

A.I.D. EVALUATION SUMMARY

(BEFORE FILLING OUT THIS FORM, READ THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS)

IDENTIFICATION DATA

A. REPORTING A.I.D. UNIT: USAID/BANGLADESH (Mission or AID/W Office) (ES#)		B. WAS EVALUATION SCHEDULED IN CURRENT FY ANNUAL EVALUATION PLAN? yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> slipped <input type="checkbox"/> ad hoc <input type="checkbox"/> Eval. Plan Submission Date: FY <u>90</u> Q <u>3</u>		C. EVALUATION TIMING Interim <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> final <input type="checkbox"/> ex post <input type="checkbox"/> other <input type="checkbox"/>			
D. ACTIVITY OR ACTIVITIES EVALUATED (List the following information for project(s) or program(s) evaluated; if not applicable, list title and date of the evaluation report)							
Project #	Project/Program Title (or title & date of evaluation report)	First PROAG or equivalent (FY)	Most recent PACD (mo/yr)	Planned LOP Cost ('000)	Amount Obligated to Date ('000)		
388-0072	Private Rural Initiatives Project	8/88	8/93	5m	3.113m		

ACTIONS

E. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR		
Action(s) Required	Name of officer responsible for Action	Date Action to be Completed
See Attachment - A		
(Attach extra sheet if necessary)		

APPROVALS

F. DATE OF MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE REVIEW OF EVALUATION: mo 08 day ___ yr 90

G. APPROVALS OF EVALUATION SUMMARY AND ACTION DECISIONS:

Project/Program Officer	Representative of Borrower/Grantee	Evaluation Officer	Mission or AID/W Office Director
Signature: <i>[Signature]</i> Typed Name: JOSE GARZON Date: <u>30, 1991</u>	Signature: <i>[Signature]</i> Typed Name: RICHARD HOLLOWAY Date: <u>5 Nov 91</u>	Signature: <i>[Signature]</i> Typed Name: ANN SCHWARTZ Date: <u>Jan 30/91</u>	Signature: <i>[Signature]</i> Typed Name: MARY C. KILGOUR Date: <u>8-15-91</u>

✂ H. EVALUATION ABSTRACT (do not exceed the space provided)

The Private Rural Initiatives Project (PRIP) commenced activity in January 1989 as a cooperative agreement between Private Agencies Cooperating Together (PACT) and USAID. Its purpose has been; (a) To build the technical and strategic management capacity of PVOs operating in Bangladesh to more effectively use internal and external resources to benefit the poor; and (b) To support collaborative efforts (PVO/PWO, PVO/Government, or PVO/Private Sector) to achieve the above.

PRIP represented a new kind of activity for USAID/Bangladesh which had much experience working with population and family planning NGOs but less with NGOs in the rural development sector. The purpose of this evaluation was to review PRIP's strategy and activities, assess performance to date and provide recommendation for the remaining three and half years. PRIP set up, contracted and managed this evaluation. USAID provided guidance on terms of reference and team selection. Evaluation review and dissemination was the responsibility of PACT. The four-member review team reviewed project files and documents, conducted extensive interviews with NGOs and visited PRIP sponsored projects.

To attain the project purpose, PRIP has evolved two main foci over its first eighteen months: strengthening support organizations (SOs, or NGOs that support other NGOs); and facilitating the development of "learning group" networks that bring together NGOs concerned with a specific topic, such as literacy or women's issues. The evaluation found PRIP to be working quite successfully along these two lines of endeavor, as well as along the other avenues charted out in its "policy priorities matrix."

It was recommended that PRIP undertake a strategic consolidation by building a monitoring and evaluation capacity (to include recruiting a senior-level coordinator for this purpose) and add a specific concentration to its "policy priorities matrix" on NGO planning, building, monitoring and evaluation. It was also recommended that relations between PRIP and USAID/Bangladesh and between PRIP and the cooperative agency PACT/NY improve.

I. EVALUATION COSTS

1. Evaluation Team		Contract Number <u>QR</u> TDY Person Days	Contract Cost <u>QR</u> TDY Cost (US\$)	Source of Funds
Name	Affiliation			
Mrs. T. Abdullah				
Dr. H. Blair		30 days	29,000	PD & S
Mr. J. Sakhawat				
Mr. R. Timm				

2. Mission/Office Professional Staff Person-Days (estimate) 15

3. Borrower/Grantee Professional Staff Person-Days (estimate) 20

ABSTRACT

COSTS

7

I. Strategic consolidation

- | | | |
|--|----------------|---------------|
| (a) Build a monitoring & evaluation capability in PRIP | PRIP & PACT/NY | 30 June 1991 |
| (b) Expand "policy priority matrix" to include "NGO planning, building, monitoring & evaluation" | PRIP | 31 Sept. 1990 |
| (c) Create training & research agenda | PRIP | 31 Dec. 1990 |
| (d) Hold 2d PRIP policy review session | PRIP | January 1991 |

II. Internal management redefinition

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|--|--|---------------|
| (a) Delineate new job descriptions for Sr. & Assoc Coordinators | PRIP Sr. & Assoc. Coordinators, w/ inputs from USAID/Dhaka & PACT/NY | 30 Sept. 1990 |
| (b) Recruit senior-level Monitoring & Evaluation Coordinator | PRIP Sr. & Assoc. Coordinators | 30 Sept. 1990 |
| (i) draw up recruiting plan | | 31 Dec. 1990 |
| (ii) complete recruitment | | |
| (c) Develop more structured role for PRIP Local Advisory Committee (give it a definitive role in project approval) | PRIP w/input USAID/Dhaka | 31 Oct. 1990 |
| (d) Set up external evaluation system for PRIP projects over \$100,000 | PRIP | 31 Oct. 1990 |

III. PRIP/PACT relations

- | | | |
|--|---------|--|
| (a) PACT/NY project coordinator should visit PRIP every six months | PACT/NY | Oct. 1991 (as now planned) & each 6 mos thereafter |
|--|---------|--|

A.I.D. EVALUATION SUMMARY PART II

J. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (Try not to exceed the 3 pages provided)

Address the following items:

- Purpose of activity(ies) evaluated
- Purpose of evaluation and Methodology used
- Findings and conclusions (relate to questions)
- Principal recommendations
- Lessons learned

Mission or Office: USAID/Bangladesh

Date this summary prepared: 09/90

Title and Date of Full Evaluation Report: Private Rural Initiatives Pooject
Mid-Term Review 31 August 1990

Purpose of Activity Evaluated. PRIP's purpose is (a) To build the technical and strategic management capacity of PVOs operating in Bangladesh to more effectively use internal and external resources to benefit the poor; and (b) To support collaborative efforts (PVO/PVO, PVO/Government, or PVO/Private Sector) to achieve the above.

Purpose of the Evaluation and Methodology Used. This evaluation's purpose was to review PRIP's progress after the first eighteen months of this five-year project. It has been a new sort of project for USAID/Bangladesh, which has worked extensively with NGOs in the population and family planning sector, but has less experience over the last decade in working with NGOs in other sectors, especially the rural development sphere that is PRIP's focus.

PRIP set up, contracted and managed this evaluation. USAID provided guidance on terms of reference and team selection. Evaluation review and dissemination was the responsibility of PACT. The review team examined numerous files and documents relating to PRIP's activities, as well as interviewing the PRIP office staff extensively. The team also interviewed professional staff at USAID/Bangladesh, other donors, and both domestic and foreign NGOs. In addition, it made several field visits to observe PRIP-sponsored projects.

Overall findings and conclusions. The team found PRIP to be progressing quite satisfactorily at the end of eighteen months. The Senior and Associate Coordinators have guided the project through its teething stages, and it is now "up and running" as a full fledged player in the NGO arena of Bangladesh. By now it has built an impressive record of accomplishment, having made over 100 project commitments and obligated about 40 percent of the funding it will have over its 5-year life time. Representatives from USAID, other donors, and - most importantly - NGOs themselves, both domestic and foreign, told the team that PRIP has made an excellent start toward realizing its project purpose of strengthening NGOs.

found
The team *found* that the senior and associate co-ordinators had performed very satisfactorily in view of the fact that PRIP has, for USAID, been a new type of activity in Bangladesh - working with NGOs outside the population/family planning sector. They noted that, due to historical factors, PRIP's entry into this field has not been easy, and accordingly, that its success to date is significant.

SUMMARY

PRIP has evolved two main foci over its first eighteen months: strengthening support organizations (SOs, or NGOs that support other NGOs); and facilitating the development of "learning group" networks that bring together NGOs concerned with a specific topic, such as literacy or women's issues.

The Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) is the largest SO in the country and has become the major representative voice for NGOs in their dealings with the BDG. This latter role has now taken on a much more significant importance with the formation of an NGO Bureau in the BDG, located organizationally in the President's Secretariat, which is intended to be a "one-step shop" for NGOs in all their dealings with the government. PRIP has devoted considerable effort and support to ADAB, which has experienced difficulties, but in view of its central importance to the entire NGO enterprise in Bangladesh, the team found this effort to be well-invested. In PRIP has also supported a number of smaller SOs, and the team believed this should continue. The learning networks have proliferated and grown rapidly in the last couple of years; with PRIP as a key supporter. Given the rate of NGO growth in Bangladesh and the constant introduction of new development practices and technologies, the team believed that learning groups will become increasingly important and that continued PRIP support was justified.

Major Recommendations.

1. Strategic consolidation: PRIP should
 - (a) undertake one major initiative: building a strong monitoring and evaluation capability.
 - (b) launch two lesser plans:
 - (i) add a fifth row to its policy priority matrix, to be labeled "NGO planning, building, monitoring and evaluation," and should establish some prioritization within its policy matrix that will guide its future activities.
 - (ii) create a research agenda to help translate the priorities established by the matrix into action. PRIP needs more coherence to its research, less scatter shot funding.
2. Internal project management redefinition. PRIP should
 - (a) draw up new job descriptions for the senior and associate coordinators which will reduce overlap between their responsibilities (which was good in early days, but now should be reduced).

(b) plan and carry out the recruitment of a senior-level monitoring and evaluation officer.

(c) delineate a structured role for its Local Advisory committee.

(d) set up external evaluations for its larger projects.

(e) learn from other USAID-funded intermediaries (Asia-Foundation, MIDAS, etc.) about relating to USAID, the latter should initiate an informal network of such agencies. [This latter recommendation was rejected by USAID]

The evaluation team also recommended that:

3. efforts be made to improve PRIP's relations with USAID/Bangladesh - that PRIP understand relevant USAID policies and regulations and that USAID provide clear guidance.

4. the recent improvements in guidance from PACT New York be maintained and that the PACT co-ordinator visit PRIP on a regular basis.

Lessons Learned:

In PRIP's first 18 months, it was learned that this new kind of USAID project could function successfully, that it is possible to support NGO capacity-building efforts (as opposed to core operations funding), and that discrete development activities costing small sums can be supported.

K. ATTACHMENTS (List attachments submitted with this Evaluation Summary; always attach copy of full evaluation report, even if one was submitted earlier)

ATTACHMENTS

Private Rural Initiatives Project

Mid-Term Review

L. COMMENTS BY MISSION, AID/W OFFICE AND BORROWER/GRANTEE

The Mission found the evaluation useful in certain areas, eg. it confirmed that PRIP's basic strategy was sound; that improvements in monitoring are essential; that prioritization of research and projects is important.

However, the Mission was, in general, disappointed with the quality of this evaluation. Several of the topics in the scope of work were dealt with in a very superficial manner and did not adequately examine results to date of PRIP's involvement; the recommendations for the remainder of the project, although useful, did not provide sufficient substance re how to focus strategy and activities.

A conventional USAID external evaluation, set-up and managed by USAID, would have been more effective, allowing greater supervision and quality control over the evaluation process and product.

MISSION COMMENTS ON FULL REPORT

PACT is extremely pleased that the evaluation found that the project was progressing "quite satisfactorily" at the end of 18 months, and that it is up and running "as a full fledged partner in the NGO arena in Bangladesh", and has "built an impressive record of accomplishment".

This evaluation was not planned as a conventional one. As agreed with USAID, it was an 18 month review to provide objective investigation and advice. The team selected, in close coordination with USAID, is highly noted for their knowledge of the NGO sector in Bangladesh, the work of PRIP and the rural development sector. PACT attempted to recruit a team leader from inside USAID, as requested, but that candidate dropped out several weeks before the Mission.

PACT agrees there may be more room in future monitoring and evaluation to learn additional lessons from experience; such is the essence of program such as PRIP. PRIP staff believed they gained much from this interim exercise, however, due to regular contact with the team. Unfortunately both the USAID project and evaluation officer were partly or almost wholly on leave during the exercise, missing opportunities to dialogue with the team.