Africa (both Anglophonic areas, as was the Sudan, a short-~~termed~~ program) a fresh look was taken at potentialities in ~~many~~ Francophone countries. At that time the opportunity for a creative contribution seemed highest in Zaire.

Some of these considerations remain as valid today as they were then, but an evaluation of this would be a separate exercise. Some of the potentialities obviously have yet to be realized. However, the records reflect that the above considerations were among the important ones leading to the decision to go into Zaire.