



Global Excellence in Management

Impact Evaluation

Mid-term Evaluation

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AI	Appreciative Inquiry
AIM	Asian Institute of Management
BHR	Bureau for Humanitarian Response
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CWRU	Case Western Reserve University
CRWRC	Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
DIP	Detailed Implementation Plan
GEM	Global Excellence in Management
IDR	Institute for Development Research
IIRR	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction
LWR	Lutheran World Relief
MIS	Management Information System
MSI	Management Systems International
n.d.	No date
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OD	Organizational development
OEP	Organizational Excellence Program
PACD	Project activity completion date
PVC	Private and Voluntary Cooperation
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
SIGMA	Social Innovations in Global Management
SWOT	Analysis of Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats
TA	Technical assistance
TPM	Team planning meeting
UNDP	United Nations Development Programs
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WEP	Women's Empowerment Project

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Description and Background

The Global Excellence in Management (GEM) Initiative is implemented by Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) under a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC). The initiative is designed to build the organizational capacities of private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) to deliver effective development programs at the grassroots and across organizational and geographic boundaries. The current initiative (GEM II) began in 1997 and will continue through September 2000.

GEM's activities are organized into four levels but share a common emphasis on improving organizational performance. At the individual level, GEM works to build the capacities of PVO and NGO leaders managing organizational change and partnership development. At the organizational level, programs are designed to strengthen key organizational capacities. The inter-organizational level develops the skills for creating, managing, and fostering mutually beneficial partnerships, alliances and networks. System-wide level programs identify, document, and publicize innovative best practices. The GEM focus on management and organizational performance and the state-of-the-art methods it uses parallel recent experience and learning in the private sector. GEM takes a rigorous, research-based approach to capacity building and it is to USAID's credit that it has nurtured this initiative using the resource of a school of management known for its work in organizational development.

Effectiveness of GEM Models and Approaches

Programming targets were set for each of the four GEM goal levels. GEM is generally on target in terms of its programming activities at these levels of intended impact and such variations as exist are mainly the result of planned program shifts.

GEM's stated intent is to bring to the PVO and NGO community contemporary and innovative thinking and practice in the area of organizational learning and capacity building. To do this it uses a variety of adapted methodologies, including the centerpiece of the GEM approach to virtually all its programming, Appreciative Inquiry (AI). As described by GEM, Appreciative Inquiry is a capacity building process that begins by valuing the organization and the culture in which it is embedded; by learning about the organization, its relationship, its environment; and by identifying and building on existing strengths rather than examining in detail problems and deficiencies.

AI's emphasis on personal and organizational values, vision, environmental mastery, and core competencies parallels key elements in current management thinking about attributes of leadership and effective organizations.

The reaction to AI as a workshop or retreat approach is overwhelmingly positive. Virtually every respondent to our inquiry found the approach (and GEM's use of it) valuable and many said so with unusual enthusiasm and conviction, implying or saying directly that the experience of AI in a GEM setting was a life changing experience. AI, as used by GEM, also works especially well in multi-cultural contexts and with a wide variety of organizational agendas. The underlying values of the approach fit well with most PVO/NGO value systems

Views toward AI as a tool for use by the PVOs/NGOs themselves are also positive but there is an almost universal sense it is best used in conjunction with other approaches that are more rooted in operational systems and procedures and that in the "real world" it is unrealistic to avoid addressing real problems. There is universal respect for and appreciation of the quality and professionalism of the core GEM staff who lead or facilitate GEM programs or other workshop events.

Constraints and Limitations

Despite the near universal praise for GEM programs and their value to participating individuals and organizations, there are concerns expressed as well—mainly revolving around the task of applying GEM concepts in an actual organizational setting. As might be expected, this is a particular concern of individuals and organizations who experience GEM in a one-shot event or intervention. Many cite a need for more follow-up, more support for post-event networking, and a more interactive web site that would allow for interaction and even "help desk" type services through which organizations could solicit ideas and help both from GEM and from other organizations using GEM approaches. There also is support for more focused training of selected staff of organizations who will be involved in follow-up implementation of GEM-based initiatives such as a new strategic plan or an organizational shift to a team-based structure. GEM is, in fact, moving in these directions in response to learning from its own feedback systems.

Many also feel that GEM training itself needs to focus, in part, on management skills, at least those related to the application of GEM approaches. The avoidance of "problem-solving" as a paradigm means to some that there is also an omission of attention to the systems and procedures that are the lifeblood of organizations.

Impacts of the GEM Program

The most consistently reported GEM impact was the project's effectiveness in helping organizations take a forward-looking approach to planning. The methods and techniques are viewed as particularly enabling in the process of making transitions within an organization around leadership change, decision-making processes, teamwork, and interpersonal issues.

A second overall impact was the clear impetus that GEM program participants felt to actually transfer and adapt the methods and techniques to their own work situation, either through designing new programs, holding workshops and seminars, facing issues in their own organization, and changing their own way of relating to and working with colleagues

and partners. For those persons that were involved in partnership or networks, GEM's influence provided new alternatives for the directions of those alliances. Several GEM clients also developed their own models and approaches based on GEM principles.

Relationship of GEM to PVC's Strategic Plan

The PVC mission statement sets out levels of desired impact for its programs. The plan clearly identifies U. S. based PVOs as the primary client group for the Office, and as partners for the implementation of development efforts around the world.

The following diagram summarizes the GEM impacts for each of the levels included in PVC's strategic plan.

**U. S. PVO
capacity building**



**Local
NGO/community
group capacity
building**



**Community level
impact**

- Broader awareness/consensus around key organizational issues
 - Healthier interaction among staff
 - Improved strategic planning
 - Higher morale and productivity
 - Major help for organizations in transition or emerging from crisis
 - Support for goal definition and building staff alignment with goals
 - Enhanced openness and dialogue within organization
 - Help in moving from hierarchical structure to team-based approach and structure
 - Enhanced energy and motivation throughout organization
 - Stronger organizational base for generating new program activity
 - Organizational empowerment
- ~~~~~*
- Enhanced PVO respect for and appreciation of role of partners
 - Broader participation of community members with local development initiatives by PVOs and their partners
 - Increased local interest and participation in self-development activities
 - Enhanced sense of local ownership of on-the-ground development activities
 - More NGO partner involvement in strategic planning and program direction that affects them
 - Improved problem solving and involvement with PVO partners in food aid administration
 - Higher quality of local NGO planning
 - Enhanced local citizen voluntarism in PVO/NGO development programs
- ~~~~~*
- Increased generation of community resources for development
 - Community leaders work in a more participatory fashion with more support from their constituency
 - Programs spread from one community to the next with community members as facilitators
 - Improved management of intra-community conflict
 - “Empowerment” of local women and men
 - Increase in the number and quality of local self-help initiatives and actions
-

Beyond this direct hierarchy of USAID-supported GEM impacts, the project has begun to reach out to several organizations in the non-profit and for-profit sector who have utilized GEM services or collaborated with GEM on a pay-as-you-go basis. This multiplier effect of USAID support for GEM has significant implications for spreading and sustaining the impact of this initiative.

GEM Program Management

The GEM project's stated intent is to "bridge the two worlds (of university research and reflection and GEM's focused implementation), bringing out the best that each has to offer." Accordingly, GEM management is shared between a GEM Washington Project Office and The Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western University. This seems to work very well.

The performance monitoring strategy and related indicators generated for GEM II include a set of output indicators linked to system-wide (within GEM itself) capacity building. These indicators measure the development of systems and activities for strategic inquiry and dissemination of learning. There are no output or outcome indicators that attempt to measure GEM's strategic capacity or cost-effectiveness directly though program outputs and outcomes that provide an indirect indication of the ability of the GEM system to accomplish its work. There also is little *documented* self-reflection on internal GEM organizational capacity or management systems.

Important program shifts based on GEM experience-based reflection include combining PVOs and NGOs in the same workshops and shifting the original GEM focus on broad PVO-NGO networks to GEM II's stress on specific partnerships.

GEM has periodically examined the cost-effectiveness of its program, most specifically during a mid-grant retreat in March 1996. This led to decisions about level of involvement in the various types of programs, and "an economic paradigm shift in GEM where funds are centrally monitored and managed and where cost effectiveness is a shared value and operating principle." However, no dollar-based cost-benefit analysis has been done. GEM consistently uses a cost-sharing model and that generated over \$174,000 during GEM II.

GEM Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

The first GEM II Annual Report (December 1998) posits the overall goal to create a system of ongoing learning and evaluation that engages all GEM's stakeholder groups in a co-inquiry that benefits all. Elements in the strategy for gathering data and reflection include participant evaluation, interviews with program alumni, and both quantitative and qualitative data collection keyed to indicators defined in the project's detailed implementation plan

GEM evaluation indicates that its programs are in demand and that participants rate them highly and report anecdotally that they have made a positive difference in their lives or their organization's capacities. But, until recently, there was little evidence in GEM

internal or external documents of serious reflection on evaluation findings and how they might challenge the project's presuppositions or guide redirection of programs. Nowhere, for example, is there any cost benefit analysis of programs nor serious comparative analysis of GEM approaches and other techniques of capacity building. Nor is there much attempt to track field-level results in terms of enhanced NGO viability or program impact.

Summary of Lessons Learned

- Capacity building works. There is abundant anecdotal evidence that GEM interventions to improve organizational capacity have led both to more capable organizations and to greater program impacts by these organizations.
- GEM's approach and methods are most useful in visioning, goal setting, and strategic planning and less helpful in *implementing* organizational change.
- Some organizational issues are primarily related to exogenous structural elements or factors in the external environment and GEM's approach does not always adequately address these factors, in part because of its focus on inward values and in part because of its reluctance to address "problems."
- Continuity of consultation relationships is effective in supporting organizational change.
- Focused, sustained support to partnership development has paid off.
- Focusing on positive achievements is an effective way of mobilizing resources for development at the community level.
- GEM monitoring and evaluation primarily looks at anecdotal information to relay qualitative information about the impact of programs. Some of the participant organizations, however, are beginning to find ways to quantify results—this type of innovation could provide improved documentation for GEM.
- There is a rich lode of experience among PVOs and NGOs in applying AI to their own agendas, with and without GEM assistance (though usually triggered by GEM programs).
- The PVO community values PVC as both a source of capacity building assistance and a locus of support for innovation and experimentation.

Recommendations for GEM

- Address the question of under which circumstances and in which situations the GEM methods and techniques are most useful, especially at the application stage.
- Build the focus on systems and procedures and add more management skills training to GEM events to facilitate application of theoretical concepts.
- Look for ways to enhance the "value-added" of GEM methods to other organizational development methods and approaches to conflict resolution.

- Improve quantitative and qualitative documentation of field-level impact and thoughtful interpretation of resulting findings.
- Maintain better quality control over consultants used in GEM programs.
- Develop trained cadres in regions to support continuity of GEM assistance with localized expertise.
- Selectively train key staff in organizations participating in GEM programs to enable them to facilitate later implementation of GEM approaches in their organizations and with partners.
- Train more consultants and support organization personnel in certificate programs to gain a greater and sustainable multiplier effect.
- Increase support for networking of alumni
- Systematically document adaptations of GEM materials and methods by participants.
- Provide more follow-up assistance to help organizations interpret and apply new concepts from workshops/retreats, especially for organizations not in the customized partnership program.
- Enhance the focus on sustainability of GEM program initiatives, including exploration of funding options outside of USAID.
- Nurture a close and structured relationship with PVC staff to enhance awareness of GEM both for its contribution to PVC results and for its potential as a resource for USAID capacity building.

Recommendations for PVC

- Continue to invest in capacity building through a spectrum of methods and organizations.
- Increase role in facilitating links between PVO/NGO/non-profit sector and for-profit/private business sectors.
- Look for consulting services for PVOs outside the PVO/non-profit sector.
- Use GEM as a resource for Matching Grant PVOs as well as PVC and other departments of USAID itself.
- Continue the effort to improve the state-of-the-art in assessing organizational capacity and approaches to building such capacity.

Build on the above to establish a recognized role as a center for innovation, experimentation, and learning within USAID.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Program Description and Background

The Global Excellence in Management (GEM) Initiative is implemented by Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) under a cooperative agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR), Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation (PVC). The initiative is designed to build the organizational capacities of private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) to deliver effective development programs at the grassroots and across organizational and geographic boundaries. The current initiative (GEM II) began in 1997.

As the USAID re-engineering process and PVC's strategic planning were getting underway in the early 1990s, the PVC Office began to focus on helping to build the management capacity of U. S. PVOs to better manage and implement development efforts. GEM began as a pilot effort (the PVO/CEO initiative) based on recommendations of a joint USAID/PVO Task Force. From the beginning, GEM stakeholder involvement was a part of planning. Partnership consultations, presentations, focus groups and PVC-initiated surveys provided critical input for the design of GEM I and GEM II.

GEM II is now in its second year of implementation. Its project activity completion date (PACD) is September 30, 2000. This evaluation, along with continued involvement of stakeholders, will help shape the program during the final year.

GEM's programs and activities are organized into four levels, each of which addresses a specific goal and can be customized to best suit the needs of a country, a region, or a group of organizations. At the individual level, GEM works to build the capacities of PVO and NGO leaders engaged in managing organizational change and partnership development. At the organizational level, programs are designed to strengthen key organizational capacities. The inter-organizational level develops the skills for creating, managing, and fostering mutually beneficial partnerships, alliances and networks. System-wide level programs identify, document, and publicize innovative best practices.

1.2 Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation for BHR/PVC is fourfold:

- to provide information that PVC will use in reporting at the Strategic Objective level in its annual R4 report;
- to contribute to a larger study of PVC's capacity building efforts which will inform PVC of the efficacy and utility of these efforts, their impact and cost-per-organizational change;
- to provide lessons learned for broader application; and
- to inform USAID in designing future results frameworks in capacity building.

1.3 Evaluation Methodology

Representatives from GEM, PVC, and the evaluation team met for a team planning meeting (TPM) in Washington, D. C. in September 1999. This meeting resulted in agreement about the general focus of the evaluation and identification of basic questions each of the stakeholder groups wanted addressed by the evaluation

Following the TPM, the evaluation team drafted an interview guide, which was forwarded to GEM and PVC for comments and suggested revisions. An e-mail version of the interview guide was also prepared. Once revisions were integrated, the evaluation team met with GEM staff in Washington and in Cleveland to gather documentation, finalize the list of GEM clients to be interviewed and to address questions and issues outlined in the interview guide. Meetings were also held with PVC and other USAID staff for the same purpose.

Personal and telephone interviews were held with client stakeholders as a major source of information. (A list of respondents is in Appendix A.) E-mail and fax were used where telephone interviews were not practical overseas. Personal interviews and focus groups were held in Kenya and the Philippines by an additional consultant already traveling on PVC business. In addition, the evaluation team reviewed all project annual reports, case studies, training materials, tools, publications, data, and other documents provided by GEM and PVC. Some respondents also provided reports of activities from their organizations. (A list of documents reviewed is in Appendix B.) GEM made several files available that contain information about financial management and evaluation results and these were also reviewed, but are not included in the list of documents.

A mid-term discussion/briefing was held with GEM and PVC the last week of October 1999 to review progress to date and to examine whether the methodology for the evaluation was working. At that point, it was decided to hold a preliminary discussion/briefing of the final report draft with GEM and PVC early in December 1999, followed by a more structured briefing in PVC.

2. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 Progress toward Program Purpose and Objectives

As stated in the GEM Initiative DIP, the goals of GEM focus on four levels:

- **Individual level.** Build individual capacities of PVO and NGO leaders engaged in managing partnerships; organizational change, and innovative development initiatives.
- **Organizational level.** Strengthen key organizational capacities of PVOs and NGOs so that they provide more effective and creative development assistance and make stronger partners.
- **Inter-organizational level.** Develop skills and capacities for creating, managing, and evolving partnerships, alliances, and networks that are mutually beneficial and have a positive development impact.
- **System-wide level.** Discover, document, and disseminate innovative best practices of capacity building, organizational excellence, and effective partnership and alliance building in the service of sustainable development.

This report discusses progress toward these goals in this and the following section. This section, 2.1, addresses the effectiveness of GEM programmatic approaches along with selected constraints and unanticipated effects. The following section, 2.2, discusses GEM impacts in relation to the PVC strategic plan and at the various levels of GEM programming—individual, organizational, and inter-organizational.

2.1.1 Effectiveness of GEM Models and Approaches

Programming targets were set for each of the four GEM goal levels. An overview of how selected major program targets were met is presented in the following table.

As can be seen from this summary, GEM is generally on target in terms of its programming activities at its various levels of intended impact. The next questions are the effectiveness of its methods (discussed here) and the impact of the programs (discussed in section 2.2).

Table 1: GEM goals, targets and achievements

Goal level	Targets (From GEM DIP)	Achievements
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 certificate programs of 30-40 PVO/NGO participants • TOT on large group cooperation methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 certificate programs held; 1 more planned • not done; instead GEM alumni were used as support trainers in Certificate Program
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Organizational Excellence Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be held in 2000
Inter-organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 partnership consultations with potential participants • Customized partnership program with 8 U.S.-based PVOs) • Support to the International Forum on Capacity Building of Southern NGOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 to date (8 in year 1; 4 in year 2) • 5 customized partnerships active to date • GEM participated in and provided financial support for NGO participation in organizing meeting in Brussels.
System wide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two state-of-the art workshops • GEM journal • 3-5 Case stories • interactive Web site • practitioner's handbook and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 held; 1 anticipated in 2000 • 2 published; 1 pending • 1 published to date • established May 1998 • published September 1999

GEM's stated intent is to bring to the PVO and NGO community contemporary and innovative thinking and practice in the area of organizational learning and capacity building. To do this it uses a variety of adapted methodologies, including (as GEM lists them):

- Appreciative Inquiry
- Future Search Technology
- Open Space Technology
- Multi-cultural Groups
- Inter-Group Dialogue
- Trend Scans
- Team Building
- Benchmarking

- Personal Models
- Paradigm Shifting
- Cross-Boundary Organizing

Without question, however, the centerpiece of the GEM approach to virtually all its programming is Appreciative Inquiry (AI). As described by GEM,

Appreciative Inquiry is a capacity building process that begins by valuing the organization and the culture in which it is embedded; by learning about the organization, its relationship, its environment; and by identifying and building on existing strengths rather than examining in detail problems and deficiencies. Appreciative Inquiry puts organizations back in touch with their “deepest living values.” It can help an organization create its niche by identifying its collective hopes and dreams and then designing a process for achieving them.¹

In using AI, GEM facilitators and trainers guide participants through a “4-D model.” This consists of the stages of:

- Discovery (inquiry into ‘life giving’ properties),
- Dream (agreeing in possibility statements visioning the ideal),
- Design (aligning values, structures, and processes with the ideal, getting everyone into the conversation), and
- Delivery (constructing a sustainable preferred future embracing system-wide innovation).

AI was developed by David Cooperrider and his colleagues at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU). The practical application of this methodology and related action research has been greatly expanded by GEM though the methodology was developed separate from GEM and is used more broadly by CWRU faculty and graduate students and other practitioners.

AI and its conceptual base are central to the value system with which GEM approaches its work. It is applied consistently and thoroughly in the entire range of GEM interventions. Several evaluation respondents did note that while AI is extremely valuable during the 4 D’s Discovery and Dream steps, the concrete elements that would be useful in the Design and Delivery are less well addressed.

The reaction to AI as a workshop or retreat approach is overwhelmingly positive. Virtually every respondent to our inquiry found the approach (and GEM’s use of it) valuable and many said so with unusual enthusiasm and conviction, implying or saying directly that the experience of AI in a GEM setting was a life changing experience.

¹ Liebler, Claudia J., “Getting Comfortable with Appreciative Inquiry”, from the GEM web site (www.geminitiative.org/getting.html)

A Note on Appreciative Inquiry

In singing the praises of Appreciative Inquiry (AI), GEM's backers go out of the way to stress its uniqueness, especially in contrast to so-called "traditional problem-solving approaches."

The catch is, GEM backers lump virtually everything but AI as practiced by GEM into a conventional "deficit-based" approach category.

For example, an article by Timothy B. Wilmot in the first issue of the GEM Journal (*Global Social Innovation*, vol. 1, issue 1, Summer 1996) titled, "Inquiry and Innovation in the Private Voluntary Sector" states the following in connection with a discussion of the GEM Organizational Excellence Program.

... Participants must be choiceful about defining their topics and questions for inquiry. They can choose, for example, to study an entire range of phenomena, from their weaknesses, breakdowns, and environmental threats, as in the common practice of "SWOT analysis," or focus on the common values, empowering moments in their histories, and shared aspirations for the future.

This treatment of SWOT analysis, ignoring any mention of the Strengths and Opportunities dimensions of the tool, is fairly typical. In its zeal to make claims of uniqueness for AI, GEM makes straw persons of alternative approaches, many of which also emphasize building on core competencies, traditional success, a sense of possibilities, innovation, and dreams. AI, as typically described, makes a virtue of a uni-dimensional approach, eschewing problems or performance gaps as a point of entry or even a matter for serious recognition. Whether this approach is "life-giving" as claimed or a form of denial that ignores all negative issues can be debated. Either way, it is not the sole possession of GEM.

Nor, apparently, is AI always operationalized in a fashion so aggressively oblivious of "deficits." GEM leadership talk more in terms of AI as a value-added (our term) approach and there is an interest in doing more in the area of conflict. Similarly, several participants gave examples of how AI assisted their organization in recognizing, but moving beyond internal issues of long standing. Others, however, did point out that there are circumstances such as corruption and injustice that should NOT be appreciated and that AI tends to avoid this reality. Most GEM program participants do not experience AI as overly one dimensional although some note, as we observed, that some GEM materials give a different impression.

In our view, AI represents one in a spectrum of approaches and GEM is on firmer ground proclaiming its merits than proclaiming its uniqueness. If AI as a contribution to NGO/PVO organizational capacity is to be sustained, in fact, one hopes its effective techniques can be borrowed and adapted by others rather than be dependent on the Weatherhead/GEM philosophical base.

Clearly AI as a method of organizational development is energizing, motivating, and supports creativity and innovation.

AI, as used by GEM, also is credited with working especially well in multi-cultural contexts and with a wide variety of organizational agendas. The underlying values of the approach fit well with most PVO/NGO value systems. As noted to us by one participant, GEM "encouraged the staff to look further, be creative, and not just focus on what they

are doing at the moment. GEM accommodated all kinds of ideas and tried to find a place for them to fit in somewhere.”

In short, the reaction to AI as used by GEM in its programs is enthusiastically affirming. Views toward AI as a tool for use by the PVOs/NGOs themselves are also positive but there is an almost universal sense it is best used in conjunction with other approaches that are more rooted in operational systems and procedures and that in the “real world” it is unrealistic to avoid addressing real problems (see box, “A Note on Appreciative Inquiry”).

Many GEM participants are as skeptical as the evaluation team is about some of the rhetoric and claims surrounding AI uniqueness. This does not reduce the value they give it as an effective approach to organizational capacity building and team building.

There also is universal respect for and appreciation of the quality and professionalism of the core GEM staff who lead or facilitate GEM programs or other workshop events. The result is the sense of many that GEM training is the best they have encountered.

2.1.2 Constraints and Limitations

Despite the near universal praise for GEM programs and their value to participating individuals and organizations, there are concerns expressed as well—mainly revolving around the task of applying GEM concepts in an actual organizational setting. As might be expected, this is a particular concern of individuals and organizations who experience GEM in a one-shot event or intervention.

Several respondents noted to us the difficulty of transferring GEM ideas to the operational realities that managers face. Left to their own devices, GEM alumni, even if highly enthused and motivated by a GEM event, may feel unprepared to deal with apathy, resistance, and the panoply of complications that constrain implementation of GEM ideas in a typical organizational setting.

Not surprisingly, this is less of a problem for organizations involved in the customized partnership program where there is, at its best, an ongoing and multi-faceted interaction between GEM trainers and the organization. A group of CRS staff, for example, meet regularly with GEM to review relevant organizational issues. Save the Children in the Philippines notes that GEM was effective for them in large part because of the continuity GEM provided: sharing, networking, and engaging GEM trainees with other groups using AI.

But for most of the groups participating in GEM, this is not the case. Many cite a need for more follow-up, more support for post-event networking, and a more interactive web site that would allow for interaction and even “help desk” type services through which organizations could solicit ideas and help both from GEM and from other organizations using GEM approaches. There also is support for more focused training of selected staff of organizations who will be involve in follow-up implementation of GEM-based

initiatives such as a new strategic plan or an organizational shift to a team-based structure.

Many also feel that GEM training itself needs to focus, in part, on management skills, at least those related to the application of GEM approaches. The avoidance of problem-solving as a paradigm means to some that there is also an omission of attention to the systems and procedures that are the lifeblood of organizations. As one respondent, who found GEM very useful overall, put it, “GEM needs to work on the application part of their approach rather than the theoretical at this point—especially in situations where there is corruption or injustice that one should really NOT appreciate!”

The evaluation team notes that this common observation regarding GEM application conflicts somewhat with the finding from GEM’s own monitoring system. Of 18 organizations whose first experience to GEM was over a year before the 1999 monitoring survey (and who answered the question), all 18 reported “positive impact beyond one year.” This suggests two things. First, those who have been GEM participants retain the energy and commitment to “make a difference” in their organization well after their GEM exposure. Second, GEM is having a positive impact on these organizations but that impact could perhaps be larger or expedited with additional follow-up support for “change agents” who have been trained by GEM.

Another occasional criticism, especially among those involved in early GEM programs, is that some of the graduate student trainers were relatively inexperienced, especially in the development context. GEM addressed this problem through a reduction in the cadre of graduate students at CWRU who are regularly involved in GEM programs. The evaluation team notes that there is universally high regard among GEM participants for the core GEM staff in Washington and Cleveland. The problem of staff quality cited by some relates only to situations where GEM reached beyond its core personnel for trainers.

There are some concerns about GEM program sustainability (discussed also later in this report). With the focus on large and relatively labor-intensive programmatic interventions requiring highly skilled personnel, there has perhaps been inadequate focus on widening the cadre of persons who can both initiate and support GEM-based innovation in the PVO/NGO community in the future. Some respondents noted that as demand increased, it did have an effect on GEM’s ability to respond and allocate the time necessary even though they continued to work in a highly professional manner and did everything they could.

GEM has made some progress in this area through deliberate inclusion of “support organization” personnel in the Certificate Program through work in the Customized Partnership Program to enable PVOs and NGOs to conduct their own GEM-based workshops in the field. But for a successful legacy, there will be a need for many more persons able to assist organizations through the kind of seminal events GEM has facilitated so far and, especially, through the rigors of application within organizations.

2.2 Impacts of the GEM Program

The most consistently reported GEM impact identified in the evaluation was its effectiveness in helping organizations take a prospective approach to planning. The methods and techniques described in the previous section of this report are viewed as particularly enabling in the process of making transitions within an organization around leadership change, decision-making processes and interpersonal issues. The emphasis on what *can* be provides a common ground for moving ahead. A big part of this comes from the orientation that GEM places on team effort within an organization and the sharing of power and responsibility for change. As put by one NGO respondent:

You will always find what you are looking for, whether good or bad. But the minute you start focusing on the positive, your thinking becomes unlocked, and it leads you into thinking about more and more things, in new ways. You reflect back on what have been the best moments/successes in your organization and then you try to determine what were the factors in those positive moments and move ahead with them.

A second overall impact was the clear impetus that GEM program participants felt to actually transfer and adapt the methods and techniques to their own work situation, either through designing new programs, holding workshops and seminars, facing issues in their own organization, and changing their own way of relating to and working with colleagues and partners. For those persons that were involved in partnership or networks, GEM's influence provided new alternatives for the directions of those alliances. Several GEM clients also developed their own models and approaches based on GEM principles.

For example, one PVO involved in a GEM program with staff from an overseas partner NGO federation reported that they were so impressed with the change in their own relationship with the federation that they went back and did a workshop with three other NGO partners. They also developed further internal capacity building with staff to facilitate organizational change, planning, dealing with conflict, and personnel reviews.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) notes the impact of GEM interventions on USAID-supported food aid programming in the field. The new approach to partnership spurred by GEM has promoted a more genuine mutuality between CRS and its local partners. These local NGOs now are truly partners, not just local implementing agencies. As a result, traditional conflicts over administrative procedures and reporting requirements are now resolved much more successfully and performance is much improved through more clearly shared goals and improved collaborative problem-solving. Field partners now feel an "ownership" of these programs that previously was absent.

GEM seeks to have an impact at three levels, similar but not identical to the three GEM programs described in the following sections. There is the assumption that all GEM programs will have some impact at the individual, organizational, and inter-

organizational levels. The following table presents selected data for each level as reported in GEM's FY 1999 Annual Report. The data are based on surveys of GEM participants in 1998 and 1999. They cover all GEM II activities.

Table 2: GEM survey data on individual, organizational and inter-organizational level impact (n= 33 organizations, 61 alumni)

	Impact	Target*	Actual result
Individual level	Percentage of individuals participating in any GEM program that report significant impacts in their life and work	80 %	98 %
	Number of participants reporting usage of one or more capacity building skills developed in GEM programs outside their own organizations	20	49
Organizational level	Percentage of organizations reporting "significant" organizational changes		95 %
	Percentages of individual participants reporting "significant" organizational change in their organizations or organizations they work with		87 %
	Percentage of organizations reporting usage outside of their own organization of capacity building skills developed in GEM programs		91 %
	Percentage of organizations reporting positive impact beyond one year		100 %
Inter-organizational level	Number of organizations participating in any GEM program that enter a new relationship with another organizations because of their GEM participation	20	17
	Number of alumni that report significant inter-organizational changes to which GEM contributed		52
	Percentage of organizations reporting usage outside of their own organization of capacity building skills developed in GEM programs		91 %

* Targets were given when they were presented in the DIP.

2.2.1 GEM Certificate Program

The Certificate Program objective is to build capacities of PVO and NGO leaders who are engaged in managing organizational change and partnership development. The program occurs over a period of ten months and is comprised of three phases: 1) a two-week residential program; 2) action research field projects; and 3) a five-day follow-up

meeting. Participants are encouraged to attend with a colleague, but this is not a criterion.

In Tanzania, an alumnus used GEM's 4-D cycle in a three day team building meeting with the development and health departments of the Archdiocese of Nyeri (a Catholic Relief Services partner), which were in conflict about work on a field-level project. At the end of the third day, the parties held a major traditional-style celebration of the metaphorical "birth of a new baby" as a result of the resolution of their conflicts and a commitment to serving the same poor people in the same communities. Since that meeting, sub teams from the two departments are meeting and working together. As a result of the 4-D methodology, the Archdiocese also now has a vision of what it could become in the year 2010 if they work together as a team.

The action research and follow-up phases of the Certificate Program enhance the impact of the program by building application into the process. Participants take their experience back to their own situation and try it out. Often, but not always, this is in the context of their work organization. They try out the tools and approaches introduced in the residential program. Respondents to this evaluation cited GEM had significant impact on their personal relationships at work and elsewhere, improved

communication, and changed the way they approached development work. The descriptors of "energy", "empowerment", and "changed the way I work with people" were most common. Specific program impact was less easily identified—sometimes because there had not been enough time. There are, however, several examples of significant organizational change. In particular, GEM training has proven valuable to leadership that is new in an organization or to leaders whose organizations are emerging from a major transition or crisis.

According to the GEM 1999 Annual Report, 60 percent of participants completed all three phases of the program. These participants represent a total of 51 organizations. A total of 69 persons completed phase 1. Forty-two percent are female, 51 percent from NGOs and 38 percent from PVOs. The report also indicates that 82 percent of participants have initiated a new capacity building activity during the three months following Phase 1 and that 60 percent complete a capacity building activity and report on their learnings during phase three. (One assumes that this is the same 60 percent that completed all three phases.)

2.2.2 GEM Organizational Excellence Program

GEM's Organizational Excellence Program (OEP) seeks to strengthen key organizational capacities of PVOs and NGOs so that they are better able to provide development assistance and to work as more effective partners. This effort began during the PVO/CEO Initiative that was a precursor to GEM I. Overall, 19 percent of OEP participants were from "support organizations."

The evaluation team found that the level of commitment required by an organization in order to participate in this program was in itself an important positive impact. Bringing a management team together to do the preparatory work for an OEP workshop facilitates taking the time to examine an organization's vision, program, and plans for the future. The workshop itself provides a forum for concentrated work with PVO/NGO partners to define how they want their partnerships and programs to evolve. As mentioned earlier, this was especially helpful for organizations at some point of transition.

OEP participants are encouraged to look at their organization's management structure. Several evaluation respondents reported that their organizations became much more internally participatory and also more participatory in their relationships with partner organizations and clients in program communities. Since GEM II has not held an Organizational Excellence Program, the results described here are from earlier efforts. An OEP is planned for April 2000.

2.2.3 GEM Customized Partnership Program

Responding both to USAID strategic priorities and its own learning-based program assessment, GEM increased its emphasis on specific PVO-NGO partnerships (in contrast to broad networking) in GEM II. GEM has now established "customized partnerships" with five organizations. These partnerships engage both partners in an active process to improve the partnership and the development impact of the partners. Representatives of organizations in these partnerships reported that involvement with the GEM program did assist in the development of partnerships that were more equal and where all organizations took more ownership for resulting plans and programs.

There is the perception that programs ended up being more meaningful at the community level and more likely to share decision-making and responsibility for resources with community members. Four of the five organizations report implementation of significant

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) obtained a PVC Matching Grant to look at Appreciative Inquiry methodology and capacity measurement with their partners. They report that the experience opened up the opportunity for the entire organization to look at its structure and assess ways to become more effective.

In 1996, CRWRC held an Assembly of WorldWide Partners that laid the foundations for transition to a team based approach. They are currently using and refining this approach.

A major change was also made in how CRWRC works with partner organizations. They previously were perceived as a service provider for partner organizations and had a capacity rating system that they designed and implemented. With GEM program guidance, they worked *with* partner organization representatives in-country and regionally to develop new sets of indicators and capacity assessment tools. Now CRWRC develops partnership agreements based on a "menu approach" with partner organization stakeholder actively participating in capacity building activities and measurement tools. This has resulted in more ownership of projects and partner organizations have initiated this approach with community people.

inter-organizational changes according to the 1999 GEM survey, as presented in the 1999 GEM Annual Report. One benefit of the customized partnership program is that participants receive ongoing support from GEM, addressing a problem in one-shot interventions that good ideas from a GEM event may be hard for participants to implement later in their organizations.

The GEM approach is being used for continued expansion of partnership relationships and for the formation of new partnerships. As with the other programs, GEM tools and methods are seen as most useful in visioning and planning activities. At least two of the organizations are using the overall approach in several regions. Other organizations, including those not in the Customized Partnership Program, are exploring ways to develop their own partnering activities using GEM's approach.

2.2.4 Relationship of GEM to PVC's Strategic Plan

At the operational level, PVC's primary mission is to support capacity building which strengthens the sustainable impact potential of U.S. PVOs working in participatory grassroots development. Through support for U.S. PVOs, PVC also aims to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and community groups to deliver sustainable services, particularly to underserved communities (Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation, Strategic Plan 1996-2000).

The PVC mission statement sets out levels of desired impact for its programs. The plan clearly identifies U. S.-based PVOs as the primary client group for the Office, and as partners for the implementation of development efforts around the world. To this end, PVC made a commitment to strengthen PVOs to enhance their capacity to function as strong partners in this effort. Therefore, the evaluation examined the impact of GEM on the PVO community, particularly those PVOs that participated with the project through training or technical assistance. Members of this group were GEM's *direct clients*.

The second level of impact set out in the PVC mission statement is with local NGOs or other community groups in developing countries, recognizing that this impact comes primarily through partnerships with PVOs. The evaluation also examined impact of GEM activities at this level, either directly or in PVO partnerships. These groups were GEM's *indirect clients*.

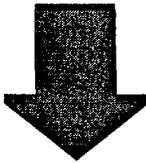
As with any development program, the ultimate results depend on whether or not a program makes a difference in the lives of people in communities in developing countries. The PVC mission statement reflects this fact when it articulates the purpose of PVO/NGO strengthening as the delivery of sustainable services to those communities. Impact at this level for GEM happened because of the application of the GEM approach by its direct and indirect clients.

The diagram on the following page summarizes the GEM impacts for each of the levels included in PVC's strategic plan.

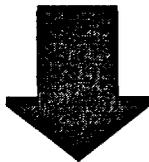
PVC Strategic Plan

GEM Impact

U. S. PVO capacity
building



Local
NGO/community
group capacity
building



Community level
impact

- Broader awareness/consensus around key organizational issues
- Healthier interaction among staff
- Improved strategic planning
- Higher morale and productivity
- Major help for organizations in transition or emerging from crisis
- Support for goal definition and building staff alignment with goals
- Enhanced openness and dialogue within organization
- Help in moving from hierarchical structure to team-based approach and structure
- Enhanced energy and motivation throughout organization
- Stronger organizational base for generating new program activity
- Organizational empowerment



- Enhanced PVO respect for and appreciation of role of partners
- Broader participation of community members with local development initiatives by PVOs and their partners
- Increased local interest and participation in self-development activities
- Enhanced sense of local ownership of on-the-ground development activities
- More NGO partner involvement in strategic planning and program direction that affects them
- Improved problem solving and involvement with PVO partners in food aid administration
- Higher quality of local NGO planning
- Enhanced local citizen voluntarism in PVO/NGO development programs



- Increased generation of community resources for development
 - Community leaders work in a more participatory fashion with more support from their constituency
 - Programs spread from one community to the next with community members as facilitators
 - Improved management of intra-community conflict
 - "Empowerment" of local women and men
 - Increase in the number and quality of local self-help initiatives and actions
-

3. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

3.1 GEM Organizational Structure

The GEM initiative is part of a program named “Social Innovations in Global Management” (SIGMA) at the Weatherhead School of Management at CWRU. SIGMA’s stated aim is to strengthen the organization and management capacities of individuals, groups, and institutions dedicated to innovative global social change. The program emphasizes research conferences, and executive education. A substantial history of university-based research and practice thus undergirds the GEM approach. But this is a two-way street. From a funding standpoint, GEM dominates other soft money sources for SIGMA. As a result, in recent years, GEM-based experience has had a significant impact on broader SIGMA programs with such clients or partners as the Peace Corps, the United Way, the United Religions Initiative, and Philanthropic Quest.

The GEM project's stated intent is to “bridge the two worlds (of university research and reflection and GEM’s focused implementation), bringing out the best that each has to offer”. Accordingly, GEM management is shared between a GEM Washington Project Office and Weatherhead. Day-to-day operations are managed from Washington by a staff of program and project directors and support staff. Overall direction is provided at Weatherhead where the principal investigator and GEM Initiative director are based. Several faculty and graduate students have played a part-time role in GEM programs, training, and documentation, providing “intellectual content”, and linking programs with current research and scholarship at Weatherhead. Additional expertise for GEM programs is drawn from consultants and PVO partner organizations as needed.

While overall USAID experience with university-based programs is mixed, it seems to work well in the GEM case. This may well be due to the action learning focus of Weatherhead/SIGMA that fits the needs of this project in a way that a more theoretical orientation would not.

The goal of the Washington managers is to “help transform the ideas and creative thinking of the university into practice”. This seems to work well. The link between Washington and Weatherhead now appears quite seamless. Having a dedicated project staff in Washington averts the risk common to some university-based projects of part-time or distracted management. The co-leadership roles of the program director and project director in Washington also function well in a fashion that allows one or the other to often be in the field. Over the life of GEM, the role of the DC full-time management team has grown, less in function than in scope for decision-making. This has evolved in response to GEM concerns about resource allocation and accountability decisions in the circumstance of dispersed leadership.

Values-based Management

Management and leadership are consistently more effective when keyed to a compelling value set and vision, especially when there is alignment to that vision throughout the organization. The broader GEM structure—including its home base at Weatherhead School of Management (Weatherhead) at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU)—strongly exemplify this kind of alignment. The Weatherhead philosophy, centered in Appreciative Inquiry (AI) anchors the GEM approach to external and internal functions, including management. This base in a clear and consistent vision is rare in USAID contractors and aligns GEM to an important degree with many of its PVO/NGO clients where a value-based sense of mission is common.

GEM management consistency and continuity is reflected in more than its value system. The program's principal investigator at Weatherhead and two Washington-based program managers have been in place since GEM's beginning and were previously involved in pre-GEM organizational capacity building activities with the PVO/CEO initiative. Their own approach is deeply rooted in AI, demonstrated in their own contribution to the body of conceptual and training literature on the subject. This continuity contributes significantly to GEM's ability to expand its reach and fine tune its programs over time.

The major risk for a belief-based program such as this, perhaps accentuated by personnel continuity, is a lack of self-criticism or new ideas. Or, self-examination risks being selective in its findings and dissemination of "learning" risks becoming an adjunct to marketing and self-promotion.

In our view, GEM at least flirts with these dangers. One of the basic premises of AI is that the kind of questions you ask shapes the answers you get. The implications of this for self-assessment are fairly clear. This in no way detracts from the successful work that GEM does, but should be considered as findings from this evaluation are reviewed.

3.1.1 GEM Internal Strategic Capacity Development

GEM has attempted to draw lessons from its processes of monitoring and strategic inquiry, some of which are applicable to its management structure. Many of these are fairly obvious, for example, the conclusion that program follow-up is very important for assuring sustainability of program impact (1996 Annual Report). Other lessons have more focused relevance to GEM strategy, for example the conclusion that work on PVO/NGO partnerships is best implemented at the regional or country level (1996 Annual Report).

The performance monitoring strategy and related indicators generated for GEM II include a set of output indicators linked to system-wide (within GEM itself) capacity building. These indicators measure the development of systems and activities for strategic inquiry and dissemination of learning. There are no output or outcome indicators that attempt to measure GEM's strategic capacity or cost-effectiveness directly though program outputs and outcomes that provide an indirect indication of the ability of the GEM system to accomplish its work. There also is little *documented* self-reflection on internal GEM organizational capacity or management systems. GEM staff can cite anecdotal evidence of management learning. One such indicator is that each program is different. Feedback

from participants is taken seriously and each program is redesigned continuously in terms both of content and presentation. For example, internal documents reflect detailed recording of participant feedback from the Organizational Excellence Program. These documents record detailed session-by-session participant ratings and qualitative comments. Additionally they note the implications drawn by GEM and specific redesign decisions made in the course of staff meetings to review the participant feedback.

Important program shifts based on GEM experience-based reflection include combining PVOs and NGOs in the same workshops and shifting the original GEM focus on broad PVO-NGO networks to GEM II's stress on specific partnerships. Another change is that one more certificate program than planned will be implemented in GEM II (three versus two) due to the success of this initiative.

While there has been long-term continuity of management at the Washington Project Office, GEM determined in the course of implementation that a smaller core team at Weatherhead would be more effective. Accordingly, that team was reduced to two faculty and three graduate students to provide greater continuity. Other faculty and graduate students are selectively involved, but with a task focus rather than with programmatic responsibility.

GEM notes that, as a bounded program, the GEM structure is not permanent so that building the GEM structure is not a program objective *per se*. Hence the lack of outcome indicators to measure the status of that structure and the absence of documented management and organizational assessment. It is clear however, that GEM takes learning seriously and that a good deal of intuitive reflection and learning takes place and is acted upon. It also is clear that there is a healthy staff pride in what has been accomplished so far, especially in the innovative focus on PVO-NGO partnerships.

3.1.2 GEM Strategic Partnerships

What GEM calls strategic partnerships are, in reality, joint programs where GEM has allied with another organization to conduct an activity or series of activities. The participants in these programs vary from the partner organization's normal clients to a special purpose audience. GEM believes that these partnerships offer a broader, richer mix of approaches and ideas from which both organizations can learn.

To date, there are three levels of collaborating organizations in GEM experience to date. The first category (The UNDP and United Way) involves cases where GEM basically runs a program for the organization. These, GEM notes, are limited collaborations. The second category (Macro, the Peace Corps, Social Impact, Interaction, Pria, AIM/IIDR, the Chaordic Alliance, and the Wilgespruit Fellowship Center) includes organizations with which a single joint program has been conducted. The third category (IDR, PACT, Mwengo) involves more substantive ongoing collaborations, especially in the area of partnership development.

The category two and three organizations can fairly be said to be collaborators but to apply the term “strategic partnership” is a stretch for all except the organizations in category three.

3.1.3 GEM Financial Management

While a detailed assessment of GEM financial management is outside the scope of this evaluation, the evaluation team notes that the project’s financial management processes are determined by and supported by policies and procedures of Case Western University. Financial transactions are processed by Case Western based on invoice approval by the Washington-based GEM project staff. The university prepares income and expense statements, which are used by project staff for budget tracking and for monitoring matching requirements of the GEM cooperative agreement.

From all available evidence, GEM financial management, control, and record keeping are satisfactory. Project expenditures and GEM matching contributions are tracking well with expectations and budgets. Remaining funds are adequate to finance planned programming for the final year of the current grant.

GEM periodically examined the cost-effectiveness of its program, most specifically during a mid-grant retreat in March 1996. This led to decisions about level of involvement in the various types of programs, and “an economic paradigm shift in GEM where funds are centrally monitored and managed and where cost effectiveness is a shared value and operating principle.” However, no dollar-based cost-benefit analysis has been done. GEM consistently uses a cost-sharing model that generated over \$174,000 during GEM II.

3.1.4 GEM Management and PVC

GEM has worked under five different grant officers in PVC, each with his or her own priorities, style of collaboration, and relationship with the rest of the PVC office. GEM cites several aspects of their relationship with USAID that they “*appreciate*.” These include:

- Some good cooperative idea-based dialogue and sharing on strategic directions.
- Substantive interaction when PVC staff come (and stay) to GEM programs and engage actively in program interactions.
- The absence of micro-management and excessive reporting requirements.

On the other hand, in addition to the lack of leadership continuity, GEM has some concerns about:

- Changing PVC emphases and perspectives over time that may shift the ground under GEM strategic priorities or change expectations.
- The general lack of awareness, interest, or appreciation of GEM among PVC staff not directly involved (sometimes including and sometimes not including PVC leadership) and among USAID mission personnel.
- The absence of USAID feedback to the GEM II Detailed Implementation Plan, which seemed in contrast to the desired level of collaboration.

Looking to the future, GEM needs to build and maintain a more regular and structured relationship with the PVC office, including its leadership, and use this relationship to leverage more visibility with other program staff and USAID missions.

3.1.5 GEM Sustainability

GEM has learned a lot about how to do its work effectively. There is considerable documentation on how, for example, one might conduct a workshop using Appreciative Inquiry. There are ample illustrations of how programs were designed to address particular organizational agendas from visioning to planning to program implementation.

For example, in Bosnia, a GEM alumnus used GEM concepts and techniques to lead the Future Search Conference, “Building a Better Future: Position of Women in Yugoslavia in 2020” in November 1999. The direct result of the conference was the creation of an effective national network based on the needs and visions of participants. The network consists of five smaller networks, each dealing with a specific issue. Each smaller network made one-year action plans with agreement on first steps for implementation.

What was not documented, as noted above, is GEM learning about how to manage and evaluate such programs. Such documentation would be potentially valuable to organizations in a post-GEM environment that may wish to maintain GEM-like programs of organizational capacity building. For example, the important work of conceptualizing and implementing the partner program led to a good deal of valuable but largely intuitive learning on the part of GEM managers. While articles were written about the beneficial results of certain partnerships, there is little documentation available on the dynamics of managing such a program.

Moreover, a lot remains to be done to assist organizations to sustain the drive and momentum of a GEM workshop through the aftermath of implementation in the trenches or organizational life and practice. At this stage in its evolution, GEM needs to take sustainability very seriously through documentation of its methods and their application, application of cost-sharing mechanisms, and an aggressive search for new funding and clients.

What GEM believes should be sustained

When the evaluation team asked GEM staff to articulate what lessons they have learned about approaches that should be sustained in PVC programming, they cited the following:

MULTI-LEVEL CHANGE WORK

Change-work with PVOs and NGOs should include building the capacity of individual "change agents" within the organization as well as a focus on an organizational development approach with the whole system.

A WHOLISTIC FOCUS

A wholistic approach to capacity building allows for attention to strategic as well as relational skill building; and to productivity and program effectiveness as well as the creative and spiritual dimensions of work life.

ACTION LEARNING VERSUS TRAINING

Action learning strategies provide opportunities for change to happen within the context of a workshop. Rather than a training program about partnership, an action learning approach brings partners together to work in the "here and now" on partnership.

ASSETS BASED

An assets-based approach to capacity building creates an empowering environment that honors indigenous knowledge and wisdom and builds a sense of optimism about one's ability to influence the future.

DIVERSITY OF PARTICIPANTS

Including PVOs and NGOs in the same event and creating conditions that support exploration of North/South perspectives builds increased appreciation for the challenges and opportunities inherent in partnership. Bringing together a wide variety of organizations, with different sectoral foci, size, and mission breaks, down artificial boundaries.

SUSTAINABILITY OF LEARNING

A multi-phased approach contributes to sustainability of learnings. For example, GEM programs begin with an action learning event and then are followed by an application period, a time for reflecting on lessons from attempts to apply and contextualize the learnings, and an opportunity for advanced training.

COST SHARING

Cost sharing encourages both organizational and individual commitment to learning.

3.2 GEM Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

For any project that has been ongoing for over four years, and certainly for a project focusing on capacity building, the ability to reflect on experience and measure results is critical. This section explores GEM success in the following dimensions:

- analysis and self-evaluation of its programs to refine its interventions and partnership strategies;
- development and institutionalization of performance monitoring and impact evaluation systems; and
- existence of an adequate framework to assess progress toward GEM goals and objectives.

These dimensions are interrelated. The key question is whether GEM developed and applied systems for learning about its own activities and used that learning both to refine its approach and to disseminate relevant knowledge to the broader NGO and development community.

In its early stages, GEM emphasized both its own learning agenda and setting measurable results as key elements in development of the project. An initial August 1995 Progress Report to USAID stated that GEM's philosophy of evaluation "is influenced by a very strong bias toward learning and inquiry involving the active participation of all stakeholders throughout the process." Elements of the project's evaluation strategy were described as:

- tracking programmatic outputs (through reports, focus groups, and program review workshops);
- inquiring about impact (through post-event focus groups, later mail questionnaires, and selected visits to participating organizations by GEM staff); and
- building a learning culture (through processes of

GEM Strategic Changes

GEM staff cites a number of programmatic shifts based on internal learning. For example:

Partnership Development Strategy

Selected Lessons

- *It is difficult to attract multiple partnership (North-South) pairs to a workshop in the U.S.*
- *Partnership development is not effectively nor sustainably supported by one-shot interventions.*

Strategic Shift

- *Create a customized partnership program that works closely with individual PVOs and their NGO partners in a tailored way responsive to mutually agreed-upon goals for over one year.*

Overall Program Approach

Selected Lessons

- *Where GEM had more than one intervention with a selected organization (through multiple people and/or multiple programs), significant change was more likely.*
- *The richest and most exciting programs were characterized by diversity of participants (e.g., PVO/NGO balance, geographical diversity).*

Strategic Shifts

- *Regional focus to benefit from a critical mass of cross-colleague learning.*
- *Seeking support organization involvement for greater leverage.*
- *Emphasis on partnership development as a theme across all programs.*

inquiry that stimulate creativity and innovation).

The 1996 GEM Annual report describes the purpose of GEM evaluation as to: 1) provide an accurate assessment of program strengths and weaknesses; 2) ascertain GEM's impact on organizations and individuals; 3) support alumni in their organizational learning; and, 4) disseminate knowledge about resulting social and organizational innovations. Evaluative findings are reported primarily as lessons learned in this and other annual reports. These lessons are a mix of:

- **propositions** supporting GEM practices (for example, "The process of Appreciative Inquiry brings organizations and individuals back in touch with their 'deepest living values.'" and
- **results** attributed to GEM interventions reported in brief anecdotes about successful activities of participating organizations in the wake of GEM program participation.

These add up to an impressive, if self-serving, compilation of GEM impacts on organizations.

The 1997 Annual Report adds statistics regarding the number of persons and organizations served by GEM programs, the number of action research projects initiated, new partnerships formed, and other markers of the level of activity. These data are a precursor to the quantitative data matrix developed as part of the implementation plan for GEM II (see below).

In 1997 GEM considered sponsoring a Best Practices and Evaluation Workshop for GEM alumni and other PVOs interested in sharing best practices in organizational capacity building. Unfortunately this workshop was not held due to lack of interest and other priorities. GEM considers it possible that something similar may still be done under the rubric of a state-of-the-art workshop, but there are no specific plans.

Given this pattern of emphasis on gathering qualitative and anecdotal impact data, it is odd that the GEM II proposal (1997) gave little attention to evaluation. Under the heading "GEM II Learning and Dissemination" mention is made of the need to spread information about successful capacity building approaches. The proposal highlights opportunities for GEM to share best practices, lessons learned, and success stories with the broader PVO-NGO community. Brief mention is made of proposed mechanisms for this such as fora, workshops, "Good News" releases, and the GEM Journal. Virtually no mention is made of monitoring or evaluation as an agenda nor of any mechanisms to accomplish this. Thus one is left with an impression that evaluation is equated with public outreach or marketing.

The GEM II Detailed Implementation Plan (1998) also lacks any comprehensive discussion of monitoring and evaluation despite the statement in the DIP introduction that – "The challenge of measuring results in a project such as ours is truly extraordinary and

requires all of our best thinking.” This is followed by a series of “GEM Findings” attributed to the project’s “strategic inquiry.” That inquiry was keyed to GEM stakeholders and to structured methods of soliciting their advice, insights, interest, and needs. The main activities of the strategic inquiry were a series of eight consultations with U.S. PVOs, presentation to a USAID/PVC workshop, two focus groups with U.S. PVO and overseas NGO participants in GEM programs, telephone interviews with eighteen alumni, and consultations with USAID.

Some findings, as might be expected, simply affirm the GEM approach. Others such as the need for or interest in more follow-up to GEM programs, more substantive topical workshops, and regional networking helped to inform the development of GEM II approaches.

Looking to the future, the DIP also provides a set of performance indicators developed with assistance from Management Systems International (MSI). These are organized into output indicators and outcome indicators and distributed across the four GEM program categories of individual skills, organizational capacity building, partnership development, and system-wide learning and dissemination. These indicators and associated targets are all quantitative and rely on counts of people participating in GEM programs or enumeration of participants perceptions of impacts such as, for example, “a sense of renewal in life/work” or development in their organizations of “new organizational vision.” There is no discussion in the DIP about how these data will be collected or analyzed or used though it can be inferred that methods similar to the strategic inquiry used earlier would be employed.

In fact, as described by GEM staff and observed by the evaluation team, there is more going on than the DIP describes. Consistent with its emphasis on Appreciative Inquiry, GEM prefers to use the term “(e)valuation” to describe its learning and dissemination strategy to capture the dual role of valuing and judging. The first GEM II Annual Report (December 1998) posits the overall goal to create a system of ongoing learning and evaluation that engages all GEM’s stakeholder groups in a co-inquiry that benefits all.

Elements in the strategy for gathering data and reflection include:

- participant evaluation at the end of specific programs through written forms and focus groups. These, however, are typically not summarized.
- strategic inquiry using primary telephone interviews with alumni.
- a March 1996 “Mid-Grant Retreat” for GEM staff to reflect on program implementation and create shared visions for the future.
- quantitative data collection keyed to the matrix of output and outcome indicators in the DIP (This was first reported comprehensively in the 1998 GEM Annual Report and updated data in the 1999 Annual Report, released just as this evaluation was nearing an end).

- qualitative data collection (anecdotal) keyed to selected outcome measures in the matrix
- a 1999 mail survey of 111 alumni from the entire range of GEM programs.

Unlocking the Capacity Within

A recent working paper of the Weatherhead School of Management (Ronald Fry and Parameshwar Srikania), "Capacity Building as Unlocking the Capacity within: Findings from 15 International Cases," examines the processes associated with 15 GEM capacity building interventions to delineate core conditions and processes to build capacity while honoring the inherent strengths of local communities and organizations. While not a GEM study *per se*, this analysis is based on field projects conducted by participants in the GEM Certificate Program.

This paper does not claim to provide an arms length evaluation. It is an advocacy piece that details its conclusions in the form of propositions closely aligned with GEM principles, especially Appreciative Inquiry. (This reality does not invalidate the findings nor the apparent overall success of the 15 projects outlined in terms of their objectives, the nature of the intervention, and the outcome of the intervention.)

The paper concludes, for example, that capacity building initiatives best honor local capacities and indigenous wisdom when they "refocus a community's pride in the resources available to it locally" or "induce the community to reframe its condition in affirmative terms, from a problem to be solved to a possibility waiting to be realized."

For readers interested in the application of capacity building processes that emphasize local participation and ownership of the process, this paper provides a substantive review of key themes and conditions for effective intervention and relates them to specific cases.

Like most direct GEM evaluation, however, the paper leaves unanswered questions of comparative analysis or cost-effectiveness.

The survey is indicative of the GEM approach to evaluation. The survey itself primarily gathers quantitative output data (numbers and types of participants, etc.), but also points to categories and examples of impact that the project then seeks to learn more about. If a respondent responds affirmatively to a question asking about "stories to tell," they may become involved in a follow-up activity to gather selected anecdotes of GEM impact. GEM plans to repeat the 1999 survey (the first of its kind in the aftermath of developing GEM performance monitoring indicators) in the year 2000.

GEM disseminates these stories and other narrative learning from their (e)valuation process through the GEM Journal, case studies, annual reports, published articles, workshop discussions, stakeholder gatherings, and other means, many of which are available on the GEM web site. As early as its first Annual Report in December 1995, GEM offered a section on "Learnings about Impact." Most of the learning, however, seems only to confirm basic GEM presuppositions. Anecdotal examples are provided to illustrate impact from the application of these presuppositions to actual capacity building programs.

There does not seem to have been a great deal of analysis of the information collected.² GEM appears to use its findings primarily to support public outreach and, secondarily, reporting requirements. As with the working paper discussed in the text box, much of the (e)valuation seems more directed to outreach than to learning. Admittedly, in its substantial dissemination through articles and papers, GEM provides thoughtful and informative descriptions of its basic approaches to Appreciative Inquiry, capacity building, and partnership development. And, as discussed elsewhere in this evaluation, these approaches are generally effective.

GEM evaluation informs us that their programs are in demand and that participants rate them highly and report anecdotally that they have made a positive difference in their lives or their organization's capacities. But there is little evidence in GEM internal or external documents of serious reflection on evaluation findings and how they might challenge the project's presuppositions or guide redirection of programs. Nowhere, for example, is there any cost benefit analysis of programs nor serious comparative analysis of GEM approaches and other techniques of capacity building. Nor is there much attempt to track field-level results in terms of enhanced NGO viability or program impact. (E)valuation seems primarily a tool of advocacy and marketing—an inward looking Appreciative Inquiry.

Transfer of performance monitoring and evaluation skills to GEM client organizations is not a significant aspect of the program. GEM notes that it is not a training program; its emphasis is on organizational development rather than skill building. There is a focus on helping organizations think through what it means to be a reflective learning organization and to engage in continuous learning. This, of course, is a significant element in organizational capacity. Translating this to the details of an organization's own monitoring system is left to them. They probably could use some help.

² The 1999 GEM Annual Report represents a significant improvement in this regard. This report provides brief analytical comment on each cluster of indicators on which data are reported. The evaluation team believes this represents a significant step forward in GEM's internal learning process and its reporting. The document does not take the next step of discussing the implications of these findings but, as noted in this section, there is reason to expect that GEM staff will engage in serious internal dialogue to interpret and apply learning from their monitoring data.

4. SUMMARY OF LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Lessons Learned

This full report contains numerous points of learning by the evaluation team. Listed here are selected items of particular importance in our view.

- Capacity building efforts under GEM had a positive impact on organizations contacted during the evaluation.
- GEM's approach and methods are most useful in visioning, goal setting, and strategic planning and less helpful in implementing organizational change.
- Some organizational issues are primarily related to exogenous structural elements or factors in the external environment and GEM's approach does not adequately address these factors, in part because of its focus on inward values and in part because of its reluctance to address "problems."
- Continuity of consultation relationships is effective in supporting organizational change. Several respondents pointed out that they were able to call on GEM staff at critical points of transitions. Others said that more follow-up assistance was needed at the post-workshop implementation stage since it often is difficult for participants to apply new learning from a workshop when they return to their organizations.
- Focused, sustained support to partnership development has paid off. In the maturest customized partnerships, there is good reason to believe that GEM initiatives will have a significant multiplier effect and broad impact at the grassroots level. Moreover, there is a good chance these positive outcomes will be sustainable.
- Focusing on positive achievements is an effective way of mobilizing resources for development at the community level. Examples were given of how, after use of AI, community members implemented programs primarily using their own time and other resources. There is, however, no systematic documentation of these instances.
- GEM monitoring and evaluation primarily looks at anecdotal information to relay qualitative information about the impact of programs. Some of the participant organizations, however, are beginning to find ways to quantify results—this type of innovation could provide improved documentation for GEM. There is a concern among GEM staff that quantitative methods do not capture the process of what happens, but quantitative and qualitative methods can complement each other to provide a more complete and more systematic picture of impact.

In Nepal, a USAID-funded cooperative agreement developed a MIS monitoring and reporting system to trace the project's progress in working with over 7,000 groups and 130,000 rural women in 21 Terai districts. Baseline data were collected and a follow-up survey completed seven months later, measuring involvement in decision-making, spending on family well-being, collective actions for community-level social change, female literacy, provision of economic development services and microfinance institutional development. The project uses Appreciative Planning and Action (APA), derived from Appreciative Inquiry. The second survey was completed before other techniques and materials were introduced to women's groups. Despite this fact, women's groups were independently undertaking collective actions at an accelerated rate. From a limited involvement in decision-making, 38 percent of women were active decision makers. The average women participant accumulated Rs. 356 in savings in the past 6 months, 93,000 women passed a literacy test; 25,000 additional women had savings and an additional 7,000 met an earning target of Rs. 300. These findings indicate that APA may be having a positive impact on economic status and rights, prior to the introduction of the specific program interventions concerned with the related indicators (Source: *Women's Empowerment Project (WEP), Nepal*).

- There is a rich lode of experience among PVOs and NGOs in applying AI to their own agendas, with and without GEM assistance (though usually triggered by GEM programs). The opportunity for organizations to share best practices and learn from each other has not been maximized. There is much communication between participating organizations and GEM, but there is relatively little between these organizations.
- The PVO community values PVC as both a source of capacity building assistance and a locus of support for innovation and experimentation. There is considerable hope in the PVO community that PVC will continue its support for innovation. A corollary of this role is the need to define results and determine indicators in terms of the dynamics of organizational change and capacity.

4.2 Recommendations for GEM

We note the following key recommendations for the final year of the GEM project. Several of these match GEM's own stated agendas for focus as described in the recent 1999 Annual Report.

- Address the question of under which circumstances and in which situations the GEM methods and techniques are most useful, especially at the application stage.
- Build the focus on systems and procedures and add more management skills training to GEM events to facilitate application of theoretical concepts.
- Look for ways to enhance the "value-added" of GEM methods to other organizational development methods and approaches to conflict resolution. This requires affirming

the validity of other planning and management tools, which are proven in practice and may, in fact, improve the applicability of AI in an typical organizational setting.

- Improve quantitative and qualitative documentation of field-level impact and thoughtful interpretation of resulting findings. This must be done as a learning exercise, not a promotional exercise.
- Maintain better quality control over consultants used in programs (some concerns were expressed over role of students without sufficient development experience, though this may date from earlier days before the smaller core team at CWRU was defined).
- Develop trained cadres in regions to support continuity of GEM assistance with localized expertise.
- Selectively train key staff in organizations participating in GEM programs to enable them to facilitate later implementation of GEM approaches in their organizations and with partners.
- Train more consultants and support organization personnel in certificate programs to gain a greater and sustainable multiplier effect.
- Increase support for networking of alumni by facilitating ongoing interaction, making the web site more interactive (i.e., message boards, a “help desk”), seminars for exchange of experience and best practices, mechanisms for soliciting help and ideas from one organization to another).
- Systematically document adaptations of GEM materials and methods by participants (*see text box*).
- Provide more follow-up assistance to help organizations interpret and apply new concepts from workshops/retreats, especially for organizations not in the customized partnership program.
- Enhance the focus on sustainability of GEM program initiatives, including exploration of funding options outside of USAID.
- Nurture a close and structured relationship with PVC staff to enhance awareness of GEM both for its contribution to PVC results and for its potential as a resource for USAID capacity building.

SAVE/Philippines pioneered the idea of “appreciative community mobilization (ACM)” in its integrated family health project. This approach takes the AI model down to the community level for community mobilization, and looks at where all proposed changes will lead, and especially promotes greater participation of marginalized community members (those at the lowest 30% of income). This methodology is now being further tested in a Johns Hopkins University project with the Philippines Ministry of Health. If it continues to be successful, there is the potential of use on a countrywide basis with health programs.

4.3 Recommendations for PVC

The following points are noted for PVC consideration:

- Continue to invest in capacity building through a spectrum of methods and organizations.
- Increase role in facilitating links between PVO/NGO/non-profit sector and for-profit/private business sectors.
- Look for consulting services for PVOs outside the PVO/non-profit sector.
- Use GEM as a resource for Matching Grant PVOs as well as PVC and other departments of USAID itself
- Continue the effort to improve the state-of-the-art in assessing organizational capacity and approaches to building such capacity.

APPENDIX A: LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED³

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Adede, John	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Kenya)
Aguilar, Jesus	Alternativa, (Lima, Peru)
Alloo, Fatima	NGO Resource Center (Zanzibar, Tanzania)
Bastillo, Bobby	Asian Institute of Management (Philippines)
Bekalo, Isaac	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Kenya)
Berhanu, Laelum	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Ethiopia)
Binagwa, Fulgence	World Vision (Tanzania)
Booy, Dirk	World Vision (Tanzania)
Caminade, Joy	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Philippines)
Coronel, Rudy	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Philippines)
Covey, Jane	Institute for Development Research
Craun-Selka, Phyllis	PACT
Cruz, Nenette	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Philippines)
Domanovi, Mirjana	Soros Open Society Fund (Yugoslavia)
Encena, Jess	SAVE Family Health Project (Philippines)
Ferrara, Toni	USAID/BHR/PVC
Grant, John	USAID/Sofia
Howard, Ron	Opportunities Industrialization Center
Igbokwe, Kennedy	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Philippines)
James, Dula	Catholic Relief Services (India)
Kajwang, Philip	Catholic Relief Services (Kenya)
Khan, Abrar Ahmed	Prerana Population Resource Center (India)

³ A combination of personal interviews, telephone interviews, and email contacts were used in the evaluation process.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Kimeu, Peter	Catholic Relief Services (Kenya)
Kinghorn, Meg	Catholic Relief Services
Lee, Sallie	Milford Cottage (independent consultant)
Liskov, Adele	USAID/BHR/PVC
Long, Carolyn	Independent consultant
Maata, Phoebe	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Philippines)
Meites, Peggy	USAID/BHR/PVC
Mendoza, Biosdado	Save the Children (Philippines)
Mitchell, Lou	PACT
Myers, Barbara	Catholic Relief Services
Novell, Mike	Save the Children (Philippines)
Obanyi, George	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Kenya)
Odell, Mac	ECTA (Nepal)
Pasion, Maida	Save the Children (Philippines)
Payton, David	World Learning
Pratt, Jane	The Mountain Institute
Quaye, Silas	ProNet (Ghana)
Reiling, Peter	TechnoServe
Ricci, Bonnie	World Learning
Ryskamp, Andy	Christian Reformed World Relief Committee
San Miguel, Mari-Beth	Save the Children (Philippines)
Schlessinger, Joel	USAID/BHR/PVC
Schueller, Martin	International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (Kenya)
Stamburg, Louis	Former USAID/PVC director

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Starudub, Linda	UNDP
Storck, Elise	USAID/LPA
Szecsey, Christopher	Independent consultant
Tadros, Nader	America's Development Foundation (Egypt)
Tenbroek, Nancy	Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (Bangladesh)
Thompson, Paul	Concern International
Wolford, Kathryn	Lutheran World Relief

APPENDIX B: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

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- GEM Initiative. The GEM Mid-Grant Retreat. March 12-15, 1996.
- Hlatshwayo, Godwin. GEM Initiative. Launch of the Development Center in Malawi: Planning and Celebrating the Transition from SHARED Project to Development Center. Lilongwe, Malawi. July 29, 1999.
- International Workshop on Collaborative Initiatives for Capacity Building. Convened by the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee in partnership with the International Development Research Committee. Whispering Palms, Mombasa. 7-12 April 1997.
- Levitt, Jon. Trip report from trip to conduct OEP workshops with Alternativa and APECO. November 19-21, 1995.
- Odell, Malcolm J., Jr. "Issues in Participatory Development: From Participatory Rural Appraisal to Appreciative Planning and Action—A Personal Journey of Discovery." Prepared for Workshop on Application of Appreciative Inquiry Approaches in Nepal Karuna Management, Kathmandu, Nepal. 14-15 January 1999.
- Partnership/Institutional Development: Collaborative Learning for Capacity-building. An experience based dialogue. Sponsored collaboratively by Save the Children and Global Excellence in Management (GEM). Harare, Zimbabwe. November 7-11, 1995.
- The Mountain Institute. Report of the Initial Organizing Committee of the Mountain Forum. September 21-25, 1995.
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APPENDIX C: HISTORY OF GEM'S DEVELOPMENT

In the early 1990s, as the USAID re-engineering process and PVC's strategic planning were getting underway, the PVC Office decided that it would not develop sector specific strategic objectives, but rather would focus on helping to build the management capability of U. S. PVOs to better manage and implement development efforts. The PVC strategic objective was not clearly defined at that point.

A subcontract was competed under the PVC program support contract (at the time, ARS, Ltd.) to assist PVC to design a PVO capacity building activity. Proposals were received from several top management programs at universities in the U. S. PVC selected the proposal from the Weatherhead School because of the perceived practical orientation of the proposal and the reputation of work the school was already doing with the SIGMA program. The PVO/CEO program was implemented.

Selected PVO CEOs and staff participated in a program similar to what is now GEM's organizational management track. Several of CEOs were so enthusiastic about their experience and the program that they mentioned it to the USAID Administrator and other high level persons in USAID as something that should be continued and expanded so that more PVOs could participate.

Prior to the end of the PVO/CEO program PVC held a number of sessions with AID and their colleagues from the PVO community asking what should come next. Based on these discussions, it made sense in terms of development to come up with a follow-on to PVO/CEO. "PVOs talked the talk, but needed help with the walk."

PVC wrestled a long time and came up with the GEM program – partly to build linkages with a strong university program that could provide intellectual leadership. CWR submitted a proposal that would be a separate project (GEM I). Revisions were made because goals needed to be refined and more information provided about the program. During this time, PVC and CRW sent a survey to PVOs about the usefulness of GEM-like efforts. The response to this survey provided added weight to the argument for bureau approval.

GEM I added the journal, exchange of information, and the certificate program to the original PVO/CEO program. Other new features of GEM I were benchmarking and good organizational processes.

When GEM II was approved, PVC asked them to develop a DIP, which was used as a guide for this evaluation.

APPENDIX D
EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCE

I. PROGRAM IDENTIFICATION

PVO: Global Excellence in Management
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT #: FAO-A-00-97-00062-00
DATE: September 26, 1997 – September 25, 2000
COUNTRY PROGRAMS: Global

II. BACKGROUND

History: Since 1992, the Weatherhead School of Management of Case Western Reserve University has collaborated with BHR/PVC in building the management capacity of Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs) and indigenous Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). This collaboration began with the PVO/CEO Organizational Excellence Program, a pilot effort designed to improve PVO management capacity and enhance their ability to achieve results. In 1994, following a positive response from PVO/CEO program participants and other PVOs and NGOs regarding the need for increased management training, PVC funded the Global Excellence in Management Initiative (GEM I). The three-year effort provided capacity building resources to PVOs and NGOs in three areas: management training, PVO/NGO partnering, and strategic networking by PVOs and NGOs within key development sectors.

Building on the successes and lessons learned in GEM I, Case Western Reserve submitted a proposal for follow-on funding for GEM II in the spring of 1997. PVC accepted the proposal on a non-competitive basis as is permitted for follow-on grants of less than 5 years that do not extend beyond 10 years from the original award date. GEM II was designed to implement activities in four areas: Partnerships and Alliances, the Organizational Excellence Program, the Certificate Program, and Learning and Dissemination. Within these, GEM II proposed to emphasize strengthened PVO/NGO partnerships, and expand the reach of the program while continuing to utilize its hallmark organizational strengthening methodology, Appreciative Inquiry, an approach developed by Case Western Reserve's Weatherhead School of Management.

This is the first and final evaluation of the GEM program, and as it represents a multi-million dollar investment by PVC, the evaluation should be as comprehensive and thorough as possible.

Current Implementation Status: GEM II is now in its second year of implementation. Its PACD is September 30, 2000.

Partners: In its DIP, GEM stated that it was exploring relationships with INTRAC, Katalysis and PACT.

Program Goal: The overarching goal for GEM II is to encourage and support new forms of cooperation between PVOs and NGOs in order to promote sustainable, long-term development and build organizational capacities to support the vital emerging role of civil society world-wide. GEM proposed to accomplish this through programs that:

1. Develop skills and capacities for creating, managing and evolving partnerships, alliances and networks that are mutually beneficial.
2. Strengthen key organizational capacities of PVOs and NGOs so that they provide more effective development assistance and make stronger partners.
3. Build individual capacities of PVO and NGO leaders engaged in managing partnership development and organizational change.
4. Discover, document and disseminate best practices of organizational excellence and effective partnership and alliance building.

In its Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP), GEM categorizes its indicators by outputs and outcomes, organized to parallel the four-system levels at which GEM operates: individual, organization, inter-organization, and system-wide. The indicators are described in the annex.

III. Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation for BHR/PVC is fourfold:

- To provide information that PVC will use in reporting at the Strategic Objective level in its annual R4 report;
- To contribute to a larger study of PVC's capacity-building efforts which will inform PVC of the efficacy and utility of these efforts, their impact and cost-per-organizational change;
- To provide lessons-learned for broader application; and
- To inform USAID in designing future results frameworks in capacity-building.

In addition, as the timing of the evaluation is one year before the end of its second grant, GEM will have the opportunity in this evaluation to examine and learn from its experiences of the past 5 years, and apply lessons-learned to the final year of the grant. (Note that GEM will also have the opportunity to have its accomplishments in the last year of the grant assessed before grant completion, thus providing a full picture of the life-of-project.)

IV. EVALUATOR STATEMENT OF WORK

The evaluation team will assess the following program and institutional elements, providing evidence, criteria for judgement and citing data sources. Taking into account that the GEM program is not structured or delivered as a conventional

service delivery program, evaluators will assess both its U.S. and overseas activities in one or more countries. An estimate of the emphasis or level of effort for the two main segments of the SOW is in italicized brackets below.

A. Program Implementation [*Emphasis for this evaluation -- 75%*]

1. Assess progress towards the Program Goal and achievement of outputs and outcomes, giving consideration to the following questions/issues:
 - Based on the statement of program purpose in the proposal, have objectives been met?
 - Assess effectiveness of models and approaches utilized in the program, and identify the characteristics that make the methods successful.
 - What changes have occurred in client organization capacities for analytical thinking, strategic planning, productive partnerships and effective management as a result of those organizations' participation in GEM programs?
 - Identify constraints and unanticipated effects.
2. Assessing Elements of Impact:
 - What major approaches or methods were used in the program? How effective were they and why? Was their use replicated by clients of the program? What are the possibilities for, and limitations of, the expanded use of GEM's methodologies in PVO/NGO capacity building?
 - Under what conditions is the GEM model most effective?
 - What is the time frame for organizational change as a result of participation in the program?
 - Is there demand for GEM's services/programs?
3. Cite the major implementation lessons learned and recommendations.

B. Program Management [*Total Emphasis for this Evaluation -- 25%*]

1. Assess change in the capacity of GEM (structure and quality of program management) as a result of five years of PVC grant funding.
 - Strategic Approach and Program Planning

What changes have occurred in GEM's capacity for critical and analytic thinking regarding program design and impact? Identify evidence that GEM has:

- Fostered analysis and self-evaluation of its own programs or conducted quantitative or qualitative analysis to refine its interventions and partnerships
- Conducted periodic reviews of performance and taken actions as a result of the reviews
- Institutionalized performance monitoring and impact evaluation systems into their programs
- Acted on feedback and recommendations of PVO/NGO clients.

2. Monitoring and Evaluation

Assess capacity of GEM to monitor program performance and measure impact. Consider whether:

- An adequate framework exists to assess progress toward achievement of program goal and purpose
- Indicators chosen to measure outputs and outcomes are appropriate
- There is institutional capacity in the organization to devote to monitoring and evaluation of its programs

4. Assess progress towards sustainability

- Identify: program elements that are intended to be sustained; sustainability objectives; indicators used to measure progress; achievements to date; and prospects for post-grant sustainability.
- How did GEM intend to make its approach sustainable? Were partnerships or other arrangements created to assure that work would continue beyond the life of the PVC grant?
- Existence and status of cost-recovery mechanisms or other approaches to generate resources to support project operations.

5. Assess the status and impact of strategic partnerships with other organizations involved in capacity-building efforts such as PACT, etc.

6. Financial Management

- Are adequate financial monitoring systems in place to verify program revenue, operating and financial expenses, other inputs and outputs?

- Has the program leveraged additional resources beyond the match?
- Cost-effectiveness of the program

7. Information

- Comment on the utility and timeliness of GEM's required reports
- Comment on the quality and utility of GEM's program materials
- Comment on GEM's public outreach activities: have they been effective in creating demand for GEM's services? In communicating capacity building lessons to the PVO community?

V. Evaluation Methods

The Evaluation Team will:

- In conjunction with PVC, participate in a multi-stakeholder planning meeting with GEM and PVC at, or before, the initiation of the evaluation;
- review all relevant program documents and reports;
- interview GEM staff in Washington and Cleveland;
- interview an appropriate cross-section of program clients, partners, and other organizations familiar with the GEM methodology
- document all data sources
- identify and discuss with GEM and PVC staff, criteria for assessment of program performance related to the emphases described above

VI. Team Composition and Participation

A team consisting of two individuals knowledgeable in PVO/NGO management, strategic planning, and organizational development will be required for the evaluation. Excellent writing and analytical skills are desired. No language skills are required other than English.

Individuals and organizations anticipated to cooperate in the evaluation include: BHR/PVC, AmaTech staff, GEM staff in Washington and Cleveland, its PVO and NGO partners, clients, and possibly others familiar with the GEM methodology.

It is anticipated that consensus will be reached among the evaluators, GEM and PVC regarding the findings of the evaluation. However, in the event of disagreement, the views of PVC will prevail.

VII. Schedule

The estimated level of effort for this evaluation is up to a total of 54 workdays (6 day workweek is permitted). Overseas travel will be required by one or both team members. Travel within the U.S. will be required to visit the headquarters offices of several of the PVOs that have participated in and/or are familiar with GEM programs, i.e., to CARE (Atlanta), CRS (Baltimore), and others in Washington, DC. Overseas travel destinations will be determined in an early planning meeting with GEM, but are expected to include countries where PVOs and NGOs that have participated in GEM programs are implementing activities, such as the Philippines, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

It is estimated that the evaluation will take approximately 4-5 weeks to complete. Depending on how the tasks are divided between the team members, 5-7 working days will be needed to: 1) hold a planning meeting with GEM and PVC staff, 2) review documentation and interview PVC and GEM staff in Washington and Cleveland, and 3) interview PVO headquarters staff in Washington and elsewhere in the U.S. Depending on the number of countries it is determined that the evaluators should visit, approximately 10-14 days will be needed for overseas travel and interviews. Another 10 days will be allocated for developing an initial draft report, soliciting comments from GEM and PVC, and producing and submitting a final report to PVC.

VIII. Reporting and Dissemination Requirements

The SOW will serve as the outline of the report. The evaluators will submit a draft version of the report to GEM and PVC, each of which will have five working days to review and comment. The evaluators will then have another 3 days to complete the final draft, due o/a October 22, 1999. A final debriefing meeting should be held with GEM and PVC staff upon completion of the draft report.

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