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Final Report

Evaluation of Training Programs
Reverse Farmer-To-Farmer Project
for the
Newly Independent States

Letter Contract dated 4 April 1995

Prepared for:
Agricultural Cooperative Development International

by
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Dated: September 21, 1995

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ACRONYMS

ACDI	Agricultural Cooperative Development International
AID HB 10	Agency for International Development Handbook Ten
BHR	Bureau for Humanitarian Response, USAID
CNAA	Citizens Network Agribusiness Alliance
FTF	Farmer-to-Farmer Project
HB10	AID's Participant Training Handbook
LO'L	-Land O'Lakes
NIS	Newly Independent States
PL480	Food For Peace - Public Law 480
PVC	Private and Voluntary Cooperation
SOW	Scope of Work
RFTF	Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer
TA	Technical Assistance
TVG	Tri Valley Growers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAID/ENI	United States Agency for International Development/Eastern Europe/Newly Independent States.
USG	United States Government
VOCA	Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the past three years six US non-government organizations have been conducting training in the Newly Independent States of the former Soviet Union under a \$30 million Farmer to Farmer program. Funded by USAID these six organizations (Agricultural Cooperative Development International, Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance, Land O'Lakes Tri Valley Growers, Winrock International and Citizens Network) have arranged the dispatch of over 1700 volunteer farmers, bankers and agri-businessmen to the NIS to transfer knowledge and techniques of modern farming, agricultural finance and business methods.

An evaluation of the Farmer-to-Farmer (FTF) program completed in May 1994 had as a major conclusion that USAID favorably consider the creation of a program which would bring agricultural leaders who had participated in the Farmer-to-Farmer program to the United States for follow on training to broaden, deepen, and reinforce those things which they had learned during the Farmer-to-Farmer program. It was believed that such a "Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer" program had the potential of forging close ties between US and NIS agriculturalists and would be cost effective as it would capitalize on already existing relationships.

In August 1994 \$1 million was provided to test the conclusion that a Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer (RFTF) program would help accelerate the pace of modernizing the agricultural sectors of the nations of the NIS. These funds were equally apportioned amongst the six implementors with a small amount allotted to evaluate their efforts to ascertain whether the Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer program was a useful technique. A total of 94 participants were programmed, with 37 of them to receive training during the final quarter.

A review of the program was conducted between April and July. All implementors were observed and questionnaires completed by 29 trainees. Anecdotal information was amassed in discussions with the trainees and the trainers. While a 29% non-random sample may not be as dependable as more sophisticated techniques, the in-depth observations, good discussions and the consistency of the responses indicate that the conclusions drawn are highly reliable.

The evaluation has led to three main conclusions:

- The training is of high quality;
- The program is cost effective; and
- There is good potential for high impact.

Quality

In contrast with normal training programs there is virtually no learning curve in this program. The trainers, trainees and their organizations have already been exposed to one another and know each others capacities and shortcomings. The training therefore gets directly to the point. In a program on agricultural credit the participants sat in on an actual

loan committee meeting at a Denver bank witnessing the debate and going through the analysis of credit-worthiness. They then spent the rest of the day with the borrower. Loan committees and business plans were unknown in the Former Soviet Union; with privatization they will become essential. The trainees in this program now have experience on processes which previously did not exist in their economies. The quality factor was also underlined in the training provided to a group of insurance executives. They were given highly restricted proprietary documents by a host insurance firm which explicitly outlined how to evaluate risks for various types of policies. This type of knowledge sharing is not available from academic courses nor could it be readily available in regular Farmer-to-Farmer programs. Finally, the quality factor was underscored by the fact that training institutions put their most senior officials at the disposal of the program. Part of this is the result of a desire to repay the hospitality offered to trainers who participated in the FTF program. A second determinant is the view of several of the participating firms that there is a good potential for business with the participants who were mostly senior executives and officials. They therefore viewed the training programs as marketing tools and put out extra efforts.

Cost Effectiveness

By September 30, 1995 the program will have trained 94 individuals, most of whose programs were for one month for a cost of approximately \$1 million. The costs per participant approximate \$10,600 per training month. Short term training costs are roughly \$14,000 in most AID sponsored programs so the Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer program produces high quality training at three quarters the cost. Some of the cost savings occur because the services of the trainers are provided free by the training entities which are anxious to build relationships with agricultural entities in the Former Soviet Union. Another cost cutting factor is the quick startup of training with minimal time spent on orientation and building relationships. This permits more training to occur in less time.

Impact

Fifty percent of the participants in the evaluated groups bore titles of Director, Chairman, Head or Chief Executive Officer. This is an uncommonly high percentage of senior officials for an AID sponsored program and virtually assures that to the extent that the participants want to bring about change resulting from their training, they will be able to do so. The questionnaires indicated that a number of the participants planned to hold seminars to disseminate the results of their training. This multiplier effect will assure that the new techniques acquired during training will be widely disseminated. One senior manager was so taken with apple processing equipment he encountered at a food processing plant in Ohio that he negotiated the purchase of similar equipment for use in his food processing operation. Another participant, seeing a seed planter which had been modified to plant several rows at once bought the modified machine and will make them for use on his farm in the NIS.

The insurance group left their host training firm with cartons of documents which they will apply in their operations. The close relations forged by the continued relations between the NIS insurance executives and their US colleagues has laid the groundwork for a potential joint venture. Executives of both organizations committed to keeping in close touch and exchanging visits in the future.

Other Conclusions

The mechanical aspects of the project are working. While startup was slow because of slow production of some implementation plans, it has now been regularized and 37 participants will have been trained during the fourth quarter. Anecdotal feedback indicates that this training is going well and should be as productive as the training which occurred during the first three quarters. The reporting system is functioning. The project implementors have found that given the high level of responsibility of the participants the training period should be between 3 and 4 weeks, long enough to have a complete immersion in the subject and short enough not to exhaust the participants. Future programs should make more use of videotapes to permit better dissemination of the experiences once the participants return home and will be more focused.

Recommendation

Based on the fact that there is a synergy between the Farmer-to-Farmer program and the Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer program the evaluation concludes that the program continue for at least one more year. The demonstrated cost savings stretch the foreign assistance dollar. The high level of participation by both parties to the program as well as the surprising number of actual transactions started by parties in the program indicate that there will be measurable benefits to NIS privatization and modernization efforts and US firms wishing to do business in the NIS. Administrative structures are in place to continue the program at a slightly accelerated pace over the next year if additional funding is provided to the implementors.

I. INTRODUCTION, PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program (FTF) in the New Independent States (NIS) is financed under the Food for Peace Program (PL480) with an authorization of \$30 million. The program sends American agriculturalists, farmers, credit specialists, cooperative managers, agribusiness executives and technicians, teachers, and researchers to the NIS to provide direct technical assistance (TA) to farmers, food processors, farmers' associations, and other agricultural organizations.

Phase I of FTF/NIS began in early 1992 with a "Quick Start" program, which was implemented solely by VOCA. In October 1992, Phase II began with the selection of five additional implementors, who were engaged by three-year cooperative agreements which will

end September 1995. Approximately 1,700 volunteers will have been fielded in the combined phases. The six implementors of the Farmer-to-Farmer program are:

- Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI);
- Citizens Network Agribusiness Alliance (CNAA);
- Land O'Lakes;
- Tri Valley Growers;
- Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA); and
- Winrock International Institute for Agricultural Development (Winrock).

An evaluation of the NIS FTF programs, completed in May 1994 by a team from Development Associates, stated that Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer (RFTF) programs (sending selected NIS agricultural leaders who have participated in the FTF programs) held great promise for reinforcing the in-country technical assistance assignments, and recommended that a complementary RFTF training activity be established using the six implementors of the FTF program. This was done in September 1994.

ACDI was given responsibility for project and financial management. Specifically, ACDI distributes sub-grant funding, receives implementors quarterly reports, compiles those reports and submits them to USAID and provides policy guidance to sub-grantors.

Program Design

The RFTF program was designed to be flexible. Building on their strengths and experience some of the implementors focus on specific geographic areas; others address specific substantive issues. For example, ACDI works in the area of agricultural credit primarily in Russia, Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic; Land O'Lakes does excellent agribusiness training; and Tri Valley Growers has wide experience in food processing and storage. A common objective of all programs is the bringing together of experienced U.S. volunteers with institutions and individuals in the NIS countries who are reform-minded and who would benefit from exposure to new procedures and ideas.

The FTF implementors felt strongly that the person-to-person contact and assistance provided under a RFTF program would be a powerful tool in introducing new ideas and practices. The 1994 evaluation noted that they also believed that the opportunity to observe operations in the United States reinforces the lessons learned and deepens and broadens the learning experience by creating credibility for what the U.S. volunteer demonstrated. The design structure of the RFTF program also assumes widespread dissemination of new ideas when the returning participants discuss and share what they have learned with their colleagues.

Program Implementation

Administration - ACDI was provided with a grant of \$1 million to share among the other five cooperators through sub-grant arrangements. It provides general administrative support for this project from its Washington, DC headquarters. The program is supervised by ACDI's Training Department. Key persons involved in the project have been Stephen Landrigan, Director of Training, Michael Moran, Executive Director, NIS Programs and Eta Nahapetian, the Associate Director of Training, who provided day-to-day management responsibility for the project. Upon her departure in late July, Anne D'Angelo, the Training Coordinator, carried on through the completion of the Program.

Each implementor was responsible for selecting participants to travel to the United States based on their FTF program activities. They were responsible for all pre-departure documentation and arrangements as well as all arrangements and support for the participants during their sojourn in the US. They conducted ongoing monitoring of the project as well as a final evaluation at the conclusion of each study tour.

Resource Allocation, Reporting and Evaluation - ACDI allocated an equal amount of funding to each of the six participating FTF implementors to support their U.S. training programs with an amount approximating \$60 thousand retained for evaluation and management. A percentage of the funding is provided to each implementor as an advance, and the implementors reconcile their accounts through submission of documented quarterly reports and invoices.

ACDI submits quarterly programmatic and financial reports to USAID one month after the end of the quarter drawing on implementors reports to ACDI.

At the conclusion of the program ACDI will provide a uniform questionnaire to feed into a final evaluation. In addition to the above, ACDI hired an independent external evaluator to observe project activities and prepare this interim evaluation.

II. EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was conducted by John A. Foti, based on a letter contract with ACDI dated 4 April 1995 and a SOW to be found at appendix A. The purpose of the evaluation was to review the Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer program to include: attending representative opening and briefing sessions of all six participating implementors, observing participants during field visits to evaluate the quality and potential impact of training, and preparing and administering a questionnaire. The project is financed by USAID/BHR/PVC under USAID grant no. FAO-0705-G-00-4055-00. The evaluation findings and recommendations are intended to assist ACDI meet its USAID requirements to evaluate the program, to help them measure potential impact of the program, adjust program implementation and to help justify future programs.

The evaluation plan called for administration of a questionnaire, discussions with participants as well as field visits to observe a training group sponsored by each of the implementors. These visits included participation by the evaluator in either the opening or debriefing session or both. Twenty nine participants completed the questionnaire. Field trips were carried out in Ohio, Minnesota, Idaho, Arkansas and Colorado during the period April 5 - August 20. (Appendix C provides a complete list of field trips). A representative visit included participating in the opening session, accompanying the group for 2-3 days in the field, and then participating in the debriefing session either in Washington, D.C., or the field as appropriate. A visit schedule and a number of the program documents were provided by ACDI and reviewed (a list of those documents can be found in Appendix D). The contractor also met with individuals from USAID and the six implementing NGOs and reviewed program documents and progress reports.

III. ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Questionnaire Results

A debriefing questionnaire (Appendix B) was required as part of the scope of work. It was developed to complement the post program questionnaire planned for execution 2 to 6 months after the participants return to their countries. This questionnaire required for this evaluation was not developed in sufficient time to be used by the VOCA group. VOCA's last group completed their program on March 28th and this group completed a post program questionnaire.

The questionnaire was directed at determining: 1. whether implementing agency support was sufficient to maximize the utility of the training tours; 2. how the participants plan to use the information and knowledge gained upon returning to their countries; and 3. whether the observational/training tours helped the participants improve their work responsibilities and/or business venture opportunities once they return to their respective countries. In developing the questionnaire, it was understood that while it would be too early to determine impact it would provide information on participants' plans for using their new knowledge. 29 participants answered the questionnaire.

All RFTF participants were engaged in some form of agriculture, either government or private sector, and interests included production, processing, marketing, credit, research, etc. The matrix below shows the number of participants sponsored by the implementors and from which NIS country the participant came from.

	ACDI	CNAА	LO'L	TVG	WIN	VOCA	Total
Russia		3		1			4
Ukraine			10			2	12
Georgia				2			2
Kazakhstan	4						4
Kyrgyzstan -	1				1		2
Moldova						2	2
Tajikistan					2		2
Turkmenistan					1		
Totals	5	3	10	3	4	4	29

Question No. 1: *Did your implementing agency (ACDI, CNAА, VOCA, TVG, or WI) provide adequate logistics and management support to make your trip worthwhile and to maximize opportunities for you in the U.S.?*

All responses were positive, with participants noting their satisfaction at meeting their objectives. There were no systemic breakdowns; any problems encountered were the normal glitches associated with complex travel arrangements. Some comments, such as the suggestion that increased efforts be made to arrange meetings with potential joint venture partners, provided useful guidance to the structuring of some of the later programs.

Question No. 2: *How useful was the experience?*

Areas of Usefulness	Implementors/No. of Participants					
	ACDI (5)	VOCA (4)	LO'L (10)	TVG(3)	WIN (4)	CNAA (3)
a. Enhanced professional capability	2	1	2	2	-	1
b. Career advancement/better job	-		1	-	-	-
c. Increased self-esteem/prestige	-		1	-	-	-
d. Professional contact/linkages	1	2	2	1	-	-
e. Observing market economies at work	2	1	1	-	2	2
f. Others	-	-	2	-	-	-

Increased professional capability and observing market economies at work were the greatest benefits noted by the participants. During informal discussions with participants it became clear that they viewed their U.S. experience as an important stepping stone to furthering their professional status. It was repeatedly stated that the opportunities being made available to the participants should be a means to accelerating development in the NIS. An example of the usefulness of the training was demonstrated during the CN training of Russian insurance executives. The host US insurance firm provided large quantities of proprietary and confidential risk evaluation material to the Russian insurance company leaders which the group said would be translated and used in their business on their return to Russia. In another case, an agribusiness CEO observed vacuum packing techniques for the first time and learned about the value of varying humidity in storehouses and techniques for doing so. Both of these will improve the competitiveness of his recently privatized organization and could result in follow on business for the US hosts.

Question No. 3: *How much of what you saw/learned is transferable?*

Knowledge Transferrable	Implementor/Number of Participants					
	ACDI (5)	VOCA (4)	LO'L (10)	TVG (3)	WIN (4)	CNAA (3)
a. None	-	-	-	-	-	-
b. A Little	1	1	3	-	-	-
c. A Great Deal	4	3	7	3	4	3

All participants noted seeing/learning things while participating in the program which they would be able to practice in their current jobs, with an overwhelming majority stating they would be able to use "a great deal" of what they saw and learned. Participants exhibited a voracious appetite for written material, collecting and shipping volumes of information they plan to use on return to their countries. In one training program all participants prepared business plans for their enterprises, a major advance for individuals accustomed to working in a command economy in which all decisions were made centrally. Suggestions were made that documents would be translated and used verbatim or that documents would be published and used for training purposes. Most participants noted that they plan to conduct seminars or workshops for colleagues upon their return. A group of senior central bankers informed that they planned to conduct a conference at the beginning of 1996 for bankers which would draw on material from their training program. They also stated that they would draw on data from their videotaped program to publish an article in the major Russian financial journal "Money and Credit". **These types of after training activities will lead to a multiplier effect for the training indicating that the already cost effective training will be even more so as the knowledge is disseminated by the participants.**

Question no. 4: How will knowledge be applied?

Areas of Application	Implementor/No. of participants					
	ACDI (5)	VOCA (4)	LO'L (10)	TVG (3)	WIN (4)	CNAA (3)
a. Management of a project, office division or company	-	-	4	-	2	-
b. Initiation of new projects or services	1	2	2	1	2	-
c. Improved operational procedures, programs or services	2	2	2	1	-	1
d. Influence or make policy	2	-	1	-	-	-
e. Train others (workshops on-the-job-training, etc.)	-	-	1	1	-	2
f. Participate in research activities	-	-	-	-	-	-
g. Not returning to a specific organization/job	-	-	-	-	-	-
h. Others (be specific)	-	-	-	-	-	-

Most participants noted the possibility of affecting project and/or office management as a result of the training. However, the response to this question was so low that no real

conclusions should be drawn. In interviews, several examples of training application were reported. In a highly specialized program, WI trained participants in vegetable processing. Post harvest losses are a meaningful problem in Russia. The training transferred techniques of drying and storage which will increase quality as well as reduce losses. This should be helpful in permitting the participants' recently privatized plant to be competitive and profitable.

Question No. 5: *How many U.S. organizations/individuals do you plan to maintain contact with?*

No. of Contracts Planned	Implementor/Number of Participants					
	ACDI (5)	VOCA (4)	LO'L (10)	TVG (3)	WIN (4)	CNAA (3)
a. 1-3	2	1	8	-	-	3
b. 4-6	1	-	1	3	3	-
c. over 6	2	2	1	-	1	-

As shown by the preceding table, a desire to maintain contact was expressed by almost all of the participants. In some cases, like the insurance group, ties have already been formed and the training solidified them. Other relationships were launched by the training. During a Tri Valley training program, a joint venture was solidified to produce seed potatoes in Russia, with the financing and materials provided by the local host of a training visit and the production and marketing to be done by the family of the participant. There is little doubt that relations between the parties will be maintained.

Question No. 6: *How many colleagues will you share knowledge gained with?*

Colleagues to be trained	Implementors/Number of Participants					
	ACDI (5)	VOCA (4)	LO'L (10)	TVG (3)	WIN (4)	CNAA (3)
a. None	-	-	-	-	-	-
b. 1-10	-	-	2	-	-	-
c. 11-25	-	2	3	1	2	-
d. 26-50	-	2	1	-	-	-
e. over 50	5	-	4	2	2	3

A majority of the participants intend to share their new knowledge with colleagues, with none opting to keep it to themselves. All expressed interest in sharing their U.S. experience with their colleagues and most of the participants viewed the sharing of information as a key

element of success and a responsibility of the training. The means by which information would be exchanged was a common theme of discussion. In cases where video cameras were being used, there were regular reminders of the importance of sharing topics. Should the program continue, training groups should have their important activities videotaped for future reference and dissemination.

Question No 7: *In what ways will you be able to affect policy as a result of your training?*

Level of policy impact	Implementors/No of participants					
	ACDI (5)	VOCA (4)	LO'L (10)	TVG (3)	WIN (4)	CNAA (3)
a. Organizational	-	2	5	2	4	2
b. Community/City	-	-	3	1	-	1
c. Regional	4	-	1	-	-	1
d. National	1	-	1	-	-	-

The potential for policy impact is clearly at the organization and regional levels. Participants noted their ability to affect policy lie in their ability to participate and influence organizational discussions; their ability to make implementation decisions; as well as their responsibility to analyze decisions. Through policy changes the participants have had opportunity to influence privatization in the NIS. The fact that 15 out of 29 of the participants had titles indicating that they function at the most senior professional levels indicated that they can be influential in bringing about policy change. For example, the central banking group included very senior officials. They arrived with a ten page list of detailed questions. At their exit debrief they noted that all of their questions had been answered and that they will apply their experience in their daily operations. This will undoubtedly lead to policy changes, albeit in a subtle central banking manner.

Question No. 8: *Did training meet expectations and objectives?*

The following comments by participants indicate that the program did meet expectations.

- Many participants want to access American volunteers and/or U.S. consultant services for future needs which indicated a positive experience. Implementors should try and set up systems to respond to this desire.
- Some participants noted the potential benefit of having NIS farmers, agribusiness leaders, and others participate in internships in the U.S. for extensive hands-on experience. Areas of potential benefit include production technology, agricultural product sales, product marketing, and agriculture equipment design.

- Participants expressed the importance of continuing/maximizing the use of former volunteers who have worked in the NIS countries because they bring with them the knowledge of problems associated with the NIS and potential solutions to those problems which the participants can observe while in the U.S.
- Participants in all groups lauded the importance of this program and noted that it should continue so that other citizens from the NIS can take advantage of this, an opportunity which broadens and deepens relationships and absorption of technologies. Several participants suggested the program be expanded as a way to expand potential benefits and speed modernization of the NIS economies.
- An important aspect of the RFTF program is the flexibility that allows the implementing agency to add or subtract to the program to meet specific needs noted by the participants after they have arrived in the U.S. This flexibility allows the program to be tailored to needs that surface directly related to something seen or taught while in the U.S. For example, while on a training program with WI a participant expressed a wish to observe meat processing techniques. He was quickly accommodated.

Conclusions

The questionnaire results, visits to the implementors, perusal of the quarterly reports and discussions with both trainers and trainees have led the evaluator to three conclusions, as follows:

- *The training is of high quality;*
- *The program is cost effective; and*
- *There is good potential for high impact.*

In addition to the above there are a number of other conclusions regarding the management of the program which will be articulated at the end of this section.

Quality - The small size of the groups receiving training permitted the project implementors to provide far more attention to individuals than they could have if the groups had been larger. Most groups were between three and five, which are easy to move and can observe a commercial firm without disrupting its operations. The example of a group which was walked through an agricultural credit loan at a Denver bank is illustrative of the thoroughness of the training. The group spent the entire morning with the bank loan committee reviewing the application and witnessing the interplay of the reviewers. In the afternoon they spent time with the applicant and learned about his side of the transaction. All of the participants noted that this was an excellent and transferrable learning experience.

The close relations which developed between the insurance group and the US host insurance company was another indication of quality. Care was taken to assure that the Russian insurance executives saw all sides of the business. Much material was provided to the Russians gratis. This material will provide the basis of a modernization program for their company.

High quality is also the result of bringing together experienced trainers and trainees. Many of the implementor trainers had worked in the NIS in FTF programs and were familiar with the problems faced by the participants. They were thus able to tune their inputs more precisely achieving more progress in less time. Previous contact between implementors and trainers also increased productivity, a sign of high quality. Anecdotal data indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the training experience and a desire to continue and even expand contacts under the program. This, combined with a virtual absence of complaints, indicates that the implementors are providing high quality training.

Cost Effectiveness - At the end of the one year program the RFTF program will have trained 94 individuals for approximately \$1 million. This is about \$10,600 per training month inclusive of transportation, lodging and translation services. Similar short term training in other AID projects costs approximately \$14,000 so there is an effective savings per trainee of roughly 25 percent. The project trains four individuals for the price of three. A large part of this benefit derives from the fact that the trainers are volunteers and therefore uncompensated. In many cases local transport and training materials are provided free by the training entities. This is done because many of the training entities anticipate forging some commercial relationships with the NIS in the future and believe that the contacts developed with the RFTF participants will give them a head start. The fact that the participants are senior individuals with previous experience with their trainers permits them to get down to work immediately on arrival in the US. They have a firm agenda and need little or no orientation. The result is a quicker and more cost effective training experience.

Twenty four out of twenty nine participants questioned indicated that the knowledge gained is transferrable and a number of these noted that they would disseminate their experience to others upon return to their countries. Most estimated that they would train over 50 others on their return to their jobs. Even if only half of this occurs, it would indicate a very high multiplier effect from the training further enhancing its cost effectiveness.

Impact - The high quality of the participants virtually assures that there will be high impact from the program. Fifteen out of the twenty nine individuals who filled out the questionnaires held titles of Director, Head, Chairman or Chief Executive Officer. The agribusiness participants were decision makers of newly privatized operations and the financial executives were people in positions to change policies and practices in their firms. The insurance executives left little doubt that on their return they would adopt much of what they learned in their operations. One of the agribusiness operators, on observing a seed planting device which had been modified to plant seven rows at a time bought it for replication.

The high impact potential was highlighted by several transactions reported by implementors. A fruit processor visiting an apple chip processing facility in Ohio has entered into negotiations to purchase equipment being replaced for his facility back in the NIS. Documentation outlining equipment leasing techniques was provided to agribusiness trainees who indicated that it had relevance to their operations in the NIS.

Other factors which lead to a conclusion that the project will have a high impact are the initiation of discussions about possible joint venture for seed potato production, the enthusiastic acceptance of the concept of business plans by the agribusiness group, which wrote plans for their own enterprises as part of their program and the warm and close ties forged by many of the participants with their implementors.

Other Conclusions - A review of the implementor reports on each training experience and the quarterly reports indicated that satisfactory reporting systems are in place to assure that programmatic and fiduciary responsibilities are being adequately discharged and the program is operating in a productive fashion. As the grant was executed in September 1994 the first quarter program was smaller than anticipated as plans needed to be created. The program picked up its pace and by the fourth quarter of FY1995, all indicators were on target.

The questionnaires and interviews indicated that on occasion a more focused program might be appropriate. Interviews with trainers and trainees indicated that a training period of three to four weeks was optimum and that future training should meet this timetable. Use of videotapes to help the trainees disseminate their newly found knowledge and experience on their return is recommended and should be incorporated in any follow on activity. Finally, all parties to the evaluation concluded that the mix of little classroom and much hands on and observation training was appropriate and productive and should be continued.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED/RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions above and the synergy which exists between the FTF and RFTF programs it is recommended that the program be continued for at least one more year. The cost savings are meaningful and demonstrated and the program targets decision makers who can make a difference in the process of transformation of the agricultural environment of the NIS economies. Close relationships are being forged between agribusiness leaders of the NIS and US agriculturalists and entrepreneurs. Indications are that there will be measurable benefits to the NIS economies and potential commercial benefits to the US participants in the future. The short period of time which the RFTF has existed makes speculation about success somewhat risky. Nevertheless, it would appear prudent to provide another tranche of funding to continue this to-date successful program so that the successes of the past year can be built. The fact that a well functioning implementation structure has been created by the implementors further strengthens this recommendation.

APPENDIX A

Reverse Farmer-To-Farmer Pilot Project

Scope of Work

Evaluation of Training Programs

Introduction to Project:

Since early 1992, six agricultural development organizations have been conducting Farmer-To-Farmer programs throughout the Newly Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development. The six implementors of the Farmer-To-Farmer program (Agricultural Cooperative Development International, Citizens Network, Land O'Lakes, Tri Valley Growers, Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance, and Winrock International) have arranged volunteer assignments for more than 1,700 U.S. farmers and agribusiness persons throughout the NIS.

The Reverse Farmer-To-Farmer Pilot Project was established to complement Farmer-To-Farmer activities by providing resources to each implementor to conduct participant training programs in the U.S. ACDI is administering the project. Each implementor has received a sub-grant from ACDI and is responsible for conducting their U.S. training program. ACDI and VOCA work together under a memorandum of understanding to administer VOCA's U.S.-based training programs.

Scope of Work:

- A) Attend representative opening sessions and evaluation sessions of all participating implementors.
- B) Travel to six U.S. training sites, one visit per implementor, as appropriate for the purpose of evaluating quality of training and potential impact of training.
- C) Review all project documents and prepare questionnaire for administration to selected participants who received training under the Reverse Farmer-To-Farmer Pilot Project.
- D) Participate in strategic planning/evaluation sessions with implementors to highlight design and training issues to be addressed for the remainder of the year, and to lay the groundwork for ongoing activities and project extension.
- E) Review returned questionnaires and prepare an overall evaluation of the project.
- F) Other duties as may be assigned by Stephen Landrigan, Director of Training, which are consistent with the overall scope of this assignment.

APPENDIX B

NIS Exchange and Training Project

Debriefing Questionnaire

1. Did your implementing agency (ACDI, CN, LOL, VOCA, TVG, and WI) provide adequate logistics and management support to make your trip worthwhile and to maximize opportunities for you in the United States? If not how might it be adjusted?
2. How useful was the experience? What do you believe to be of greatest benefit as a result of your training program? (If more than one please rank)
 - ___ a. Enhanced professional capability
 - ___ b. Career advancement/better job opportunities
 - ___ c. Increased self esteem/prestige
 - ___ d. Professional contacts/linkages
 - ___ e. Observing a market economy at work
 - ___ f. Other (be specific) _____
3. How much of what you saw/learned in the training program do you believe you will be able to put into practice in your present job/position?
 - ___ a. none
 - ___ b. a little
 - ___ c. a great deal
4. How do you envision applying what you observed/learned in training to your organization/ job ? (please number in rank order all that apply, the number "1" being the most successful)
 - ___ a. Management of a project, office, decision or company
 - ___ b. Initiation of new projects or services
 - ___ c. Improved operational procedures, programs or services
 - ___ d. Influence or make policy
 - ___ e. Train others (workshops on - the - job- training, etc)
 - ___ f. Participate in research activities
 - ___ g. Not returning to a specific organization/job.
 - ___ h. others (be specific) _____

5. How many U.S. organizations/individuals do you plan to maintain contact with as a result of your training program? (check one)

- _____ a. 1-3
- _____ b. 4-6
- _____ c. over 6

6 With how many colleagues will you share the knowledge gained as a result of your training program? (Check one.)

- _____ a. none
- _____ b. 1-10
- _____ c. 11-25
- _____ d. 26-50
- _____ e. over 50

7. In what ways will you be able to affect policy change as a result of your program training?

	Input into Decisions	Make Decisions	Implement Decisions	Analyze Decisions
a. Organizational				
b. Community/City				
c. Regional				
d. National				
e. others				

8. Did the training program meet your expectations and program objectives? Please explain, How might the program be improved (too long, too short, proper timing, relevancy, etc)

9. Please share any other observations you wish.

APPENDIX C: EVALUATION FIELD VISIT SCHEDULE

1. VOCA/ACDI Fruit and Vegetable Processing Group, Cincinnati/Columbus, Ohio, March 23-25. Included a debriefing session at ACDI on the 28th of March.
2. Land O'Lakes Agri-business Training Group, Minneapolis, MN, April 25-28. Included a debriefing session at Land O'Lakes on the 28th of April.
3. Citizens Network's Insurance Company Leader Group, Columbus, Ohio May 8-12. Included a debriefing session at Citizens Network in Washington, DC on the 12th of May.
4. Tri Valley Growers - Seed Potato Program, Idaho Falls, Idaho, June 18-22. Included a debriefing session in Idaho Falls on June 22.
5. ACDI's Commercial Banker Program, Denver, Colorado August 7-10. Included the briefing session at ACDI on July 20th and a debriefing session at ACDI on August 14.
6. Winrock International, Aquaculture/Food Processing, Morrilton, Arkansas, August 14-16. This visit was limited to field observation only. I did not participate in either briefing or debriefing session.

APPENDIX D: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED DURING EVALUATION

Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI), Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer Pilot Program for the Newly Independent States Proposal prepared for USAID/BHR/PVC, undated.

Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA) and Agricultural Cooperative Development International's (ACDI), Implementation Plan for October 1, 1994 - September 29, 1995. Prepared for USAID/BHR/PVC, undated.

Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance's (VOCA) proposed Fruit and Vegetable Processing Observation program (March 1 - 28), undated.

Land O'Lakes, Inc. (LO'L) proposed schedule for the last 3 days of the training course in Agribusiness Management scheduled for April 10-28, addressed to ACDI March 21, 1995.

Draft "NIS Exchange and Training Project Follow-up Questionnaire" prepared by the Academy for Educational Development (AED), undated.

"Final Report Guidelines for Training Provider" prepared by AED for implementing Agency debriefing of participants, undated.

Final Report "Midterm Evaluation of the Farmer-to-Farmer/NIS program prepared for the bureau for Humanitarian Response by Development Associates, Inc., May 6, 1994.

Agricultural Cooperative Development International's (ACDI's) Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer Pilot Project, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia Bank Training Program, July 19-August 15, 1995.

Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA) and Agricultural Cooperative Development International's (ACDI's) Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer Pilot Project, Russia and Kazakhstan, Grain Processing and Storage, February 22 - March 21, 1995.

Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA's) Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer Pilot Project, Armenia and Kazakhstan, Fruit and Vegetable Processing and Marketing, February 15 - March 11, 1995.

Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance's (VOCA's) Reverse Farmer-to-Farmer Pilot Project, Belarus, Crayfish Production, March 1 - 21, 1995.

1st Quarterly Report Farmer-to-Farmer, October 1-December 31, 1994, Grant # FAO-0705-G-00-4055-00, from AID to Larry Harms.

2nd Quarterly Report Farmer-to-Farmer, January 1-March 31, 1995, Grant # FAO-0705-G-00-4055-00 from ACDI to Larry Harms.

3rd Quarterly Report Farmer-to-Farmer, April 1-June 30, 1995, Grant # FAO-0705-G-00-4055-00 from ACDI to Larry Harms.

APPENDIX E: NIS PARTICIPANTS OBSERVATIONS IN THE FIELD

VOCA/ACDI Fruit and Vegetable Processing Group (March 1-28, 1995)

Bublich Gregorievich, Chairman, Zguritsa: Agrofirma, Moldova

George Zherege, Chairman, Terra Farmers Association, Moldova

Vasil Yurtchenko, Head, Tavija Joint Stock Company: Ukraine

**Georgiy Vassililyeu, General Director, Souther Scientific-Technical Center on
Approbation and Purchase of Foreign Technique and Technology: Ukraine**

Georgietta Solomitskaya, Escort/Interpreter, VOCA: Moldova

Land O'Lakes Agribusiness Group (April 10-28, 1995)

Alexander Tiupa, Director of Private Farming, Department of Agriculture, Ukraine.

**Bogdon O. Fedenko, Chief Expert, Herd Management, Beregovo District, Department of
Agriculture, Ukraine.**

Alexander V. Peleshkei, Private farmer focusing on aquaculture and potatoes, Ukraine.

Edward P. Maidanevich, Private Potato farmer, Ukraine.

**Tigomir Z. Botosh, Chief Executive Officer, Prykordomnik Agricultural Farm which
processes meat and meat products, Ukraine.**

**Ivan S. Kerita, Chief Executive Officer of a private agribusiness firm engaged in
mushroom production, processing and marketing; sunflower seed processing, Ukraine.**

Carl C. Shosh, Private potato producer, Ukraine.

**Vasili A. Kavoch, Chief Executive Officer for a Ukraine-Polish joint venture specializing
in meat processing (beef and pork), Ukraine.**

**Ivan I Adam, Chief Executive Officer for a Ukraine-Hungarian joint venture which
produces ice cream and processes vegetables, Ukraine.**

**Vasili F. Shtefanink, Chairman, Beregova, District Association of Private Farmers,
Ukraine.**

Citizen's Network-Insurance Company Leaders Group (April 30 - May 12)

Zinaida Valeriyevna Vorobyova, Director, Chivashia-Podderzhka, Russia.

Eygamy Llyich Salischev, Director, Tula-Podderzhka, Russia.

Tatiana Alexandrovna Tatarchuk, Director, Parm-Podderzhka, Russia

Dimitril Kilnenko, Interpreter

Tri Valley Growers - Seed Potato Program (June 4 - 22)

George Marzanidze, Institute of Agrobiotechnolgy, Tbilisi, Georgia

Nugzar Tchelize, "Original" Farm, Asureti, Georgia

Nina Victōrova, Institute of Agriculture, Stripino, Russia

ACDI's Central Asia Bank Training (July 19 - August 15)

Mr. Serik U. Amirbaev, Deputy Chairman, Turan Bank, Kazakhstan.

Ms. Alma Kerimbekova, Head, Credit Division, Kazagroindustrial Bank, Kazakhstan.

Ms. Saniya Galieva, Deputy Manager, Central Bank Office, Kazagroindustrial Bank
Kazakhstan.

Mr. Nurzıy B. Mamyraliev, Deputy Manager, Dzhambul Oblast, Turan Bank,
Kazakhstan.

Mr. Arstanbek Osmonaliev, Head International Department, Kazagroindustrial Bank,
Kyrgyzstan.

Ms. Helen Barashkova, Escort/Interpreter.

Winrock International, Agriculture/Food Processing Group (August 12 - August 20)

Mr. Nosir Aliev, Komibodom Enterprises, Tajikistan

Mr. Abdullo Ishonbobev, Konibodon Enterprises, Tajikistan

Mr. Adye Adul Sydykov, Emerging Leader of Private Farmers, Kyrgyz Republic

Mr. Charie Aldoshev, Chairman, Danow Business Association, Turkmenistan

Mr. Iouri Zama, Escort/Interpreter

APPENDIX F: IMPLEMENTING AGENCY CONTACTS

ACDI

Mr. Ronald Gollehon, President, ACDI
Mr. Stephen Landrigan, Director of Training
Mr. Michael Moran, Executive Director, NIS Programs
Ms. Eta Nahapetian, Associate Director of Training
Ms. Natalie Ernstrom, Training Coordinator
Ms. Anne D'Angelo, Training Coordinator
Ms. Tammy Sheldon, Training Assistant

USAID

Charles Rheingans, USAID/BHR/PVC
Larry W. Harms, Farmer-to-Farmer Coordinator, USAID/BHR/PVC
John Fasullo, Farmer-to-Farmer Program Leader, USAID/BHR/PVC

Citizens Network

Jerry W. Leach, Director, Agribusiness Volunteer Program
Sarah C. Cloris, Assistant volunteer Coordinator
John S. Balis, Director, Food Systems Restructuring Program

Tri Valley Growers

Jean Bouch, Training Coordinator

VOCA

Debriefing session conducted by ACDI at ACDI

Land O' Lakes

Ms. Lori Anderson, Project Officer, Training, International Development
La Verne Palmberg, Instructor, Agribusiness Management
Ms. Michelle Wilson, Program Assistant

Winrock International

Mr. David Norman, Program Manager
Mr. Thomas Green, Associate Program Manager
Ms. Glenna Howell, Assistant Fellowship Manager

APPENDIX G

ACDI'S Proposed Follow-up Questionnaire

1. How useful was your training experience in the United States? How do you think you benefited from the program in each of the following areas? For each area, write none, a little or a great deal in the second column. In the third column, you can write any comments or examples regarding how you benefited from the program in each area.

Area	Degree of Benefit (none, a little, a great deal)	Comments, Examples
a. Enhanced professional capability		
b. Career advancement/ better job opportunities		
c. Increased self esteem/prestige		
d. Professional contacts/linkages		
e. Observing a market economy at work		
f. Other (be specific)		

2. For each of the following activities, how did you apply what you observed/learned in training to your organization/ job? For each activity, write none, a little or a great deal in the second column. In the third column, you can write any comments or examples regarding how you benefited from the program in each activity.

Activity	Degree of Application (none, a little, a great deal)	Comments, Examples
a. Management of a project, office, decision or company		
b. Initiation of new projects or services		
c. Improved operational procedures, programs or services		
d. Influence or make policy		
e. Train others (workshops on-the-job-training, etc)		
f. Participate in research activities		
g. Not returning to a specific organization/ job.		
h. others (be specific)		

3. With how many U.S. organizations/individuals have you maintained contact as a result of your training program? This is a two part question. In Section "a" of the chart below, name up to three U.S. organizations or individuals with whom you have had the most contact since the program and, in the second column, briefly describe the nature of that contact. In Section "b", write the total number of U.S. organizations or individuals with whom you have had any form of contact as a result of the training program.

a. U.S. Organizations/Individuals with whom you have maintained the most contact	
Name	Type of Contact

b. Total number of US Organizations/ Individuals with whom you have maintained contact:

4. With how many colleagues have you shared the knowledge gained as a result of your training program? (Check one and describe one or two examples.)

- a. none
 b. 1-10
 c. 11-25
 d. 26-50
 e. over 50

Example(s):

5. In what ways have you affected policy change as a result of your program training?

	Input into Decisions	Make Decisions	Implement Decisions	Analyze Decisions
a. Organizational				
b. Community/City				
c. Regional				
d. National				
e. others				

Please describe some key examples of the types of policy changes noted above.

6. Please share any other observations you wish.