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GRANT MONITORING

REPORT OF THE MONITORING
TASK FORCE

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Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. The Grant Manager's Monitoring Responsibilities, Management's Role and Systems of Ensuring Quality
- III. Field Monitoring of Grants
- IV. Implementability of Task Force Recommendations

Attachments:

- A. Diagram of the Monitoring Process
- B. Recent PVC Site Visits to Grant Activity
- C. Updated Grant Monitoring Calendar Format
- D. Guidance for PVO Site Visits
- E. Guidance for PVO Headquarters Visits

I. Introduction:

The PVC Monitoring Task Force was created by Tom Fox in his staff memorandum of June 12 in order to "look at all of our monitoring procedures." He noted further that "our monitoring process could benefit from some additional support materials and a more systematic review." Of particular concern was the structuring of headquarters and field visits by PVC staff.

To some extent, the work of this task force builds on that carried out by the reorganization task force of November 1980. In responding to the recommendations of the latter, Tom Fox, in a draft discussion paper, drew a distinction between monitoring and grant management. He defined monitoring as "ascertaining that A.I.D.'s grantee, the PVO, is performing in accordance with our grant agreement. In meeting this responsibility we rely on the PVO's own systems, regular reports, visits to and from the PVO's headquarters, site visits, second and third party reports and evaluations and audits." Grant management was viewed as something more encompassing, which includes monitoring, and could be defined as "orchestrating all of the steps and procedures necessary for a grant relationship to proceed smoothly. It involves such steps as pushing PIO/Ts, receiving and acknowledging reports, analyzing a grantee's strengths and weaknesses, ensuring appropriate monitoring, scheduling an evaluation, etc. An annual plan for each grant is essential for communication as well as 'discipline' reasons."

While the above distinction is useful, there is sufficient overlap that the findings and recommendations of this Task Force go beyond those activities defined above as "monitoring." Monitoring involves not only tracking activities. It includes the analysis of the grant manager which, in turn, is challenged and reinforced by management. This report focusses on the roles that grant managers and other staff play in the overall

monitoring process of this Office. It attempts to differentiate among the events that make up monitoring, including the responsibility grant managers and management take for each event, and the aids available to assist in monitoring. In addition, it provides a discussion of the monitoring process, a monitoring travel plan, and recommendations.

¹Although we share management's view that headquarter's and field visits are important, we should recognize that this is only part of the larger monitoring task, which is further explained in the following section. A diagram of the overall monitoring process (Figure 1, Attachment A), borrowed from the PVOs workshop on evaluation/monitoring, shows that staff visitation/observation is only part of the information input step in monitoring. Other information sources include evaluations, audits and reports from AID, the PVOs or independent parties. Other steps in the process include review/dialogue, reflection, decision making and action. The first three steps often reiterate before decisions and actions occur.

II. The Grant Manager's Monitoring Responsibilities, Management's Role and Systems of Ensuring Quality

The single most-important determinant of the quality of PVC's monitoring is the grant manager. As stated by Mr. Fox, "the process of familiarization, fact finding, issue-identification, and recommendation-preparation by the 'development officer' is the key to this office's success." This said, however, we can and should have systems which encourage and support the grant manager in the monitoring process, and which serve as a periodic check-up on the quality of monitoring to make up for the inevitable "pilot-error" omissions.

The creation of this task force on monitoring procedures is evidence that the present monitoring system is not functioning as well as it should. That is not to say the quality of monitoring is poor, but instead that it can and should be improved. Over the past two years the office has developed some useful "aids to monitoring" (e.g., the grant monitoring calendar) and "monitoring guidelines or principles" (e.g., annual visits to grantee headquarters, and site visits to each significant AID/W financed activity during the grant period). In general, we feel the quality of monitoring varies greatly within the office and that there are too many examples of inaction on the part of grant managers which resulted in issues going unidentified and unresolved until too late. With the tension between regional and centrally-funded programs great already, we must avoid such "mistakes" which only add to the tension. After examining the current monitoring process, we concluded that the monitoring of grants could be most improved through the establishment of a framework which demands analytical reporting and quality monitoring which can stand careful scrutiny. Such a system cannot, however, substitute for timely and thoughtful analysis of the grant managers. On the following pages we discuss an office framework

that we believe will encourage more analytical thought on the part of grant managers, while not usurping their time for preparation of needless reports. We have recommended new documentation only where we feel it will enhance the performance of grant managers and prove useful to management.

This office's framework for monitoring, detailed in the following chart, consists of:

- (1) regularly scheduled reviews and "events" in the grant monitoring process;
- (2) a clear statement of the grant manager's responsibilities in the monitoring process;
- (3) fuller use of the "aids" for grant managers and management;
- (4) a clear statement of management's role/responsibilities for ensuring quality monitoring; and
- (5) a statement of the expected "outputs"/documentation in the monitoring process.

Following the chart is a section which articulates each of these elements more fully:

THE PLAN/OFFICE FRAMEWORK FOR PVC GRANT MONITORING

Key Event/Frequency	Grant Manager's Responsibility	Aides for the Grant Manager	Management Participation Role	Monitoring Output: Documentation
1. Receipt of Proposal and Processing	Familiarization with PVO & relevance to FVA priorities. Issues identification, including "monitoring" of program. Liaison with PVO and within AID/W. Development of PVC's monitoring plan (before grant is made).	Report of review committee. Project documents. Headquarter's visit. Checklist for Headquarter's visit. Telephone.	Division Chief discussions. Deputy Director and Director involvement, as appropriate.	Memos of meetings. Action Memo to FVA. Grant Agreement.
2. Grant Monitoring Calendar Establishment/January of each year	Issues identification. Updating Monitoring Plan	Project Paper. Grant Agreement.	Division Chief discussion. Director and Deputy Director review and discuss.	Grant Monitoring Calendar.
3. Tri-annual Review/ 4-6 months in grant year and prior to headquarters or field visit	Recommendations/judgments to management on actions needed to resolve issues. Updating Grant Monitoring Calendar, and identifying issues, prior to meeting.	Discussions with PVO on program progress. Grant Monitoring Calendar.	Division Chief and Deputy Director meet with grant manager to review grant progress, issues and actions.	Updated Grant Monitoring Calendar. Letter to PVO on issues if appropriate and guidance in preparing semi-annual report.
4. Headquarters Visit/ annually, usually mid-year	Preparation of agenda and communicating agenda to PVO. Issues discussion. Observations PVO's management systems and grant management. Brief trip report. Follow-up letter to PVO.	Checklist Questions for headquarter's visit. Grant Monitoring Calendar.	Division Chief meets with grant manager for discussion before visit. Debriefing after visit.	Report to files. Letter to PVO. Updated Grant Monitoring Calendar, as needed.
5. Tri-Annual Review/ 8-10 months in grant year.	Recommendations/judgments to management on issue resolution. Updating Grant Monitoring Calendar. Guidance to PVO on preparation of annual report. Report to management on results of or need for field visits.	Semi-Annual Report of PVO, appropriate. Project Paper. Grant Monitoring Calendar Trip Reports.	Division Chief, Deputy Director meet with grant manager to review grant progress, issues and actions.	Updated Grant Monitoring Calendar. Letter to PVO with guidance on preparing annual report.

THE PLAN/OFFICE FRAMEWORK FOR PVC GRANT MONITORING

Key Event/Frequency	Grant Manager's Responsibility	Aides for the Grant Manager	Management Participation Role	Monitoring Output: Documentation
<p>6. Field Site Visit (by Development Officer or other PVC staff), annually, to a minimum of one project site. (LOP, to each significant PVC-funded activity.)</p>	<p>Observation of projects. Tentative judgments about project's accomplishments (country-specific and in terms of grant purpose). Verification of data collection system and PVO's management. Preparation Trip Report. Debriefing PVC management.</p>	<p>Checklist for Field Visits. Memoranda from Responsible project officers with questions for traveler. Grant Monitoring Calendar.</p>	<p>PVC management preparatory discussions on AID/PVO policy issues for each country and those faced by PVC program. Designation by Director/Deputy of issues requiring follow-up and persons responsible. Director/Deputy review and comment on field trip report, in writing if possible. Trip Report Review with PVC staff.</p>	<p>Trip Report and recommendations. Debriefing minutes. Memorandum summarizing outstanding issues and follow-up assignments.</p>
<p>7. Annual Review (11th -12th month of grant year)</p>	<p>Additional guidance to PVO on preparation of report. Review report. Preparation issues paper for distribution with report. Arrange review meeting.</p>	<p>PVO Report. PVC Guidelines for Annual MG Reports and Self-Evaluation.</p>	<p>PVC management participate in review to identify omissions in issues papers or relevant policy questions. Director/Deputy chairs office review.</p>	<p>Memorandum summarizing PVO's report and citing actions needed. Letter to PVO requesting appropriate action.</p>
<p>8. Grant Evaluation, once during Life of Grant (as appropriate)</p>	<p>Arrange (and participate where appropriate/possible) in evaluation providing conclusions/recommendations to FVA on grant performance, future AID relationship, and where feasible development impact.</p>	<p>Scope of work. PVO annual reports. AID memoranda. Grant Monitoring Calendar.</p>	<p>PVC management and FVA evaluation officer consultation, as needed. Director reviews findings and implications for future FVA/PVC relationship.</p>	<p>Evaluation Report. Recommendations on future relationship.</p>

(1) Key Events/Frequency: The first column in the chart identifies the "key" events in PVC's grant relationship with a PVO, from the receipt of the grant proposal to the final grant evaluation. Some of these events are new (e.g., the establishment of the Tri-Annual Reviews), and require explanation. The Task Force believes that the office management has not in general received nor demanded the types of critical analytical reporting that is needed on a regular basis if the office is to adequately monitor the projects it supports. In order to help correct this deficiency and to provide for periodic management oversight of the progress and direction for each grant, we recommend a review of each grant about every four months at which time the updated grant monitoring calendar would be reviewed. In addition the establishment of grant monitoring calendars would become an annual office exercise, with the Office Director participating in their review. These tri-annual reviews should help ensure that the calendars serve as useful management/monitoring tools throughout the year as they were intended to do. The reviews would occur between the 4-6th month and 8-10th month of the actual grant year with the dates fixed at the time of the calendar's establishment. While the timing of the reviews should be coordinated with PVC visits to headquarters and the field to the extent possible, we have, on balance, given more weight to a fixed, but flexible, period for their achievement. Without such a timeframe, the system would undoubtedly break down sooner rather than later. The tri-annual reviews will also provide a sense of continuity throughout and, as such, should enhance the quality of the annual reviews held jointly with the PVOs.

(2) The Grant Manager's Responsibilities: In brief, we have tried to clarify expectations for the grant manager's performance in grant monitoring. His/her responsibilities have been linked to key events in the monitoring progress, and management's needs for timely and analytical analysis of PVO performance and grant progress for decision making. These responsibilities are more fully reflected in the

new grant manager position description recently drafted, and should be embodied in the performance contracts to be prepared by all employees by October 1.

(3) Aids for the Grant Manager: This section identifies those documents which are important in the performance of the grant manager's responsibilities. In keeping with our decision to introduce additional paperwork only where essential, there are only two new documents: the checklists for PVO Headquarters and Field Visits. (Attachments C and D) We have, however, revised the Grant Monitoring Calendar. We also recommend the Guidelines for Annual MG Reports and Self-Evaluations be updated, and modified as needed for the other grant categories.

(4) Management's Participation/Role: We have tried to clarify management's role in the grant monitoring process, which is to ensure monitoring is of a high quality and decisions are being made consciously in light of overall FVA policy. Item 6, field site visit, also indicates management's important role in identifying issues for follow-up and the designation of persons responsible for the follow-up. Often there will be issues that go beyond the confines of a specific grant. Managements role in monitoring, particularly that of the Division Chiefs, should be reflected in their performance contracts.

(5) Monitoring Outputs/Documentation: This section was added after the first draft to help ensure that every step or meeting is action-oriented. The important point to highlight here is the value of sending follow-up letters to PVOs confirming decisions reached at the annual reviews (similar to the PES process), and otherwise communicating issues raised throughout the year in connection with the grant. This expectation of management has not always been met, and should receive more attention from the Division Chiefs and Grant Managers in the future.

The tone of the Grant Manager's relationship to the PVO cannot be put in the framework shown above, but it forms an essential ingredient in how well the grant manager performs his/her monitoring role. This Task Force concludes that for the Grant Manager to be successful, he/she must view the job as one of active involvement with the PVOs on the basis of mutual respect and confidence. While this may seem obvious, the Task Force believes that, based on the widely varying practices in the office, it bears stating in this report. Some of the indicators of this active approach include the degree of personal rapport with PVO counterparts, the frequency of oral and written communications, and the level of contact the grant manager enjoys with the PVO. For the latter, the grant manager should develop working relationships as equals with officers at different organizational levels from the President on down. The management staff of PVC has an important role in facilitating the relationship of the grant manager to the PVO. While PVC management should and does establish its own direct contacts with PVO management staff, the handling of these relationship in a way that maintains the grant manager's role as the direct and principal link to the PVO is no mean feat. On this score, the Task Force feels that PVC's management deserves particular commendation.

III. Field Monitoring of Grants:

The previous section focussed on the structure of the monitoring process, which included as a key event the "field site visits." It is in the field where the products of our labor and money materialize, and the goal of PVC monitoring — to achieve third world development by enhancing the work of PVOs — can be validated.

Field visits are essential to assure us that the PVOs progress reporting is accurate and that their best effort is being given to attaining the grant's purpose. For this reason, we have devoted an entire section to the question of field visits and the ability of PVC to adequately monitor its grants.

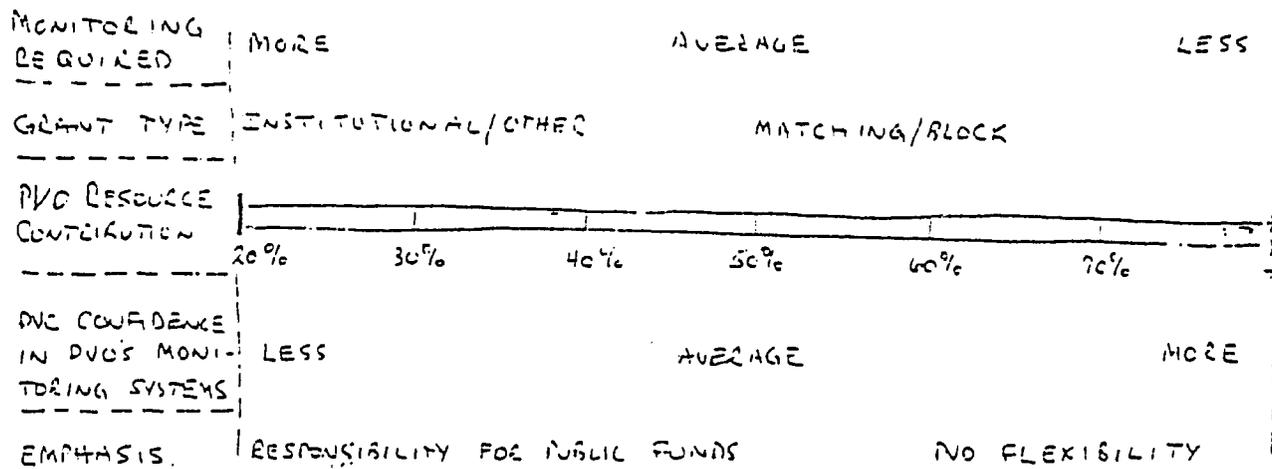
A. Background: PVC is formally committed to "make every effort to visit each program in each country where there is significant AID/W financed PVO activity at least once during the usual three-year period of the grant." We need to determine how this principle can be put into practice.

Adequate monitoring should strike a balance between Agency responsibility for judicious use of public funds and PVO flexibility in pursuing its own unique programs. Like any public donor, AID seeks to achieve a delicate balance — one which avoids undue license that wastes limited public resources yet escapes over-regulation of the special contribution of the American private sector which the Foreign Assistance Act encourages.

The degree of A.I.D. oversight of grant relationships will vary from grant to grant and over time. Each relationship must be worked out on a case-by-case basis before the grant agreement is signed. Since no monitoring system can fully guarantee outcomes, PVC will need to determine the degree of acceptable risk and design an appropriate

monitoring plan for each grant. The amount of monitoring will vary in relationship to the type of grant, PVC's confidence in the PVO's own monitoring systems, the PVO's record of accomplishment, the type of program funded, and the proportion of PVC resources contributed to the program. The continuum of the degree of monitoring required, presented below, demonstrates how these factors might influence the preparation of a grant monitoring plan. It is important to note, however, that the factors are not mutually dependent and that one does not necessarily follow from the others. Each grant monitoring plan must appropriately reflect the unique mix of factors for that PVO.

FIGURE 2
CONTINUUM OF GRANT MONITORING BY PVC



B. Monitoring Approaches: Different monitoring approaches appear to be needed for the two types of programs we fund:

(a) Grants which support sub-projects (often activities of \$30,000 or less), and/or short-term technical assistance, both usually for many countries. Grants in this group would include SAWSO, LWR, YMCA, WRC, IESC, SAWS, and WI. These PVO's approach might typically be characterized as demand-activated, and dependent on a network of affiliates throughout the world, although there are exceptions. Many do not receive, nor would they seek, funding for programs on a country-by-country basis. For the grants in this category, we have concluded that the best we can realistically hope to do is visit a sampling of the activities. The investment of staff time in attempting to visit each and every activity would be of dubious value.

(b) Grants which support several (3-7) major activities and/or institutional support. Grants in this group include PLAN, PCI, IIDI, TNS, MFM, PFP, AITEC, and NCNW. The PVO's approach here, though again not without exception, might be termed PVO-directed projects. For grants in this category, we should attempt to fulfill our commitment to the field to visit each significant AID/W financed activity.

Related to this distinction, it also seems impractical and unrealistic to require the same degree of knowledge of each and every activity included under grants falling in category (a) as for category (b). The better approach again would be sampling, with the selection of countries and activities tied to travel plans. As a corollary, it follows that for this type of program PVC should be far more confident in the PVOs own monitoring systems with our sampling serving as a cross-check on the PVO's system.

For grants falling within the second category, the Grant Manager can reasonably be expected to have a more thorough understanding of each sub-project.

In this regard, the Task Force spent some time discussing whether adequate attention was being paid in the grant proposal review and approval process to ensure that the final agreement represents "the discrete and evaluable program" which we espouse and which we can realistically monitor. This seems particularly true for the grants/PVOs in category (a), where our fund support relatively small sub-projects and/or provide short-term technical assistance in many countries. As discussed earlier, the Task Force has concluded that PVC monitoring of these grant relationships will, of necessity, be based on a sampling process. We also concluded that such sampling will provide AID with adequate oversight of these activities, assuming our confidence in the PVO's own monitoring systems. This notwithstanding, there is an issue as to where the proper trade-off is between the geographical/functional "spread" effect of these grants and the need for AID to concentrate its resources and not invite "over-diffusion". While this will, of course, vary from PVO to PVO, the entire issue needs further thought and discussion, though perhaps not in the context of monitorability.

C. Travel Priorities/Criteria for Selection of Sites: In light of the importance of PVC's travel to the field, and the normally limited travel funds availability, we felt it necessary to articulate criteria to centralize the process for determining which projects need to be visited. Over the past year PVC's travel planning has been significantly improved to make the most of our scarce resources. To ensure that the planning continues to improve, we are recommending further work in centralizing the travel plan. The isolated travel needs for specific grants, needs of the two operational divisions, and overall office policy need to be considered simultaneously, as they have been in the recent months. Decisions on who should travel should in all cases be made

last, based on the scope of work to be performed. We have developed criteria for determining priority travel needs and subsequently used these criteria to develop the beginnings of an FY 82 travel plan. Travel priorities would be:

- (1) For grants terminating in the coming year where a decision on the future PVC/PVO relation must be made, and where PVC field contact with PVO has been minimal or is not current.
- (2) For new PVOs seeking funding where PVC is interested in the proposed program but lacks sufficient knowledge of the PVO's work in the field to make a decision.
- (3) For grant activities/PVOs supported by PVC where no field visit has been made within the past year.
- (4) For other grant activities of PVC to fulfill our monitoring plan for each grant. Generally, the urgency in visiting projects will be greatest for grants in the third year; less for grants in the second year, and even less for those in the first year.

As a general rule, we believe it is realistic for us to set a target for site visits under PVC grants of 25% of the activities supported visited by the end of Year 1, 66% visited by the end of year 2, and 100% visited by the end of year 3 of the grant period. For those grants where it is agreed that a sampling of projects will fulfill our monitoring needs, the same ratio should be applied to the sample size selected. This goal-setting will help avoid bunching up visits in the final year.

Adjustments and additions to the travel plan will, of course, have to be made to accommodate pressing needs for information on certain grants/PVOS. And, in some cases we will, for whatever reason (e.g., consultant's travel), know enough (or need to know more) about a grantee to deviate from this hierarchy of priorities. The system should be flexible enough to recognize the need for fluctuations above and below the norm; i.e., more field field monitoring than "normal" in some cases and less for others.

D. Application of priorities for PVC's FY 82 Travel: The task force has constructed a matrix (Attachment A) which shows recent PVC site visits to the country programs of our grantees. It does not, however, factor in consultant travel or that of non-PVC staff which could augment our monitoring capabilities. Using the above criteria and the matrix, we have determined PVC's travel needs for FY 82 which are, in order of priority:

FY 82 TRAVEL PRIORITIES

<u>CATEGORY/PVO</u>	<u>No. Countries PVC Visited</u>	<u>No Countries w/PVC activities</u>	<u>Grant Year/Type</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>Category 1: No recent PVC visits, ongoing grant in final year:</u>				
GIA	0*	N/A	Final year IDG/ Proposed MG	1 visit planned
PACT	0*	22+	Final year CONS	4 visits in 9/81
CCSH	0	2	Final year CONS	--
USFIS	0*	N/A	Final year IDG/ Proposed MG	3 LAC/DR visits; 1 planned
<u>Category 2: Possible and/or new Grantees, no PVC field contact recently:</u>				
SAWS	0	N/A	Proposed MG	2 planned
IEF	0	"	" "	1 planned
AmidEast	0	"	Proposed IDG	--
PADF	0	"	Proposed MG	3 planned
CRS	0	"	" "	--
ABC	0	"	" "	--
HPI	0	"	" "	1 planned
WI	0	"	" "	1 planned
<u>Category 3: Other PVC grantees with no PVC site visits to date:</u>				
TAA	0	N/A	2nd year IDG	2 planned
NAPA	0	?	2nd year LAC MG	2 planned
SAWSO	0	9	1st year MG	1 planned

<u>Country/PVO</u>	<u>No. Countries PVC Visited</u>	<u>No. Countries w/PVC Activities</u>	<u>Grant Year/Type</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<u>Category 4: Adequate field monitoring:</u>				
A. Projects in the 3rd Year; target-100% sites or sample.				
MAJOR PROJECTS:				
SCF	1	8	Final year MG	1 planned
TNS	2	4	" " "	
IIDI	3	4	" " "	4th Colo
SUB-PROJECT/T.A.:				
OEF	1	N/A	Final year IDG	
CODEL	1	31	" " CONS	1 planned
PACT	0	31	" " CONS	4 planned
CCSH	0	2	" " IDG	
GIA	0	N/A	" " "	1 planned
B. Projects in the 2nd Year; target 66% sites or sample size.				
MAJOR PROJECTS:				
PLAN	1	5	2nd year MG	1 planned
MAP	1	9	" " "	1 planned
PFP	2	7	" " "	2 planned
AITEC	3	6	" " "	
SUB-PROJECTS/T.A.				
YMCA	1	16	" " "	
LWR	1	10	" " "	2 planned
WRC	4	12	2nd year MSS	3 planned
C. Projects in the 1st Year; target 25% sites or sample size (partial listing):				
SUB-PROJECTS/T.A.				
IESC	1	many	ISG	3 planned
SAWSO	0	many	1st year MG	

17

E. FY 82 Travel Plan:Based on the above analysis of PVC needs, the beginnings of an FY 82 travel plan follows. Although it does not include all the travel needs of PVC, it does provide a basis for further planning. It should be reviewed and updated in October based on Bergen's and Glaeser's actual site visits, which include several countries in this travel plan, and urgent needs for various grants. Wherever possible, we selected countries where several "priority" PVOs could be visited, thus maximizing each PVC travel dollar. The travel plan was filled out by selecting neighboring countries where PVC travel could meet the less urgent monitoring needs. We also propose two trips which are not directly linked to an urgent travel need: a trip to East and/or South Africa, for regional coverage and PVC consultation with the USAIDs, and a trip to visit the coops, the first field visit since the new Cooperative policy was implemented.

ROUGH DRAFT OF FY 82 TRAVEL PLAN

COUNTRIES TO BE VISITED	PVOS TO BE VISITED	REGION COVERED
Trip 1. Thailand Bangladesh Sri Lanka Indonesia	CCSH, OEF, YMCA, IESC, IIRR, WVRO SAWS, CODEL, PACT, MAP, TAA, WRC SAWS, OEF, SCF, CODEL, PACT, USFIS PLAN, USFIS, PACT, SAWS, SCR, YMCA	Asia
Trip 2: Morocco Israel Third Country	AMIDEAST, OEF, _____ CCSH, _____	NEAR EAST
Trip 3: Haiti Jamaica Third Country	PADF, CODEL, PLAN, PACT, TAA, WRC, etc. ABC, SAWSO, IESC, TAA, HPI, WI, WRC	Caribbean/ Central America
Trip 4: Bolivia Ecuador Peru	MAP, LWR, CODEL, SAWS, PACT, NAPA PLAN, OEF, IVS, LWR, MFM, CODEL USFIS, WEI, NAPA, IESC, LWR	South America
Trip 5: Ghana Gambia Third Country	GIA, IIRR, SAWS, HPI PCI, PACT, SCF	West Africa
Trip 6: East or South Africa		East or South Af Africa
Trip 7: To be Determined	Coops	

F. Mission Participaton/Assistance in Monitoring: State 016729 of January 22, 1981, placed primary AID responsibility for monitoring of FVA/PVC funded grants with PVC. Despite some Mission protestations to the contrary, the Task Force believes that we must continue to be charged with this task. The adoption of the travel strategy and plan described in this report combined with a travel budget sufficient to implement it, will help ensure that the monitoring function is successfully carried out.

Missions regard centrally-funded activities of less importance than their regular government-to-government bilateral programs and their own OPG-funded programs with PVOs. Very often, far to little field monitoring is carried out by Missions for their own programs in priority areas. In this environment, virtually nothing can be expected from the mission for grants emanating from Washington. Unless the activities under an AID/W grant are seen as enhancing in a rather direct fashion the Mission's own programs, they are not inclined to invest more than cursory attention to them.

The above notwithstanding, there will be the need from time to time to seek Mission help in reviewing a PVC-funded program, as in such cases where information is needed in a short period and no PVC travel is planned. For example, we recently asked the USAID Mission in Guatemala to review the program of a grantee; the Mission's findings could be important in determining the magnitude of third year funding for this grant. In addition, we should look for and capitalize on those opportunities where the Missions do have a special interest in a particular activity and might be willing to provide informal reports on progress. A good example is the interest of the Sahelian Development Planning Team and the West African Missions in the CARE Reforestation program. Another possible avenue of PVC/Mission collaboration is in those countries where a grantee is carrying out activities under both PVC-funded grants and OPGS. In such cases, the Mission might be willing to report on our grants, particularly if there are

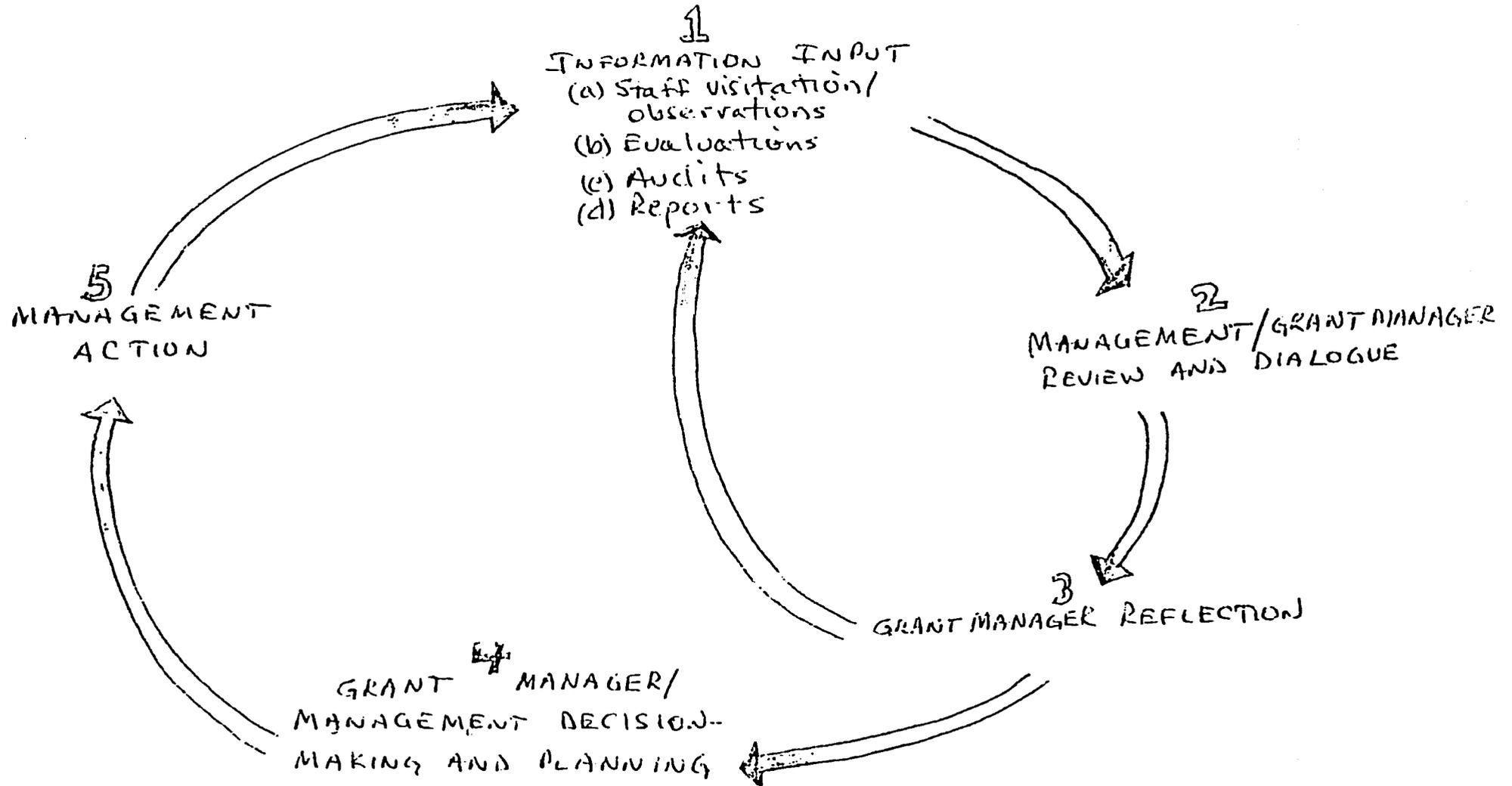
close geographical and functional proximities between the activities under the two grants. Given the widely varying practices among Missions, however, the task force cautions against trying to develop an Agency-wide policy and/or a common reporting format defining this relationship. Moreover, PVC/Mission cooperation for a particular grantee will not preclude the necessity of direct PVC monitoring in the country to cover other grants of limited interest to the Mission.

IV. Implementability of Task Force Recommendations:

The monitoring strategies for PVC proposed by this task force represent an ideal pattern for exercising our oversight responsibilities for activities supported by our grants. The implementability of our recommendations depends on factors such as the number and quality of grant managers and the size of the travel budget, which are beyond the scope of the task force. Though most of the recommendations, we believe, can be implemented without appreciably altering the existing office structure, the new procedures would probably represent a slightly greater workload for each grant manager and in sum for PVC management also. At present we do not know the impact of the anticipated reductions in staff or the availability of travel funds, which could affect the degree to which we can implement these recommendations. Changes in the office structure to lessen the impact of staff reductions and improve the efficiency of PVC might also be considered.

If the task force recommendations are accepted by PVC management in principle, i.e., an ideal toward which we would strive, then implementation could begin with each grant manager preparing a monitoring plan for each existing grant. The same would need to be done for the new grant proposals before the grant agreement is reached. The second step would be establishment of the grant calendars and scheduling of review meetings.

Figure 1
The Monitoring Process



GRANT MANAGEMENT CALENDAR

Scheduled Reviews

Initial: _____
Fourth Mth: _____
Eighth Mth: _____
Annual: _____

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

PVO Name: _____
Grant Type; _____ Start Date: _____
Current Funding Period: _____ Termination Date: _____
Current Funding Amount: _____ LOP Amount: _____
Date Next PIO/T Needed: _____ Next In-depth Eval: _____
DO Headquarters Visits (annually): 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

Countries of Operation of Project: _____

Development Officer: _____

II. Status Summary

III. Outlook for AID/PVC Relationship (Long-term)

IV. Issues and Needed Actions/Target Dates

Issue:

Action:

Comp. Date: _____

GUIDANCE FOR PVO SITE VISITS

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of the field site visit is to assess progress of selected PVO projects on a first hand basis. Periodic field visits to project sites of PVC grantees are essential for maintaining an independent check on the project and verifying the utility and reliability of the PVO's own monitoring system.

Since site visits will average 1 - 2 days per PVO, the development officer should focus on information regarding inputs, outputs and actions that are critical to project success. The comparison of such information with original plans and schedules will help alert PVC to potential implementation problems.

II. SCHEDULING OF OVERSEAS TRAVEL

Several weeks' notice should be given to minimize any potential burdens on Missions and maximize the usefulness of the travel to USAIDs.

III. GUIDELINES FOR SITE VISIT REPORT:

The attached format, Attachment 1, has been developed as a general guideline in reporting on the results of site visits. This guideline represents a suggested checklist of elements to be covered. The list of items will vary from project to project and country to country.

IV. PREPARATION FOR SITE VISITS:

Due to manpower and money constraints, site visits are seldom carried out by PVC staff as frequently as desired, nor are they always carried out by the responsible project officer. Therefore, the development officer undertaking the visit should be adequately apprised of program and project purposes, implementation concerns, and policy issues. He/she should also be familiar with other Bureau activities relating to PVOs. Preparation for site visits will include, at a minimum:

General Country Information

- a review of the CDSS and ABS for each country to be visited.
- a review of PVO activity in each country (TAICH report, country reports, etc.)

Project Specific Information

- a review of PVC grant program documents, including the grant proposal, agreement (including the log frame), and recent status reports;
- a memorandum, with appropriate background materials, from the responsible PVC project officer which reviews grant progress and highlights issues of concern;

- discussion with PVO staff, as necessary, to secure latest project-specific information and PVO headquarters' knowledge of project implementation problems, if any.

Policy Concerns

- briefing by PVC management staff of policy issues regarding USAID/PVO relationships, a specific country or PVO, or general management.

V. REPORTS

Trip reports are to be prepared as soon as possible upon return to the States but not later than three weeks. While some descriptive and narrative material is useful to convey both the country contact and project details, the trip reports should primarily be analytical documents with as many specific conclusions and recommendations as possible. Personal observation should be supported by data whenever possible, although it is recognized that the short nature of the visits will allow little, if any, time for original data research and that most relevant material will be available at the PVO's headquarters.

VI. Questions for Site Visits

A. Project Specific Questions

1. Project Background

- a. Briefly describe setting, e.g., rural/urban; accessibility of site; terrain; level of development.
- b. List project initiation and completion dates.
- c. Enumerate funding sources.

2. Project Implementation Status

- a. Does the project appear successful in achieving its objectives? Are there differences in perceptions of project purposes between PVO headquarters and in-country project staff?
- b. Does the project approach seem feasible?
- c. Is the PVO providing sufficient technical and management support?
- d. Is project implementation proceeding on schedule? If not, indicate why not.
- e. Does the project planning and implementation documentation require updating?

3. Project Beneficiaries

- a. Describe the estimated numbers and types of project beneficiaries (i.e., economic status, sex, etc.)
- b. What are the costs and benefits to beneficiaries?

4. Project Institutionalization and Sustainability

- a. What relationship does the project have to host government (local/national) and/or other private groups?
- b. Describe local commitment and participation in the project in terms of financial and in-kind resources.
- c. Is the project being run by the PVO staff or local community? Is there a coordinating committee or equivalent governing body? Describe (composition, level of control, effectiveness).
- d. Is there a time-phased plan for turning the project over to the local community?

5. Reporting and Data Collection System

- a. What type of information is collected? By whom and how often? At what cost? How reliable is the information?
- b. Does the information collecting system seem appropriate and manageable by the implementing PVO?
- c. How and by whom is the information being used?

8. AID/PVO Relationships

1. Describe AID/PVO relationships in country, citing particular strengths and weaknesses. Could PVC assist the USAID in any way?
2. Do the PVOs have any problems in relating to the AID Mission? If so, describe.
3. Does the AID Mission adequately understand PVC's program? If not, why not? Are there fundamental disagreements? How can these be addressed?

GUIDANCE FOR HEADQUARTERS' VISITS

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the headquarters' visit is to provide the project monitor with an opportunity to (a) become thoroughly acquainted with the operations and staff of the PVO, (b) specifically review (through personal interviews and familiarity with documentation in the files of the PVO) the planning and monitoring systems of a PVO; (c) discuss grant progress, PVO performance, and issues; and (d) gain a perspective on the overall program of the PVO we support. The headquarters visit should, to the greatest extent possible, allow the project monitor to observe and make preliminary judgments about adequacy and reliability of the PVOs planning/monitoring process and, equally important, establish a rapport with the PVOs staff that encourages a frequent and open communication. In addition to personal interviews with personnel at all levels of the organization (i.e., Executive Director, Program Coordinator and line staff), the project monitor should request to review the documentation of a specific project or two to assess the planning/monitoring process in action.

II. SCHEDULING OF THE HEADQUARTERS' VISIT

Headquarters' visits should be scheduled annually about mid-year between the grant obligation and the end of year review. In addition, a headquarters' visit may be appropriately scheduled during the consideration of a grant proposal, or upon case assignment to a new project monitor. In these cases, of course, the substantive discussions and bulk of the visit may serve more to orient the Development Officer and set up communication channels. The PVO should be given advance notice with a suggested agenda maximize the usefulness of the trip.

III. PREPARATION FOR VISITS AND TRIP REPORT

The visit should be preceded by a thorough review of issues and updating of the grant monitoring calendar.

Upon return to PVC, the traveler should prepare a memorandum for the file on the substance of the discussions, findings and conclusions for PVC grant monitoring. A letter of understanding to the PVO will often be appropriate as well.

IV. GUIDELINES FOR VISITS

The following questions are intended to assist the project monitor in structuring his/her visit to the PVO headquarters:

A. Organization

1. How is the PVO organized? Is there a current organizational chart?
2. What are the organizational dynamics of the PVO?
3. Who (Division and Person) in the organization has responsibility for managing the PVC grant? Is this adequate from PVC's viewpoint?
4. How do the various offices of the PVO work? Are they adequate to PVC's needs?

5. What segment of the U.S. populace does the PVO represent? How do they support the PVO's program (dollars and services?)

B. Program

1. What is the PVO's total program, domestic and international? Is it a coherent, integrated program? How are program priorities determined?

2. How does the PVC grant fit within the overall program? Importance of the PVC grant?

3. How does the PVC grant relate to other AID-funded activity?

4. Have there been major changes in the objectives, design and implementation of the grant from what was anticipated?

5. What problems/progress have occurred in the country program reached under the grant?

C. Financial

1. What was the PVO's budget for the past year? What is the allocation of resources among the various program areas? What is the current year's budget projection?

2. What investment (in money and staff) is made by the PVO in fundraising? What types of fundraising do they do?

3. Is the PVO making the match providing an acceptable share of the costs in the grant supported program? To what degree are these new (or additional) monies raised by the PVO? To what degree are these monies diverted from other program are?

4. What do our grant monies pay for?

5. Arew the PVO's financial reporting and conrol systems adequate (e.g. are expenditures documented, periodic field expenditures report prepared, annual audits).

D. Field Reporting and Evaluation

1. What is the PVO's planning and monitoring system? (Criteria for country/project selection, periodic field reporting system, and quality of progress reports)

2. What is the nature of the evaluation system being used? Is the data being collected considered accurate? Will it lead to reasonable assessments of program/project outreach and impactd?

E. Other

1. What is the perceived working relationship with AID? What chances could the PVO desire?

2. Specific issues related to the PVO and its AID-assisted program.