

PN DAR-275
ISN. 36857

QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT
PROJECTS IN THE
AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PREPARED BY

ROBERT W. CACCIA

July 22, 1984
Washington, D.C. 20523

PREFACE

BASE LINE DATA COLLECTION FOR THE QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Base line data collection activities were to be conducted by the Near East and Africa Bureaus as the first step in their improvement projects. This base line data was to be used to identify the current quality and productivity levels within one major system in each bureau. The Near East Bureau's improvement efforts were to focus on the evaluation system while the Africa Bureau's efforts were to concentrate on the Project Identification Document (PID) system.

The choice of the bureau's respective systems for application of improvement efforts reflected each bureau's management concern regarding the system of operation and the quality of outputs. The concerns included the perception that both systems were using an excess amount of inputs including person hours and were producing a significant number of outputs (evaluations and PIDS) which were not acceptable to the various users. It was believed that within the processes, there existed both cumbersome procedures and rework. User rejection of products (outputs) created more rework and some products were either unusable or were only made usable after considerable additional inputs.

First efforts at designing the base line collection activity for each bureau considered Quality and Productivity measurement. This

approach applies system, input/output, quality and productivity concepts and techniques. It defines outputs which flow between functional units within systems and final outputs which flow to users, in terms of quality characteristics. These quality characteristics consist of those distinguishing features which must be present within an output in order to make the output acceptable to the user(s). Those outputs which contain the needed quality characteristics are defined as acceptable outputs or products. Those outputs which do not contain one or more of the quality characteristics or contain errors within one or more quality characteristics are defined as defective outputs or products.

Inputs are defined, for the most part, as person hours of work by employees within the producer or output units as well as those hours expended by user unit employees. There also may be inputs such as those produced from other internal or external units. For example, those inputs generated by contractors in the evaluation system represent hours of work expended and charged for by external units.

The ratio of acceptable outputs (those outputs or products which contain the needed quality characteristics) to inputs forms the basis for developing a reliable productivity measurement. In this context, acceptable outputs can be thought of as quality products. With the addition of the inputs needed to correct those outputs which are defective an accurate quality/productivity measurement can be generated. It was proposed that this approach be used in each bureau to determine current quality and productivity levels.

13

By identifying defective products (outputs) and those quality characteristics which are either not being generated or are inadequate, system/process problems are identified which can, in turn, be targeted for improvement. After the selected and targeted improvements are implemented, continued productivity and quality measurement will describe the impact(s) of such improvements upon quality and productivity. When the improvements are effective, an increase in quality (reduction of defective products) and a resultant increase in productivity will occur. Output quality increases will reduce the need for corrective rework with a related reduction in inputs such as person hours. The quality productivity measurement application would, therefore, provide management with current levels of quality and productivity within each system; identify locations within the processes from which defective outputs are being produced; identify required rework inputs; locate process trouble spots which require improvement; establish agreed to output quality characteristics (both producers and users concerned with the same output quality characteristics); and measure the impact of any improvements while giving post-improvement measurements of quality and productivity.

After exploring the quality productivity measurement approach to establish base line measurement the bureaus decided to begin with an effort which was less input/output oriented. As a starting point, the Near East Bureau developed an employee participation activity designed to identify both experiences with process problems and the identification of quality problems. The Near East Bureau's design was, in part, followed by the Africa Bureau.

H

The Near East Bureau's design for the development of base line measurement included the participation of Bureau professionals and managers at AID Washington and in field missions. The design included several steps.

1. Design of a questionnaire which reflected perceptions of problems with the evaluation system including personnel, organizations, responsibility and functions. The questionnaire also covered output and quality characteristics questions.
2. The distribution of the questionnaire was to be followed up with individual interviews with the respondents to further clarify both the appropriateness of the questions asked, the continuation of the questions themselves, the respondents' answers and additional areas of concern which the participants had.
3. The questionnaire and interview findings were to be reviewed and discussed by several quality circles. Each quality circle would discuss and refine the findings within defined subject areas. These subject areas were to include:
 - A. NE Bureau Evaluation Process; strength and weaknesses. Evaluation support: Roles of NE/DP/PAE and Backstop officers.
 - B. Evaluation Design, Planning, Review (PRC/NEAC) and the quality characteristics of an acceptable evaluation.

6

C. Host Country Involvement: Problems of understanding, anxiety; political concerns.

D. Lessons Learned: The presentation and utilization of lessons learned.

E. Evaluation Training; role of the mission evaluation officer.

Following step 3, a preliminary report would be prepared prior to bureau AID/W representatives' visits to field missions. These visits would involve mission project officers in the questionnaire, interview and QC efforts.

Upon the completion of the four steps, a report would be prepared which would reflect all participants' perceptions of process, personnel, organizational and output problems (see Attachment A).

The Africa Bureau's design for the first step in developing base line quality productivity data collection began with a less input/output oriented effort. The Bureau decided on a multi-stepped approach which would rely upon employee involvement and participation in identifying process and output problems. This design included several steps.

1. Meetings of Bureau professionals at AID/W in which the Bureau's current policies, procedures and practices related to the PID would be discussed. In addition, the quality of an acceptable PID would be defined.
2. Cable questionnaires would be prepared and sent to the missions. The cable questionnaires would include questions which reflected the findings of the meetings in Step 1.
3. An interim report would be prepared which would contain AID/W personnel and Mission personnel concerns regarding the Bureau's policies, procedures, and practices related to the PID. Included in the report would be a discussion of the PID's basic quality characteristics.

A proposal to modify the plan was later introduced in the interview meetings with AID/W bureau personnel and an initial cable had been sent to missions (see Attachment B). This modified plan included:

1. The development of a questionnaire and the conduct of individual interviews to reach 40 to 50 AID/W personnel, and all field posts including REDSOs. In addition, visits to 4-6 missions would be included in the plan.
2. Analysis of the responses to the questionnaires and interviews conducted by a quality analysis group comprised of personnel from the various disciplines within the bureau.

1

3. The formation of a management quality circle to identify acceptable quality characteristics of the PID design and the review process. In addition, the circle would recommend necessary system changes. See Attachment C.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page No.</u>
Summary.....	i-iii
Background.....	i
Conclusions.....	i-ii
Recommendation.....	ii-iii
 Recommendations for Improvements Arising From The Productivity Improvement Projects in The Near East & Africa Bureaus of the Agency for International Development.....	 1-54
 Near East Bureau Evaluation System.....	 1-29
Employee Involvement Approach.....	1
Near East Bureau Questionnaire.....	1
Employee Involvement.....	1
Key Indicators of Problems.....	3
Management & Employee Feeling.....	3
Evaluation System User Needs.....	5-7
Evaluation System Outputs.....	5-9
Output Design.....	9
Output Defects (Table A).....	11-12
Improvement Recommendations (Table B).....	14-17
Monitoring Information (Defects & Recommendations; Table C).....	 19-20
Major Cross-Cutting Problems Areas, Product & System Defect. & Recommendations (Table D).....	 22-27
An Excellent Beginning.....	28-29
 The Africa Bureau Project Identification	
Document (PID) Process.....	30-49
Management Quality Circle.....	30
Cable Questionnaire.....	30
Interim Report.....	30
Broad Problem Areas.....	30-31
Questions.....	31-32
Task Force Convenes.....	32
Purpose.....	32
Objectives.....	32
Employee Involvement.....	33
Major Process Problems (Table E).....	34
Explanation of Interrelated Processes.....	34-35
Causal Elements of Process Problems.....	35
PID Production Process Review Process & Product (PID) Problems (Table F).....	 36
Missions' Attempt To Satisfying Changing User Needs.....	 37
Explanation of Defects & Recommendations.....	38
Chapter IV of Final Report (Importance of).....	38-39

PID Product Defects, Production & Review	
Process Defects & Recommendations (Table G).....	40-42
Management Responsibility & Actions To Date.....	43
Management Notice.....	43-44
Recommendations Contained In the Management Notice (Table H).....	45-49
Impact of Deming Improvement Project.....	50-54
Africa Bureau PID Process.....	50-52
Impact on PID Process.....	50-51
Bureau Management Responsibilities.....	51-52
Productivity.....	52
Near East Bureau Evaluation System.....	53-54
Evaluation Guidelines.....	53-54
Implementation of Improvements.....	54
Management Approval of Recommendations.....	54
The Challenge.....	54

SUMMARY

A. Background

As a result of an AID Bureau for Management initiative, and in line with the President's White House Conference on Productivity, Dr. W. Edwards Deming was invited to conduct productivity seminars for AID managers. These occurred on February 28 and March 7, 1983.

The AID Bureau for Management extended the opportunity for two bureaus to establish a quality productivity improvement project. These projects were to apply the Deming productivity principles and would be assisted by Robert W. Caccia, an associate of Dr. Deming.

The Africa and Near East Bureaus accepted invitations and began their productivity projects in late March of 1983. The Africa Bureau was interested in improving its Project Identification Document (PID) process. The Near East Bureau chose its Evaluation System for the Deming application.

B. Conclusions

The Project Identification Document (PID) process in the Africa Bureau and the Evaluation System in the Near East Bureau were (and still are) out of control. Outputs of both exhibit poor quality,

and strong indicators of low productivity exist. Inputs such as person hours expended and contractor costs are producing poor quality outputs which are driving productivity down to unacceptable levels. Some improvement appears to be occurring in the Africa Bureau's PID process but continued management attention is necessary. No hard positive improvements are apparent in the Near East Bureau's Evaluation System.

The identification of product defects, system and process defects, and the need for improvements was handled well by both Bureaus. However, intensive, directed management involvement is necessary for any major sustained improvement.

C. Recommendations

Efforts should be made to develop Quality and Productivity (not production) indicators for each of the projects. AID top management and the Bureau Management should establish a working group (Management Quality Circle) to bring continued attention to the PID process and Evaluation System. This process and system utilize enormous amounts of inputs reflecting both direct and indirect consumption of Agency resources.

The Evaluation System is fraught with such problems that Management must evaluate the system's designed functions and outputs.

Project implementation and monitoring requires more management consideration. Perhaps less resource allocation to the Evaluation System and increased allocation to Project Implementation and Monitoring systems would be most beneficial.

Substantial and lasting improvements in the PID process and the Evaluation System will have to come from management. The work of the Bureau personnel in identifying outputs, process and system problems, and in designing and recommending improvements places responsibility upon Management. This responsibility includes the design for implementation of improvements to the process and system, a monitoring system to assure an acceptable level of quality and productivity, and a reasonable efficient utilization of resources.

If management chooses not to accept the responsibility, no improvements of a substantial nature will occur.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS ARISING
FROM THE PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
IN THE NEAR EAST AND AFRICA BUREAUS OF
THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Near East and Africa Bureaus improvement projects began with a base line data collection activity outlined in a previous report. That report entitled, "Base Line Data Collection for the Quality and Productivity Improvement Projects in the Agency for International Development" discussed both quality/productivity measurement and the approach taken by the Bureaus. It also outlined the process which each Bureau was to take in developing problem definition and recommendation for management.

The Bureaus began with an employee involvement approach which included the use of quality circles to focus upon quality within the project's system of processes. The Near East Bureau followed its plan consistently and succeeded in involving a significant member of AID Washington and field mission personnel. The Bureau's PAE Staff led by Mr. Robert Zimmerman developed an extensive interview questionnaire used in one-on-one interviews with the employee participants. The questions were directed toward the evaluation system, includes processes, product design, product quality, user needs, the organization, employee responsibilities, attitudes toward and practice of evaluation as well as other important areas of concern. See Attachment D (for outline of questions).

The commitment to employee involvement can best be described by noting the number of personnel involved.

1. Nearly 40 one-on-one interviews were held with Bureau staff. See Attachment E (for sample of interview questions and responses).
2. 5 quality circles consisting of from 8 to 15 participants reviewed the findings of the one-on-one interviews. See Attachment F (for group segment of question responses).
3. A cable from the Assistant Administrator to the missions regarding the improvement project and scheduling mission units was sent. (See Attachment G).
4. Five field missions were visited and over 60 one-on-one interviews were held.
5. Six small group discussion meetings were held in 4 of the missions.
6. After the preparation of a discussion paper outlining thirteen problem areas, their causal factors, and recommendations for improvement, five one hour meetings were held with interested bureau personnel. The paper was also distributed throughout the Bureau and to field missions for comment. (See Attachment H.)
6. A five person task force then met several times in order to consider all additional inputs prior to preparing the Final Report to Management.

The preliminary Final Report to Management contained discussions of problems identified by the participants representing both those who work within the system and those who are users of system products. The Report also offered specific recommendations targeted to the identified problems. These also were generated by the participants. See Attachment I.

The preliminary final report was presented to NEAC in August 1983. The final report entitled "Improving the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process" dated August 1983 containing recommendations and NEAC Decisions was then issued. See Attachment J.

15

Perhaps the key indicator of problems is expressed in the first paragraph of the Executive Summary in the final Report.

"Drawing on perceptions shared by project backstop officers and project managers in AID/W and the field as well as mission and bureau management, the findings indicate that the NE Bureau's evaluation system is only partially effective in terms of its utility for evaluation and management of the Bureau's ongoing project portfolio, in the design and planning of new project activities, and in laying the framework for the design of overall assistance programs and strategies."^{1/}

This perception of the system producing outputs of questionable usefulness is further reinforced by the attitude and practices in field missions. On page 3 section A of the final Report it is stated that "...all too often evaluation is not taken seriously and is still seen as simply another 'hoop' to jump through."

Such perceptions held by producers and/or users of a systems output are, in fact, serious warnings to management. Something significant is wrong and requires Management's immediate attention. The Near East Bureau's management obviously was aware that "something" was wrong in the evaluation system and with the system's outputs since this system was chosen for the quality/productivity improvement project. This management feeling was also held by the employees and the managers who participated in the data gathering effort. This is well documented both in the raw data contained in the numerous interview responses and in the conclusions drawn by those who participated in the quality circles. When such a broad consensus is reached by system management, system administrators and users of system products, there is frequently a rush to judgment

^{1/} See Attachment J - "Improving The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process:" Final Report, August 1983.

16

regarding the causes of the problems. Too often this results in changes which not only do not solve problems but which, in fact, may create new ones.

Fortunately, the Near East Bureau's improvement team, which led the project, had anticipated the need to probe beyond such perceptions. By utilizing an accumulative response design technique in the development of the questionnaire in conjunction with the application of Deming techniques, causal factor identification was included within the questionnaire content.

What could be the causes of system outputs which are defective and what is meant by defective? In the report entitled "Base Line Data Collection for the Quality and Productivity Improvement Projects in the Agency for International Development," defective products are defined as those system outputs which do not contain user needed quality characteristics. The basic assumption underlying the definition, however, requires that the system is to produce products which serve defined user needs. Was this true in the case of the evaluation system?

The finding which most directly addresses this question is contained in the final report.

"Drawing on perceptions shared by project officers, project backstop officers and mission and Bureau management alike, our working group concluded...that this situation derives in large measure from a lack of mutual understanding of

17

what the evaluation system is supposed to do or can be expected to produce."^{2/}

What then is the Evaluation System to do and to produce? Which user needs are to be met by the products (outputs) of the system? Who are the users?

Probably the most basic question to begin with when looking at system output problems is "who are the users?" Although this may seem to be a rather elementary question, it was addressed in the final report and led to important considerations. If there are system output problems and a lack of understanding as to the definition and use of the outputs, identifying the actual users of the outputs may be of value.

While the final report does not specifically identify all potential users within and without the Agency and specific host country users, it does discuss the Bureau, missions and host countries, as users with defined needs.^{3/}

Those needs include:

1. Project Design information including previous project experience to help design new projects.

Users include the Bureau, Missions and host countries. Sources include those generated from pilot projects -- Impact Evaluation, some mid-project evaluations,

^{2/} Attachment J, Executive Summary Section (1st page, para. 1, last sentence).

^{3/} Ibid, page 7.

18

Contractor experience, AID staff experience and host country personnel observation of successful projects.

MAJOR CATEGORIES

<u>NEED</u>	<u>PRIME USER(S)</u>	<u>SOURCES</u>
1. Project Design Information	Bureaus Missions Host Countries	. Impact Evaluations . Contractor Experience . AID Staff Experience . Host Country Personnel Observation of successful projects. . Periodic Issues-Driven Evaluation.
2. <u>Project Implementation Monitoring Information</u> including monitoring of project progress and effectiveness and the identification of implementation bottlenecks or problems.		
2. <u>NEED</u> Project Implementation Information	<u>PRIME USER(S)</u> Bureaus Missions Host Countries	<u>SOURCES</u> . Mission meetings with Country personnel and project officers. . Quarterly Project Reports . Portfolio Reviews . Issues-driven Evaluations . Audits . Alert List
(Contracting Process Information)	Bureau	. Project/Program Assistance Implementation Report . Portfolio Reviews . Congressional Presentation Submissions . Evaluations.
3. <u>Country Development Status and AID Strategies Information.</u> In addition to information on progress toward achievement of project purpose and the Impact of individual projects, the Bureau and Missions need information in sector and macro-economic trends.		

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>3. <u>NEED</u>
Country Development
Status and AID
Strategies Information</p> | <p><u>PRIME USER(S)</u>
Bureau
Missions</p> <p>Bureau</p> | <p><u>SOURCES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">. Host Country socio-economic data. Macroeconomic trends. Special studies. Surveys. Assessments. Periodic Project evaluations.. Country development strategy statement |
| <p>4. <u>AID History Information.</u> Because of the continual transfer of AID personnel, missions keep track of what AID has financed in their respective countries.</p> | | |
| <p>4. <u>NEED</u>
AID Historical
Information</p> | <p><u>PRIME USER(S)</u>
Missions
Bureau</p> | <p><u>SOURCES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">. Final Project Evaluations. Project Completion Reports. Comprehensive program Reviews. Import Evaluations |

It is clear from the data that users within the bureau, missions and host countries look to evaluations as sources to satisfy a broad range of needs. However, these same users may or may not consider evaluations as a primary source for any given set of needs.

Which needs can then be expected to be met by the outputs of the evaluation system? The consensus appears to be that the Evaluation System is designed to provide answers to three questions relevant to all forms of economic assistance.

1. Those dealing with effectiveness.
2. Those dealing with significance.
3. Those dealing with efficiency.

Effectiveness questions are:

"Are the targets for outputs and purposes being achieved? Are the lessons learned the utilized to improve implementation? Are they being incorporated into new project designs?"^{4/}

Significance questions are:

"Will the achievement of the targets contribute to economic development or other higher goals beyond the project purpose? To what extent? What are the activity's advantages over possible alternatives? What about unintended, unplanned effects (positive or negative)?"^{5/}

Efficiency questions are:

"Do the benefits justify the costs? Are there more efficient means of achieving the same targets?"^{6/}

The following evaluation products are designed to provide answers to these questions.

<u>PRODUCTS</u>	<u>CONTENT</u>
1. Impact Evaluations	Types and magnitudes of benefits from specific projects and programs. Effectiveness of past projects and programs. Factors which influence whether potential benefits are likely to or have been achieved.
2. Periodic, Issue Driven Evaluation of Individual Projects	Review of Issues raised during design which could only be resolved during implementation. Solutions to serious implementation problems. Document successes or failures. Bring a project to attention of high level host country officials. To relate progress toward outputs to purpose. To reassess the continued relevance of project purpose, assumptions and whys of implementation difficulties.

^{4/} Ibid, Page 8.

^{5/} Ibid, Page 8.

^{6/} Ibid, Page 9.

21

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 3. Assessments and Special Studies | Examination of cross cutting issues within one sector or across several sectors. May focus on prior AID experience or may develop new information in AID limited experience area. |
| 4. End of Project Evaluation/ Reports | There may be final evaluations or project completion reports. Final evaluation reports provide information on the project's impact on beneficiaries, possible economic return and lessons learned. Completion reports emphasize inputs, outputs and end of project status indicators. |

The products of the evaluation system are designed to meet specific user needs. They are not designed to meet all needs for the identified major needs categories including:

1. Project design information.
2. Project implementation monitoring information.
3. Country development status and AID strategies information.
4. AID history information.

While the system products may be a source they are neither the only source nor, in most cases, the prime source. Quality Evaluation System Products, however, are important sources for users. Each identified major need requires a mix of products. Although not stated in the report, it appears that if the system products (impact evaluations, periodic issues drive evaluations, assessments and special studies and end of project evaluations) were meeting their design requirements (general quality characteristics), the system would be producing what is needed from an effective evaluation system.

Is the system producing products which meet the design requirements? Table A lists the products, their design requirements, common defects noted by users and other comments which relate to system, process, and other problems.

TABLE A

EVALUATION SYSTEM

<u>System Products</u>	<u>Product Design Requirements (General Quality Characteristics)</u>	<u>Current Product Defects</u>	<u>Other Comments</u>
1. Impact Evaluations	<p>A. Provide information on types and magnitude of benefits from specific projects.</p> <p>B. Provide information on effectiveness of past projects and programs.</p> <p>C. Provide information on factors which influence whether or not the potential benefits of a project or program are likely to be or have been achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Not available when needed. . Uneven quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Expensive . Time consuming . Complicated . Host countries often not interested in using "their" aid funds. . Pressure for new project outweighs willingness to wait several years for evaluation of similar project elsewhere.
2. Periodic, Issue Evaluations of Individual Projects	<p>A. Issues review of issues raised during project design which could only be resolved during implementation.</p> <p>B. Define solutions to serious implementation problems.</p> <p>C. Documentation of successes or failures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Bureau finds evaluations focused on wrong issues. . Evaluation reports often unsatisfactory for mission and AID/W use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Evaluation system does not facilitate Bureau/USAID agreement on types of evaluations needed - purpose - and detailed scopes. . AID/W support for mission level evaluation varies.

<u>System Products</u>	<u>Product Design Requirements (General Quality Characteristics)</u>	<u>Current Product Defects</u>	<u>Other Comments</u>	
2. Continued	D. Relate progress toward outputs to purpose and to reassess periodically the continued relevance of project purpose, assumptions and the whys of implementation difficulties.	Scopes of work do not usually ask for this information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Evaluations often poorly planned or ad hoc. . Recommendations not always implemented. 	
3. Assessments and Special Studies	<p>A. Provide an examination of cross-cutting issues within one sector or across several sectors.</p> <p>B. Prior AID experience may be focus.</p> <p>C. Purpose can be to develop new information in area where AID's experience is limited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Repetitious products. . Other users may not know info exists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . System does not facilitate formal Bureau/USAID agreement on need, purpose, scope or timing. . No one office coordinates. . Information not shared. 	
4. End of Project Evaluations/Report	Final Evaluations	<p>A. Provide information regarding impact on beneficiaries.</p> <p>B. Information on possible economic return.</p> <p>C. Lessons learned that are particularly relevant to possible follow on projects or similar projects in same or other countries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Cases when no report is done. . Varying quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . No Bureau policy requiring either report to be produced.
Project Completion Reports	<p>A. Information emphasizing inputs/outputs.</p> <p>B. End of project status indicators.</p> <p>C. Lessons learned.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Seldom address lessons learned. 		

25

The analysis in Table A points out several product defects, many of a serious nature. In addition, specific causal factors are listed in the "other comments" column. The data from the final report does indicate that evaluation system products are not meeting their design requirements. Unfortunately, precise information re the extent or frequency of defective products does not exist. The perceptions of those interviewed, however, as reflected in the final report indicates that defective products are common.

Certain recommendations were made to NEAC which were directed toward addressing the causal factors of product defectives. These are related to the products, product defects and causal problems in Table B. The reader is referred to the final Report (Attachment J) for an in-depth presentation of this information.



TABLE B

Partial List of Recommendations for Improvement
Of Evaluation Products' Quality/Usefulness

<u>Product</u>	<u>Defects & Problems</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Responsible For Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
1. Impact Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Expensive, time consuming, complicated. . Available for projects no longer in vogue. . New projects begin before similar projects' evaluation findings available. . Host countries often not interested in using "their" AID funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Be done sparingly. . To study project approaches where little Agency experience. . In relation to pilot or demonstration projects. . Bureau to be responsible for selection of sectors and projects to received impact evaluations. . Bureau to help fund and administer Impact evaluations. 	Agency/Bureau	Approved
2. Periodic, Issue driven evaluations of individual projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Current system does not facilitate Bureau/USAID agreement on types of evaluations needed now. . the purpose of the evaluation now. . The detailed scopes of the evaluations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Establish permanent NE Bureau Senior evaluation committee. . Reviews general status of implementation of evaluaton plan. . Establish selected project evaluation priorities. 	Bureau	Disapproved PEPC chaired by NE/DP/PAE sufficient.

17

<u>Product</u>	<u>Defects & Problems</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Responsible For Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
2. Continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bureau finds evaluations focused on many issues. Ad hoc/poorly planned evaluations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify inadequate contractor performance. Deliniate Bureau level evaluation interests (personnel finding). Review and act upon specific studies of assessments proposed by mission or bureau. Consider requirements from PPC/E and others. Formal recognition for exceptional work. 		Disapproved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uneven follow-up on evaluation recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missions disagreeing with specific evaluation recommendations to include their views in final evaluation report as an attachment. Missions to address on recommendations in previous evaluations in subsequent evaluations. When evaluation recommendations beyond capacity of host country to implement missions consider revision in project provide technical or other assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission Mission Mission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approved Approved Approved

28

<u>Product</u>	<u>Defects & Problems</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Responsible For Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
3. Assessments and Special Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current system does not facilitate Bureau/USAID agreement on need for assessments and/or special studies. Detailed scopes of the assessments on special studies now. Their timing. Inadequate conceptual framework and/or scopes of work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All proposed assessments and/or special studies from all sources submitted to NESEC. 	Bureau	Approved Substitute PERC for NESEC.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PRC to have role in drafting scopes of work. 	Bureau	Approved
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently apply the Redlegation of Authority guidelines: PIDs include draft Log frame. PIDs include draft evaluation plan. (absence of these items in PID will defer decision.) 	Bureau	Approved
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure provisions for information needs included in every project design. 	Mission	Approved
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditure for data collection to reflect type of project and magnitude of overall investment. 		

29

<u>Product</u>	<u>Defects & Problems</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Responsible For Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
3. Continued		. Institute policy requiring original as well as draft updated log frames be included with PES.	Bureau	Approved
	. Uneven AID/W backstopping support.	. Require missions to clearly define who is responsible for evaluation, clarify role of evaluation officer; and	Bureau	Approved
	. Uneven follow-up of Evaluation Recommendations.	. Establish system for follow-up on evaluation recommendations.		
	. No one office in Bureau coordinating: . Bureau support fragmented information not always shared.	. NE/DP/PAE to be a member of all Bureau special interest studies.	Bureau	Approved on trial basis.
<hr/>				
4. End of Project Evaluation Reports	. No Bureau policy requires either product to be produced. . Possibility of losing part of AID's experience history.	. Project Completion reports be required of all AID-financed Projects (Handbook III requirement). . This be waived if a final evaluation in PID & PPs be discontinued.	Bureau	Approved

In addition to the product's specific recommendations, an additional analysis related to an additional user need was made. This analysis of user concerns was directed to the need for project monitoring information.^{7/} This report section entitled "Progress/ Implementation Reports and Portfolio Reviews," includes the consideration of a variety of monitoring systems used by the Bureau and missions.

While evaluations should not be necessary to provide the monitoring information needed, some missions are continuing to perform annual project evaluations to meet this need..

Table C lists the problems and recommendations for this user need.

^{7/} Ibid, page 10.

TABLE C
MONITORING INFORMATION

<u>User Need</u>	<u>Products</u> (From a variety of Monitoring Systems)	<u>Defects/System Problems</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Responsible For Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
Project Monitoring Information (What is and is not happening?)	. Project/Program assistance Implementation Report.	. This report was refocused on Procurement - not important source for status of implementation against targets.	Change title to reflect nature of report.	Bureau	Approved in Principle.
	. Semiannual Portfolio Reviews.	. Sometimes users tend to rely too heavily on SPRs in lieu of more routine effective monitoring system.	Develop Management Monitoring/Implementation Report. (Use Tunisia Quarterly Implementation Report as a model.)	Bureau	Approved in Principle.
	. Alert List		No recommendations.		
	. Various forms of Quarterly Implementation Status Reports.	. Information not pulled together in usable format. Inconsistencies in the various reports' content.	Discontinue- Replace with Management Monitoring Implementation Report. (Use Wang System.)	Bureau	Approved in Principle.

21

<u>User Need</u>	<u>Products</u>	<u>Defects/System Problems</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>	<u>Responsible For Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
	. Annual Project Evaluations.	. Does not effectively nor efficiently serve as a source for monitoring information.	. Discontinue as a substitute for monitoring system.	Bureau	Approved in Principle.
			. Establish formalized system for requiring officers to prepare end of tour reports.	Bureau Missions	Approved
			. Alternative to above is to schedule in-house evaluations of all projects officer with participation by his/her replacement.	Bureau Missions	Approved

The project also resulted in the identification of major cross-cutting problem areas which affect system operation and product quality. Table D lists the product and system defects identified together with the related recommendations and management decisions.

TABLE D

MAJOR CROSS-CUTTING PROBLEM AREAS AFFECTING
EVALUATION PRODUCT QUALITY AND SYSTEM OPERATION

<u>Product Defect</u>	<u>System Defect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsible for Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
	Lack of trained, experienced mission evaluation officers with clearly defined roles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission Director or Deputy Mission "de facto" mission evaluation officer job title holder, however, usually defines role of staff evaluation officer. Roles vary from mission to mission and from job title holder to job title holder. Evaluation officer is usually a mission assistant program officer. Very few missions treat evaluation as a full time job, thus little time is available to ensure either production of quality evaluation reports or individual HC more effectively in the process. There is no career track or reward for evaluation officer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NE Senior Evaluation Committee to resolve confusion over where Primary responsibility lies in mission for evaluation system; Develop clearly defined role for mission evaluation officers; Require minimum experience in project design, managing Project implementation; Budget and programming experience. 	Bureau	Approved for Development of Guidelines
Uneven quality of External Evaluation Reports.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Evaluation teams (contractor, AID/W TDY or combination) produce untimely, unbalanced, irrelevant reports with unfeasible recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select IQC Contractors with proven capability. Reinstate Contractor performance reports. IQCs (or individuals within IQC's) dropped for poor quality work. 	Agency Bureau	<p>Not Approved. Need further exploration of legal constraints other approaches.</p> <p>AID needs to have greater specificity in delineating expectations from contractor.</p>

34

<u>Product Defect</u>	<u>System Defect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsible for Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
			. Scope of work to include required review of AID evaluation policies, documentation requirements, a review of Project related DIU documents and review of project files before departure to evaluation site.	Bureau	Approved
			. Require every contractor prepared report include Executive summaries following PES format.	Bureau	Approved
			. Include in contract for consultants doing AID evaluations a performance guaranty.	Bureau	Not approved (Same reasons as denial of recommendations of IQC Contractors.)
			. Require AID/W via the PRC and mission to agree on scope of work prior to departure to Evaluation site.	Bureau	Approved
			. Require AID/W TDY evaluators complete draft of evaluation report for mission review before leaving.	Bureau Mission	Approved on case by case basis.

15

<u>Product Defect</u>	<u>System Defect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsible for Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
	. Uneven Proforma or non-existent host country participation in evaluation efforts.	. Varies from country to country. General perception is that host countries are not attuned to evaluation. . Evaluation unique American management tool. . Mission not consistent in seeking host country participation.	. Include in PID or PP evaluation plans requirement that design officer discuss degree of host country interest in and capacity for participation in evaluations. . Require missions to develop and report on efforts to establish liaison with host countries, offices or agencies concerned with evaluation.	Bureau bureau	Approved; Institute policy to require missions to provide full text of project evaluation plan to host country. Approved
			. Designate Mission Evaluation officers position as a language position.	Bureau	Not approved.
			. When appropriate, provide technical assistance or training to counterpart evaluation or organizations.	Mission	Concur in principle.
	. Heavy reliance on external evaluations.	. Positive learning aspects of evaluation participation cost to mission staff, AID/W TDY staff and host country.	. Institute policy to reduce Bureau reliance on external contractors for evaluation.	Bureau	Approved in principle.

2/2

<u>Product Defect</u>	<u>System Defect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsible for Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make operating expense funds earmarked for evaluation available for travel expenses for AID employees. 		
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage missions to use in-house and host country staff in routine evaluations. 	Bureau	Approved in principle.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During redesign process ensure evaluation plan, data collection requirements and resources for evaluation tightly interwoven into project implementation plan. 	Mission	Approved in principle.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and utilize host country social scientists and economists in in-house and external evaluation teams. 	Mission	Approved in principle.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for evaluation process and methodology training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusion exists among Washington and field AID employees about evaluation policies, documentation policies, and documentation and techniques. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct training sessions in missions and bureaus with concentration on application of FES methodology to different types of projects. 	Bureau	Approve with changes.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confusion contributes to both product defects and system problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior mission management to participate in Washington. 		Incorporate training into existing training programs.

41

<u>Product Defect</u>	<u>System Defect</u>	<u>Explanation</u>	<u>Recommendation</u>	<u>Responsible for Action</u>	<u>NEAC Decision</u>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for middle level officers to participate on Agenfy or bureau impact evaluation teams. 	Bureau Mission	Approved in principle.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend missions make time available for officers and staffs to participate on evaluation teams. 	Bureau Mission	Approved in principle.
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend missions encourage officers from one sector participate in evaluations in other sectors. 	Bureau Mission	Approved
<hr/>					
Limited Economic		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic analysis requirement in project design process not generally carried over to evaluation plan (even for those projects in which project paper presents a quantified economic analysis. Data rarely obtained for impact in economic terms except where micro data is required in implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require projects justified on economic basis to be evaluated. Include in evaluation assessment of economic impact. Provide resources necessary to do data collection overtime. 	Bureau	Approved

28

Product Defect System Defect

Explanation

Recommendation

Responsible
for
Action

NEAC
Decision

- Require discussion of host country capacity for analyzing and collecting data. Where host country capacity for this is weak, training should be integrated into project.

Bureau

Approved

39

The Near East Bureau's Quality/Productivity Improvement project resulted in an excellent beginning. The project applied many of the Deming improvement principles, involved a large number of managers and professionals in real participation activities and influenced many of those employees to look at their work in terms of systems, products, producers, users, and quality. The identification of system products, product user requirements, system product design requirements, major product defects and system problems can prove to be of great value to the Agency.

This way of looking at Agency work can be applied to any activity in the Agency. It is being applied with success in federal and state government agencies as well as private sector organizations. Every system, no matter where found, must either produce acceptable products (outputs) or it literally chews up inputs while it produces partially or totally unusable products.

It is apparent from the final report that serious defects within the evaluation system have in turn inexorably led to serious product defects. Defective products waste inputs such as person hours and contracting costs. Reworking defects to produce acceptable products requires additional inputs. That the evaluation system is wasting inputs becomes undeniable when system and product defects are identified.

The Bureau's efforts at identifying product defects led to the identification of system defects. This process is a proven road to

40

the development of management and employee awareness that quality and productivity are outcomes of the system. As Dr. Deming pointed out in his sessions with AID/W management, "any significant improvement in (product) quality and (real) productivity must come from the system." This principle is illustrated by the fact that nearly every recommendation for improvement contained in the Bureau's final report relates to the system.

The Africa Bureau's project to improve the Project Identification Document process followed a similar course to that of the Near East Bureau's project. It began with the development of a questionnaire by a management quality circle consisting mainly of Bureau of AID/W professionals. This Circle led by Russell Anderson of PD/CCWAP identified generally held perceptions of PID process and product problems. The questionnaire was first tested via a cable sent to the Bureau's missions.

The cable questionnaire was designed to deal with the quality characteristics of a PID, consistency (or lack thereof) in the design and review process experience with Handbook 3 guidelines and the impact on PIDs of the increased delegations of authority (see Attachment L). Responses from several missions were presented in an interim report to management (see Attachment M). This interim report contained a significant statement regarding the Project Identification Document itself.

"...it did indicate that the missions feel that they can't submit a PID that conforms to the Handbook 3 guidelines and have it approved."^{1/}

The report further states that the broad problem identified by the mission responses was:

"...They believe what AID/W wants is the substance for project approval because AID/W is using the PID level decision as the de facto authorization of a project. To satisfy AID/W's unstated desire for sufficient (and everchanging) information on which to base the de facto authorization, the Missions try to anticipate

^{1/} Attachment M "Deming Pilot Project Report" Page 2.

42

every possible question that might be raised and to answer those questions in the PID. THE NET RESULT IS A BREAKDOWN OF THE PID PROCESS..."8/

Within the broad problem area defined by these preliminary report conclusions, it was suggested that several areas be examined. This was to be done in order to:

"get the PID process back into the Handbook 3 context so that the mission and AID/W can agree on what the real rules are on PID design and review."9/

Further suggestions included the pursuit of answers to the following questions:

1. What is the PID and what level of substantive information is required for each section of the PID?
2. What should be reviewed in a PID during the review process?
3. How is the PID review process working?

The report went on to suggest that within each of these questions there existed such areas to be examined. It cautioned that these concerns reflected only field perceptions and that AID/W's might be different. The report went on to provide a project plan incorporating broad AID/W and field participation, identification of process problems leading to defective PIDs, base line data gathering to isolate problems and causal factors, the development of a

8/ Ibid page 2.

9/ Ibid page 9.

questionnaire dealing with process problems (system problems) and product (PID) problems. In addition, a discussion of data analysis and the role of Quality Circles was included.

Shortly after the management Quality Circles interim report was forwarded, the Bureau for Management decided to convene a Task Force to examine:

1. The way PIDs were prepared.
2. The way PIDs were reviewed and approved.

Members of the Task Force established set for themselves these objectives:

1. Examine PID guidelines contained in Handbook 3 for adequacy;
2. Provide field posts with guidance on how to interpret those guidelines in preparing PIDs;
3. Provide guidance to those who participate in AID/W PID reviews on what to expect of PIDs.^{10/}

The Task Force had, in effect, accepted the suggestions of the original Management Quality Circle. This acceptance was not only reflected in the area to be examined by the Task Force but also in the objectives which the Task Force established.

^{10/} Attachment N "Africa Bureau Task Force Report on The Project Identification Document", Introduction.

44

The Task Force also adopted the MQC's technique of actively involving a large number of the Bureau's AID/W managers and professionals as well as personnel assigned to missions. It also expanded participation beyond the Bureau to other AID/W staff. Over 40 AID/W individual interviews were held by the Task Force with high level Bureau managers, and personnel for Geographic offices, Development Planning offices, Technical areas, etc. Over 40 AID/W and representatives from missions visiting AID/W were interviewed. Preliminary results from these interviews were presented to attendees at the two annual scheduled Workshops (Abidjan and Nairobi) in late September. Responses from the attendees were incorporated in a final report (Attachment N).

This final undistributed report contains principal findings and recommendations as well as an excellent analysis of the Handbook III guidelines. This analysis attempts to clarify PID requirements so that both the producer and reviewer (user) of PIDs can be in agreement on PID content.

Table E lists the Major Process (System) problems identified in the final report.^{11/}

^{11/} Attachment N, Africa Bureau Task Force Report on the Project Identification Document (PID), January 1984, (not distributed).

TABLE E

PID And System Process Defects

<u>Product</u>	<u>System/Process</u>	<u>Defects</u>
PID		Excessive length unwieldy- go beyond intended purpose.
	Handbook III	Producer and user (reviewer) lack of common understanding of level of information and content of each PID section.
	Review Process	Unnecessarily long and cumbersome.

There are two major interrelated processes operating within what is commonly referred to as the PID process. The first is the process which results in the creation of the PID. The second is the process through which the PID is reviewed and a decision is made.

Handbook III is a critical element in each of these interrelated processes. It must be relied upon by the producers (missions) in order to produce PIDs with those quality characteristics which make PIDs acceptable to users (reviewers and decision-makers). The users must rely upon the Handbook to provide the quality characters by which they must test the acceptability of the PID.

Problems with these types of systems most often occur when the producers and users:

1. can not agree upon the quality characteristics necessary for an acceptable product; and/or

2. the users begin to redefine the use of the product as others than that for which the product was designed. This most often results in an expansion of the quality characteristics required.

When one or both of these causal elements exist the system begins to produce perceived "defective" products, lengthy delays while rework is carried out and finally products which continue to grow on in terms of quality characteristics content until the producer begins to produce anything just so it gets past the users. The system is then out of control. Its processes are attempting to cope with the production of outputs for which the processes were not designed. Production inputs and rework inputs grow until everyone is engaged in satisfying uncontrollable system's requirements which have little relationship to actual user need.

Table F lists the major findings with reference to PID production process problems, review process problems and product (PID) problems.

TABLE F

<u>PID (Product Defects)</u> <u>(Missions)</u>	<u>PID Production</u> <u>Process Defects</u> <u>(Missions)</u>	<u>PID Review Process</u> <u>Defects (Users)</u>
Excessive in Length	Problems with Technical issues in previous <u>PIDs</u> require producer to respond with more detail in subsequent PIDs.	
Unwieldy		
Go far beyond intended purposes.	Mission and AID/W staff working with desired versus required levels of detail (required levels of detail are quality characteristics).	AID/W users requiring more detail than is necessary for PID to carry.
		Chairpersons for reviews (issues of CPR meetings) not directing discussions to meet requirements for acceptable PID.
		Delegation of authority for many missions to approve PPs reduced role of many AID/W staff to participate in PP review. These employees now unable to influence project design beyond PID stage. They request more information and detail in PID.
		Review process unnecessarily long and cumbersome.

KA

The findings regarding common PID defects reflect the producer missions' attempt to satisfy changing user requirements. The PIDs had become longer than actually needed and had been required to go far beyond their intended purpose. Missions were, in fact, unable to submit a PID in conformance with the process requirements (a PID with the defined quality characteristics as contained in Handbook 3). To do so only invited the receipt of cables requiring more information.

Missions were faced with either assuming all possible questions that were to be answered in the PID, or with entering a guessing game with users. They were forced to try to satisfy user desires not user needs. The resulting PIDs went far beyond their intended purposes.

The review and decision process reflects a process which had grown long and cumbersome. It allowed users to require more detail in PIDs than necessary which, of course, impacted directly on the nature of the PID. These problems in concert with those of the PID production process illustrate the elements of a system out of control.

Unless the process defects are corrected and the system is kept in control, acceptable PIDs will not be produced. Table G contains the recommendations of the task force for improvement of the PIDs and the processes.

Table G lists product defects first. However, these product defects reflect the defective nature of the PID process illustrated by the problems found in the review process which required that defective products be produced by missions. Process defects must be corrected if there is to be a realistic expectation of acceptable PID production.

The recommendations for improvement of the production and review processes appear to be on target. Most important is the recommendation to promote common understanding of what content (quality characteristics) is required in an acceptable PID, until both users and producers can agree on an answer to the question.

"What quality characteristics must an acceptable PID contain?"

No significant improvement in the PID processes can be generated unless users define what producers are to produce. The task force recognized this and included in its recommendations:

"The circulation of the contents of Chapter IV of the final report to field and AID/W staff."

Chapter IV of the final report contains the results of the task force's efforts to better define the PID contents. The task force reviewed Handbook 3, Chapter 2 section by section. In this effort they reviewed other documents related to the preparation of PIDs; interviewed AID/W staff within and outside of the bureau and discussed with them each subsection. From this work came improved descriptions of content requirements (quality characteristics) of

PIDs. This work is most important since it can serve as the basis of "the rules of the game" so that producers can produce what users need.

Table G contains other recommendations all of which are directed toward production and review process improvements.

TABLE G

Africa Bureau PID Process

<u>PID (Product Defects)</u>	<u>PID Production Process Defects</u>	<u>PID Review Process Defects</u>	<u>Recommendations</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">. Excessive in Length. Unwieldy. Go far beyond intended purpose.			<ul style="list-style-type: none">. AA/AFRICA formally reaffirm validity of HB 3, Chapter 2.. Bureau advise all field posts of 20 page limitation.. Return PIDs for revision when they exceed page limitations.. Chairpersons of issues and ECPR meetings dismiss issues not germane to PIDs.. Promote common understanding of HB 3, Chapter 2 content among AID/W and field posts. (This content relates to quality characteristics.). Circulate contents of Chapter IV of Task Force report to field and AID/W staff (quality characteristics detail).
		<p>AID users requiring more detail than is necessary for PID to carry.</p> <p>Delegation of authority for many missions (etc.) to approve PPs' reduced role of many AID/W staff to participate in PP review. These employees now request more information and detail in PID.</p>	
	<p>Mission and AID/W staff working with desired vs. required levels of detail (required levels of detail are quality characteristics).</p>	<p>Mission and AID/W staff working with desired vs. required levels of detail (required levels of detail are quality characteristics).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">. Introduce use of checklist by chairperson of ECPR and issues meetings to assure that all legal, procedural and Agency policy matters applicable to PIDs are dealt with at meetings.

51

PID (Product Defects)

PID Production
Process Defects

PID Review
Process Defects

Recommendations

Require all chairpersons at such meetings to summarize decisions made at the meetings.

Encourage all chairpersons to take short-term executive training courses on meeting management.

Review Process unnecessarily long and cumbersome.
- More time is allotted to the review of documents than is necessary.

Reduce time for reviewing PIDs to one work week between PID distribution and issues meeting.

Encourage issues committee to return poorly prepared or inadequate PIDs to source.

Expand List of ECPR chairpersons to include the Director and Deputy Director of PID.

Discontinue exchange of cables with missions or draft issues following issues meeting.

Encourage participation by field representatives at Issues and ECPR meetings for difficult PIDs.

Restructure and improve quality of issues papers which serve as agendas for ECPR meetings.

Restructure current procedures for recording ECPR decisions.

- One paragraph decision cables within one day of meeting.
- Guidance cables out with one week of meeting.
- Limit required guidance cables clearances to AFR/PD, DP, Geographic desk and PPC.

PID (Product Defects)

PID Production
Process Defects

PID Review
Process Defects

Recommendations

Process for bringing issues to the attention of senior management is unwieldy, involves too many people; takes too much time.

Eliminate most clearances required for issues papers.

Only clearance necessary is by Director P/O within one day of issues meeting.

Encourage higher level participation at executive committee for project review meetings. If Office Directors cannot attend, their representatives to have authority to concur in ECPR decisions.

59

The Deming Approach was applied in the Africa Bureau Improvement Project. In a memo to Mr. Larry Haussman of the Bureau (leader of the Task Force) several of Dr. Deming's 14 points for management were discussed. (See Attachment O). The task force final report reflects the considerations raised in the memo.

However, there are areas discussed in the memo for which the task force can have no responsibility. One of those areas is paramount to the improvement of any system/process. Management is responsible for the system. Dr. Deming's point number 4 - "Constantly and Forever Improve the System" - is a management function and requires their active participation. On page two of the introduction of the task force's report this point is well stated (see Attachment N):

We are under no illusion, however, that a series of seemingly sensible recommendations will by themselves result in a better process. Without the long-term commitment of senior managers in Washington and in the field to improve the process, these recommendations will have little sustained impact..."

As of this date (July 16, 1984), some actions have occurred as a result of the Africa Bureau improvement project. On January 25, 1984, Headquarters Management Notice No. 64-32, "Africa Bureau Procedures for Review and Approval of Projects" was distributed (see Attachment P). This notice dealt with four major areas:

1. The establishment of project committees.
2. The project issues meeting.

3. The Executive Committee for Project Review.

4. Review and Approval Procedures - The Process.

The thrust of this notice was to improve the review and approval process. It was an acknowledgement that, in order to improve the quality of the products from the PID production process review and approval process, improvements must be designed and implemented. Users (reviewers and decision makers) must define what they require and provide processes which are efficient in order for producers (missions/field offices) to produce quality products (PIDs).

Table H lists the task force recommendations and the improvements contained in the management notice.

TABLE H

Management Notice Improvements

<u>System</u>	<u>Recommendations</u> <u>For</u> <u>Management</u>	<u>Management</u> <u>Notice</u> <u>Improvements</u>
Review and Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall system improvement• Chairperson of Issues meeting dismiss issues not germane to PIDs.• Discontinue exchange of cables with missions/field offices on draft issues meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of project committees.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsibility of PID review process.• Review, analyze and present project document at Issues and ECPR meetings.• Committee to include: Project officer, AFR/PD chairperson; geographic desk officer; AFR/TR from appropriate tech. sector/discussions; AFR/DP; GC/AFR; others as appropriate.• Project Issues Meeting Requirements.• Determine whether PID or PP conforms to Agency standards (handbook, policy and strategy considerations).• Based on findings recommendations to ECPR limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approve, with appropriate guidance.• Conditionally approve with explicit guidelines for full approval.

57

System

Recommendations
for
Management

- . Eliminate most clearances required for issues paper.
- . Restructure and improve quality of issues paper.

- . Encourage higher level participation at Executive Committee for project review meetings.
- . Expand list of ECPR chairpersons to include Director and Deputy Director of PD.

- . Restructure current procedures for recording ECPR decision.

Management
Notice
Improvements

- . No clearances needed for issues paper.
- . PCR recommendations included in paper.
- . Paper available to ECPR chairperson and project committee members 1 day before ECPR.
- . The Executive Committee for Project Review (ECPR).
- . Review and approve, disapprove, or provide guidance on all PIDs, PID-like documents, etc.
- . Committee to include:
 - . AA/AFR or DAA/AFR as appropriate regional DAA/AFR.
 - . Directors or Deputy Directors of AFR/PD, AFR/DP, or AFR/TR.
 - . Relevant Geographic officers.
 - . GC/AFR
 - . Representatives from outside.
 - . AFR Bureau as appropriate.
- . Decisions of ECPR:
 - . Recorded by AFR/PD and cabled to the field as authorized by ECPR chairperson.

System

Recommendations

Management

- . One paragraph cables within one day of meeting.
- . Limit required cable clearances.
- . Guidance cables sent out within one week of meeting.
- . Limit required cable clearances.

- . Restructure current procedures for recording ECPR decisions.

- . Overall process improvement.

Management
Notice
Improvements

- . Decision cables (one paragraph) sent within one day after ECPR (Only oral clearances obtained at meeting.)
- . Follow-up guidance cables sent within one week of ECPR. (Clearance limited to AFR/PD, AFR/DP and Geographic Desk.)

- . Review and Approval Procedures - Process.

- . AFR/PD to serve as secretariat to the ECPR - AFR/PD responsible for scheduling ECPR's.

- . ECPR can be scheduled at any time. (ECPR to follow issues meeting within 3 working days.)

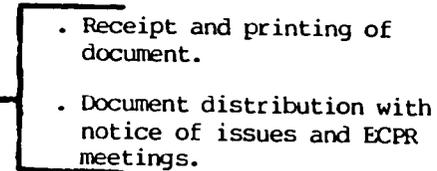
- . Total time for review and approval process 20 working days.

- . Receipt and printing of document.
- . Document distribution with notice of issues and ECPR meetings.

- . Issues meeting - 5 days later.

- . ECPR 3 days after issues meeting.

6 days



System

Recommendations
for
Management

(Tool to keep system in control.)

Management
Notice
Improvements

Decision cable sent 1 day
after ECPR.

~~Decision cable sent 1 day~~
Guidance cable sent 5 days
later.

Establishment of project
tracking networks to be used
by AFR/PD.

meeting.

6

IMPACT OF DEMING IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

While there was not an analysis of impacts resulting from the action taken by the Bureau, the following information was gathered from interviews with Bureau personnel.

1. PID processing time has been lowered from approximately 86 days to approximately 29 days.
2. Indications are that the quality of PIDs is becoming more uniform.
3. There are indications that reviews are more consistent and that the review and approval process is more simplified.
4. The new process time schedules are being met for the most part.
5. Review meetings chairpersons are exercising more control directed toward maintaining the Handbook 3 PID guidelines.
6. The Issues paper is accompanying the PID to the ECPR meetings.
7. PIDs appear to be more consistent - little, if any, negative comments from missions regarding the PID process.
8. Responses to the field has improved. Decision cable on schedule (1 day after ECPR meeting). Guidance cable on schedule.

9. Most PIDs are within the guidelines in length. Prior to improvement project, most PIDs were of excess length.
10. Distribution of PIDs has been reduced. Before project distribution had grown and was result of a random process. Now distribution is the result of a uniform selection process.
11. A bi-weekly scheduling process for PIDs is in effect. (See Attachment Q.) The follow-up and tracking documents are in two parts -- the projected new starts and the PID and PP Review Process (actual dates) document. The latter document can be used for management to evaluate the efficiency of the review and approval process with regard to meeting the stated time requirements. At least one additional entry in this document would be valuable to management. PID length would provide an important indication to management. If PID length begins to grow, management should assume that system problems are occurring which indicate that reviewers may be requiring more detail in PIDs than is needed. The system may be going "out of control" again.

While not all recommendations have been implemented and while the task force report has not been distributed, there are indications of improvement. Bureau management must involve itself not only in further improvements but also in developing, implementing, maintaining, and using a well thought out tracking system which contains quality characteristics indicators. Time of processing,

PID length, number of cables, etc., are but a few of the indicators necessary. There should also be a periodic survey of producers and users to assure that the PID process is producing acceptable products and decisions.

If these actions are not taken, management can be assured that the PID process will eventually exhibit the same problems defined by the task force. In addition, some quality/productivity measurements are needed. What is the PID process costing the Agency? Simply put are the outputs of the process acceptable and at what level of input.

$$\frac{\text{Acceptable PIDs}}{\text{Person Hours}} = \text{Productivity Ratio}$$

No one knows what the productivity ratio was prior to and following the "improvements." Through cost effective sampling, this information can be obtained. The capability of Bureau and Agency management to illustrate real productivity improvement in its systems and processes can be both a powerful management tool and a powerful Agency demonstration of management capability.

64

As a result of the project, the Near East Bureau developed Evaluation Guidelines. As of this date (7/16/84) these guidelines had not been distributed. They were proceeding through the clearance process and were expected to receive clearance shortly. The guidelines detail the evaluation process within ten separate and defined steps: (see Attachment K).

1. Decision to evaluate or not. If yes then when and in what form.
2. Preparation of an evaluation plan during project design.
3. Developing a scope of work for an evaluation.
4. Assembling and orienting the evaluation team.
5. Backstopping the evaluation.
6. Reporting the findings.
7. Submission, logging and distribution procedures.
8. AID/W review of evaluation reports.
9. Providing feedback on reviews.
10. Follow-up on evaluation recommendation.

65

Whether these guidelines will or will not result in improvements remains to be seen. Since they have not been distributed speculation as to impact is dangerous. While guidelines can be helpful, management has apparently not developed systems which have the ability to determine whether or not improvement is occurring. That is, once the guidelines are implemented, how will management be assured that problems are being eliminated?

The generation of guidelines in and by themselves do not guarantee neither their implementation nor the improvement of processes and products. Until processes for implementing the guidelines, processes for evaluating the generation of and quality of Evaluation products and for developing the training activities, etc. found in the approved recommendations are developed, no significant improvements can be expected.

Evaluation process inputs in both dollars and person hours is large. The defects within the process and products are serious and many. While management approval of recommendations infers the development of means of implementation and control, apparently they have not yet been developed.

The work which has been done in identifying system/process defects and product defects is excellent. The next challenge is to develop and implement means by which these defects can be removed and systems and processes be continually improved.

b/c

*Giving them
Johnson to
General
W. F. Johnson*

ACTION MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR BUREAU FOR NEAL EAST

THRU: DE/DP, Charles W. Johnson

FROM: RE/DP/PAE, Robert F. Zimmerman

SUBJECT: The Deming Project and the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

The current PAE proposed plan and approach for improving the effectiveness of the NE Bureau Evaluation Process has eight elements. Briefly stated these are:

1. Assessment with Project Officers (field Missions) and Project Backstop Officers (AID/W) and other senior staff in both the field and Washington of their understanding and perception of the evaluation process, specifically what is right, wrong, useless, useful or possible in approaches, policies and documentation for evaluation;
2. Development of new evaluation guidelines and adjustment in the evaluation process on basis of (1);
3. Re-definition of policy and role regarding Mission Evaluation Officers;
4. Training seminars and case study projects utilizing the new guidelines;
5. PIA Evaluation Review and feedback process;
6. Designing and funding evaluation plans during PID/FP process;
7. Logging, abstracting and computer storage (DIC) of evaluation reporting data with a special focus on lessons learned; and
8. Close attention to facilitating and monitoring utilization of evaluation findings and lessons learned in subsequent project design and implementation.

The "Deming Project" as it relates to the NE Evaluation Process encompasses the first two of these eight elements and will be carried out in the following fashion:

Best Available Document

1. AID/W (21 March - 15 April, 1985)

- (a) Interviews (one-on-one) with Backstop Officers and other senior management staff. These interviews will focus on the status of current understanding and implementation of the ME evaluation process, including personnel and documentation involved from PLD through final PFS or other evaluation reports. We will discuss what is right, wrong, useful, useless and possible in the process as well as the criteria and characteristics desirable for the most effective evaluation process;
- (b) Group sessions of 5 to 10 officers each to further discuss information and perceptions obtained during (a), each group focusing on a distinct element of the process; though obviously there will be a need to touch on other elements of the process as well;
- (c) Quality Development Group to synthesize results of (a) and (b).

2. Field (18 April - 13 May, 1985)

Interviews (one-on-one) with project officers and senior management staff and one group session in each of 4 to 5 field missions. Content will be essentially the same as 1(a) and include the synthesis developed by 1(c); (Note: We suggest that there be a regional meeting with Mission Evaluation Officers one year from now to discuss how our evaluation process has developed from the current exercise is actually working.)

3. Quality Development Group will meet again during period from 16 - 27 May to resynthesize combined findings of its previous effort under 1(c) and the reactions thereto of 2.

The final products of this effort will be (i) a clear delineation of quality characteristics for effective and useful evaluations and the process for obtaining same and, (ii) an initial draft of revised ME Bureau Evaluation Guidelines re Evaluation Policy, Plans, Process, Purpose and Utilization.

Recommendation: re country coverage Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Yemen should certainly be visited. Tunisia or Oman requires a judgement call. Both are small. Oman will be with us for awhile. Tunisia is phasing out but can we be sure? Lebanon is an issue. If we are moving in the direction of normal mission activities for a normal program so perhaps we should use this opportunity to meet with the Lebanon Mission staff. Therefore, in addition to Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Yemen we should visit:

Tunisia	Yes _____	No _____
Oman	Yes _____	No _____
Lebanon	Yes _____	No _____

68

Recommendation: That you approve this approach, including the scheduled time frame for implementation:

Approved: _____

Disapproved: _____

Date: _____

UNCLASSIFIED

AID/AFR/PD/CCBAP:KANDERSON:MSL
 04/20/23 EXT 27066
 AFR/PD:RCONEN

AID/PPC/PDPR:ELIJAHUSKIC:INFO3
 AID/AFR/CCUA:BBEYER:INFO3

AID/AFR/DP:GCAUVIN:INFO3
 AID/GC/AFR:DRROBERTSON:INFO3

ROUTINE AIDAF

AIDAC

E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: AFRICA BUREAU PID DESIGN AND REVIEW PROCESS

1. AS PART OF AN AGENCY-WIDE EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR WORK AND THE PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR STAFF AFR/PD IS PARTICIPATING IN A PILOT PROJECT SUPPORTED BY A CONSULTANCY WITH W. EDWARDS DEMING, AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED MANAGEMENT EXPERT. THE PILOT PROJECT WILL EXAMINE THE BUREAU'S CURRENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES THAT RELATE TO THE PID TO SEE IF WE CAN AGREE ON THE BASIC QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS REQUIRED OF A PID TO ALLOW FOR CONSISTENCY IN THE DESIGN AND REVIEW PROCESS. WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL MONTHS EXPERIENCE WITH THE NEW HANDBOOK 3 PID GUIDELINES AND AFR/PD NOTICE 32-13 ON PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PROJECTS. WHAT WE WANT TO DO IS LOOK AT OUR EXPERIENCE WITH PIDS UNDER THOSE GUIDELINES, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASED DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY TO APPROVE PROJECTS BY THE FIELD POSTS, TO SEE IF THE BUREAU AND THE FIELD HAVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS THE MINIMUM CONTENT THAT SHOULD

HC
 RA

PREPARATION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL? WHAT PROBLEMS STILL EXIST? WHAT CAN BE DONE TO FURTHER REDUCE PERCEIVED PROBLEMS?

- B. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PROJECT COMMITTEE IN THE REVIEW? SHOULD THE COMMITTEE BE MADE UP OF FEWER OR MORE MEMBERS? SHOULD THERE BE SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW OF PIDS? WHAT IS/SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF S/T IN THE PROCESS?
- C. SHOULD WE DEVELOP A CHECKLIST OF SPECIFIC AREAS TO BE INCLUDED FOR REVIEW IN THE PID? WHAT SHOULD BE IN SUCH A CHECKLIST? POLICY ISSUES? ADHERENCE TO CDSS? SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS? WHAT DEPTH OF ANALYSIS SHOULD BE REQUIRED FOR EACH AREA?
- D. HOW DO OTHER AGENCY BUREAU WORKLOAD PRIORITIES IMPACT ON THE REVIEW PROCESS? IS THERE ANY WAY TO SCHEDULE PID REVIEWS TO AVOID CONFLICTING DEMANDS POSED BY CDSS REVIEWS, CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION PREPARATION, ETC.?
- E. IS THERE SUFFICIENT INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS BETWEEN AID/W AND MISSIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PIDS? WOULD MORE TDY ASSISTANCE BY PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW PROCESS FACILITATE THE REVIEW PROCESS? SHOULD THE FIELD BE REPRESENTED AT EVERY REVIEW?
- F. CAN MISSIONS PROGRAM THEIR WORK TO AVOID SUBMITTING PIDS IN THE SAME FISCAL YEAR AS THE PROJECT IS TO BE AUTHORIZED? WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF COUNTRY/ FUNCTIONAL LEVELS OF PID SUBMISSIONS?
- G. WHAT IS REQUIRED OF A MISSION WITHOUT AN APPROVED STRATEGY OR A CHANGING STRATEGY?
{THIS QUESTION IS TO BE ASKED OF AID/W STAFF}:
- H. WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE AID/W REVIEW PROCESS, BOTH AT THE ISSUES REVIEW AND AT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR PROJECT REVIEW {ECPR}? SHOULD THE ROLE OF EACH OFFICE BE RESTRICTED BY SPECIALIZATION OF FUNCTION? SHOULD EACH OFFICE DEVELOP A SINGLE POSITION PAPER FOR THE REVIEW?

71

BE INCLUDED IN A PID. FOR EXAMPLE, HANDBOOK 3 SAYS A PID SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN 15 SINGLE-SPACED PAGES LONG, BUT RECENT EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE. THE PIDS WE HAVE REVIEWED RANGE FROM 30 TO 100 PAGES AND INCLUDE VASTLY DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ANALYSES. WE ARE NOT SURE IF THIS IS CAUSED BY INADEQUACY OR UNREALISTIC HANDBOOK 3 GUIDELINES, MISSION INTERPRETATION OF HANDBOOK 3 REQUIREMENTS, OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE AID/W REVIEW PROCESS, OR SOME OTHER REASON(S). WHAT WE HOPE TO DO IS GET ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE INFORMED JUDGMENTS ON PID REQUIREMENTS THAT GIVES MISSIONS CONFIDENCE THAT WHAT THEY SUBMIT IN A PID IS ALL THAT AID/W NEEDS AND THAT YOUR MISSION PID SUBMISSIONS WILL BE REVIEWED IN A CONSISTENT MANNER.

2. THE FIRST STEP IN THE PILOT PROJECT IS AN ASSESSMENT OF AID/W AND FIELD PERCEPTIONS OF THE PID PROCESS. WHAT IS THE RIGHT, WRONG, USEFUL, USELESS IN THE WAY WE ARE DOING PIDS? WHAT ALTERNATIVES DO WE HAVE TO CHANGE OUR APPROACH TO PIDS? CAN WE IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE PID PROCESS IN A WAY THAT REDUCES WORK LOAD REQUIREMENTS? WE WANT THE MISSIONS' THOUGHTS ON THE PROCESS, SO THAT WE CAN INCORPORATE MISSION COMMENTS WITH THOSE OF AID/W TO OBTAIN ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE NEEDED CHANGES IN THE PROCESS. WE WISH TO DEVELOP A QUESTIONNAIRE THAT IS DIRECTED ENOUGH TO GIVE US AN INFORMATION BASE THAT CAN BE ANALYZED AND OPEN ENDED ENOUGH TO ALLOW FOR CREATIVE INPUT. LISTED BELOW ARE SOME QUESTIONS THAT MIGHT BE INCLUDED. WOULD YOU PLEASE ADDRESS THESE QUESTIONS AND CONSIDER WHAT ELSE WE NEED TO ASK? WHAT DON'T WE NEED TO ASK AND WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON OUR APPROACH?

- A. WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HANDBOOK 3 AND THE NEW DELEGATIONS:

- - {1} WHAT IS THE CONCEPTUAL ROLE OF THE PID IN THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

- - {2} WHAT IS THE MINIMUM CONTENT REQUIRED IN THE PID TO ALLOW THE MISSION AND AID/W TO MAKE INFORMED JUDGMENTS ABOUT ANY PROPOSED PROJECTS?

- - {3} IS THE NEW HANDBOOK 3 GUIDANCE SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR TO INFORM MISSIONS OF AID/W REQUIREMENTS? HAS IT REDUCED OR INCREASED PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PID

12

3. WE WILL USE YOUR RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS AND YOUR FURTHER THOUGHTS TO DEVELOP A QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE USED IN DIRECT INTERVIEWS WITH BOTH FIELD AND AID/W STAFF WHO PARTICIPATE IN AND ARE AFFECTED BY THE PID PROCESS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR COMMENTS BY MAY 6. THIS PILOT PROJECT HAS THE CLOSE ATTENTION OF SENIOR AGENCY MANAGEMENT AND PRESENTS THE BUREAU WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK NEW GROUND THAT CAN HAVE AGENCY WIDE APPLICATION. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VITAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR EFFORT. 44

John G. ...

MEMORANDUM

TO: Norman Cohen, AFR/PD
 A. R. Love, A/AA/AFR

THRU: Howard Helman, AFR/PD/CCWAP *HL*

FROM: Russell Anderson, AFR/PD/CCWAP

DATE: June 7, 1983

SUBJECT: Deming Pilot Project

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update of the project and to outline proposed actions.

In late April we sent a cable to all Africa field posts notifying them of the pilot project to "examine the Bureau's current policies, procedures and practices that relate to the PID to see if we can agree on the basic quality characteristics required of a PID to allow for consistency in the design and review process." The cable asked a series of questions on Handbook 3 guidelines, the AID/W review process and other areas to get a preliminary response that would focus our review and elicit questions that the Mission's might want to include in the exercise. The quantity of responses, while not overwhelming (10 Missions cabled responses, AFR/RA and USAID/Yaounde responded in interview sessions), did indicate that the Missions feel that they can't submit a PID that conforms to the Handbook 3 guidelines and have it approved. Rather, they believe what AID/W wants is the substance for project approval because AID/W is using the PID level decision as the de facto authorization of a project. To satisfy AID/W's unstated desire for sufficient (and everchanging) information on which to base the de facto authorization, the Missions try to anticipate every possible question that might be raised and to answer those questions in the PID. The net result is a breakdown of the PID process because of uncertainty of what should be in a PID to allow AID/W to make a de facto authorization decision.

Within that broad problem are several areas that could be examined to see if we can't get the PID process back into the Handbook 3 context so that the Mission and AID/W can agree on what the real rules are on PID design and reviews. The first area should be the PID itself. What is the PID and what level of substantive information is required for each section of the PID? Most Mission responses to our questions provided some definition of what they thought should be in a PID, and, as could be expected, they were not uniform in what they should be

included, and no Mission dealt with the level of substantive information for any particular section. Even if we could agree on which sections should be in the PID--a relatively easy task--we would probably run into some difficulty agreeing on the substantive content required of each section.

Another specific area that all agree should be studied is the AID/W review process itself, as it is inextricably linked to the question of substantive PID content. The lack of consistency in the review process has a cumulative contributory impact on Mission perceptions of AID/W information requirements. Consistency in the review process, including preparation for and orchestration of the process, could provide Missions the assurance that the PID they plan to submit will be reviewed by AID/W using commonly agreed upon standards. Management of the review process should be studied to determine what should or should not be sorted out at the PID stage, who should do the sorting and how can the process be modified to improve the quality of reviews. Simply deciding what should be reviewed can go a long way to improving the quality by forcing a more focussed look at the PID.

Those two areas--what should be in a PID and how should it be reviewed--seem to be the ones seen by the Missions as causing most of the misunderstandings about the PID process. Within each area there are any number of subareas to be examined. Attached is a draft outline of a scope of work that tries to identify those subareas where we need to get more information. It should be kept in mind that all we have thus far are field perceptions and AID/W's may be different, e.g., Missions don't really think through what they want a project to be, or that they are inundating AID/W with verbiage in order to mask the fact that they haven't really sought out the concepts, problems and issues which are most critical. In any event, we need to decide now on the scope of the pilot project and its ramifications on our office workload, involvement by others in the Bureau and the continuation of the services of Bob Caccia, the consultant to the project.

Between now and the beginning of September it is estimated that 60 to 75 percent of my time will be required for the project. The estimate is based on Caccia's prior experience in these types of projects. That will definitely impact on the office as I am de facto deputy in the office, plus I have responsibility for Zaire, Cameroon, Congo, Eq. Guinea and Central Africa Republic, the joint S&T/AFR Education Initiative and occasional crises that hit us all at one time or another. Alternatives to be considered include: additional staff to pick up the country portfolios, have someone else take up the Deming project, severely cut back in the proposed time to be spent on the Deming project or back out entirely. Which ever route is taken there

15

will be costs to the Bureau. You should note that I have had several discussions with Ed Donoghue, who would like to participate in the project. He would be valuable to the exercise, but he too would have to commit a substantial portion of his time. You may want to consider others and formalize a committee to do the project.

In addition to staff time the project will also require some funds for consultant services and, possibly, travel. Mr. Caccia is currently working with AFR and NE under a purchase order issued by Tom Rollis' office. That purchase order has pretty much run its course and the Bureau will be requested to provide funds to cover approximately 50 days for Mr. Caccia's services, plus travel funds (should field work be approved as part of the scope). This could total 15 to 20 thousand dollars. Bureau travel funds might be required for the Bureau participants. (In a brief session with Mr. Rollis he intimated that we could get additional funds if the Bureau needed them.)

I have attached a summary of responses to our cable (attachment A) and below is a draft scope of work. We need to discuss both and make some decision on commitment to and content of the project.

PILOT PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK

I. Introduction

- A. Purpose. This is a pilot project to examine the Bureau's current policies, procedures and practices that relate to the PID to establish the basic quality characteristics required in a PID to allow for consistency in the design and review process.
- B. Status. Two seminars on the philosophy, techniques and application of Quality Control/Productivity Improvement Principles have been given by Dr. Deming. Subsequent to the seminars Mr. Robert Caccia, an associate to Dr. Deming, began working with the Bureau staff to develop the parameters and the techniques to be used in the project. In April we cabled the field (State 112171) a series of questions about the PID process. Using their responses we have focussed the project to a review of what the substantive requirements of a PID should be and a critical analysis of the AID/W PID review process. What is proposed is a data gathering exercise to isolate the problems within those two areas, a data analysis exercise to isolate the factors causing problems and a management review of the findings.

II. Work Plan.

- A. Focus on Perceived Problem Areas. At the risk of appearing to define the problems in too simplistic terms, it is evident from our initial questions to the field that the Handbook 3 PID requirements are not uniformly applied in either the design of PID's or their review. Within those two areas, PID requirements and PID review, are a myriad of subareas that need to be reviewed. What is proposed for the next phase of the activity is to gather data to determine a common understanding for what AID/W and field posts see should be in the PID and how those PID's should be reviewed.
- B. Data Gathering (June 1 - July 30). The primary purpose of data gathering is to isolate the problems and causal factors in the interpretation of Handbook 3 and in the review process. We can broadly state the problems at this point, but without further analysis it is impossible to state precisely what is causing those problems or to make any recommendations on how to correct them. We want to develop a set of questions about the substantive content of each PID section and about the review process. We think the data gathering portion should also be used to insure the participation of as many staff as we can. One of the problems thus far in the exercise is that it has been a single person project, and to make the exercise a success we need to involve the desk officers, technicians, program analysts and Bureau management. One of the tenets of the Deming approach is broad participation of staff and managers in the identification of and solutions to process problems. We will use a questionnaire and individual group interviews to reach 40 to 50 people in AID/W, all field posts (including REDSO's), and a few people outside the Bureau. We may want to visit 4-6 missions to insure a greater degree of participation. A questionnaire will be developed along the following lines:

I. The PID

What substance is required for: (Questions will be developed for each area)

- (a) Program Factors
- (b) Relationship to AID Strategy Statements
- (c) Project Description

- (1) Perceived Problems
- (2) Goal and Purpose
- (3) Project Outline
- (d) Social Considerations
- (e) Economic Considerations
- (f) Past Experience
- (g) Host Country Agencies
- (h) AID Support Requirements
- (i) Budget
- (j) Design Strategy
- (k) Environmental Considerations
- (l) Policy Issues

This follows the Handbook 3 PID outline and would look at what the Handbook says, what AID/W interprets it to say and what the field interprets it to say. We hope to isolate the sections on which we all agree, identify the problems in the sections where we don't agree, and to establish a basis for agreement on what the substance of the latter sections should be. We would not be looking to a revamp of the Handbook, but would focus on what we, as a Bureau, can do within the context of the Handbook. Questions would be developed for each substantive area, such as a.l.(b), strategy, where Missions feel that CDSS and ABS reviews should preclude the need for extensive PID language to justify the project; or, what level of economic analysis is required at the PID level.

2. The AID/W Review Process. PID development by the field seems to respond as much to the review process as it does to the Handbook requirements. The Handbook is the track to follow in PID development, but it is the review process that adds the substantive baggage that PIDs must carry. Although

the review process has been tightened in the past several years, it still appears that the system still sends the field little guidance that is uniform from PID to PID. In an effort to anticipate the unstated requirements of the review process, Missions are developing PID's that try to answer every possible question that might be raised to special interest group(s) who might review the PID. Missions also feel that the increased delegations have had a substantial negative impact in PID reviews. It is common currency that the PID is much more important to Bureau Management because it is the last chance for AID/W to review the project before major sums of money are committed. We need to look at the review process to find out how it can better serve the field and AID/W, especially in light of the increased delegation. Listed below are the kinds of questions to be asked.

1. What should the review process look for? Is it confined to Handbook 3 or is it something more?
2. What is the impact of DOA 140 (rev) on ECPR decisions? Is it realistic to depend entirely on Handbook 3 requirements?
3. What is the role of the Project Committee? Who should be on it? What should be the role of individual members?
4. How do we properly weigh the special interests, e.g., economists, WID, etc., in the review?
5. Is PID notice 82-13 sufficient as a guide to PID reviewers? Should it be more specific in assignment of responsibilities to Committee Members? Is it a proper vehicle to provide rules on the interpretation of Handbook 3 requirements?
6. Are the Issues Meetings properly forming issues to be considered at the ECPR level? Can we structure the Issues and ECPR sessions to signal the field the important areas to pay particular attention to in the PID.
7. How can we improve the pre-PID AID/W-field communications to facilitate the review process?
8. Should the USAID have a representative at each PID review?

These questions are only illustrative, and we hope, through the participation of others, we can develop questions that will get at the factors that adversely affect the review process.

- C. Data Analysis. Analysis of the responses to questionnaires and interviews should point out the factors in the process that can be modified or corrected by management. This is another important step in requiring fairly broad participation, as this is where we will decide what can or cannot be corrected. The analysis will be performed by a group comprised of staff from various disciplines. One function of the group will be to identify the management level responsible for decisions that will have to be made to address the causal factors. It is not expected that recommendations would come from the group. That is the function of the next step--the Quality Circle.
- D. Quality Circle. After the data is analyzed management will decide who should participate in the Quality Circle. The function of the Quality Circle is to identify the acceptable and unacceptable quality characteristics of the PID design and review process. Management participation at this stage is critical as they have the responsibility to decide what is acceptable. This is especially critical to this Bureau, with field delegations as great as they are. Identification of unacceptable quality characteristics should result in decisions by management modifying or removing factors causing those negative characteristics. After the quality characteristics and their acceptable levels have been determined by the Quality Circle, necessary system changes will be identified and implemented.

20

Q U E S T I O N S

1. What do you know or understand about the NE Bureau evaluation process? Purposes, policies, documentation?
 2. What strengths and weaknesses are there?
 3. Have you ever been able to draw upon an evaluation report either for implementation requirements or design of follow-on in other projects? How, what, when?
 4. What do you need from an evaluation either for project implementation or design?
 5. What characterizes a good, useful evaluation?
 6. How would you go about achieving this?
 7. How would you characterize your attitude toward evaluation? Your peers? Top Management?
 8. What support or feedback do you need from AID/W? Are you satisfied with AID/W support?
 9. To what extent are host country officials involved in evaluation of our joint projects?
- 21

10. Would host country officials be interested in or benefit from some form of a one or two day evaluation seminar with mission personnel to discuss AID evaluation policies, purposes and processes?
11. What kind of evaluation training would be most useful for AID project officers seminars, case study "hands on" projects?
12. Is fear an inhibiting factor in evaluation? Does it affect you, your colleagues, mission leadership, host government? What kind of fear?
13. How would you approach presentation of lessons learned for each project activity? What types of lessons should we be looking for re:
 - Administration and implementation (HC and USAID)
 - Political environment (HC and USAID)
 - Staff skills and time (HC and USAID)
 - Assumptions
14. How often or at what points are evaluations most useful?
15. How would you define the Mission evaluation officer's role? What it is or should be?

42

16. Would a full time Region based evaluation officer be helpful? How?
17. Have you ever drawn on DIU for evaluation materials? To what effect?
18. What AID Evaluation Documentation Guidelines are you familiar with or fine useful, useless?
19. Do you believe effective evaluations (i.e., evaluations that result in cooperative AID-HC efforts to change, drop, or initiate certain projects) are possible within the political context of our programs in the Middle East?

63

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

71

WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM AN EVALUATION EITHER FOR PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION OR DESIGN?

(a) Concentrated evaluations for specific purposes.(?)

Need to know how well a project is going - outputs on schedule;

Need for design purposes;

Pipeline situations;

Explanation for why projects aren't working out as planned;

Baseline data on beneficiaries, lessons learned;

Explanation of design mistakes.

Clarification on implementation progress at appropriate benchmarks for possible modification of project design;

An impartial outside view by persons familiar with subject matter;

What has occurred against planned actions, what are implications

84

Tues 2:00 PM

4. What do you need from an evaluation either for project implementation or design?

"Lessons learned from experience in particular sectors by country. What happened in the project to let you design better projects in that sector and in that country in the future."

"For design, I want to know and have confidence that the people have considered the project in terms of potential hazards. I look at evaluations of similar projects and look for hazards and pitfalls which I may want to consider in the design, i.e., location of advisors 40 to 50 miles from the project area did not work in Jordan. You need to look closely at local conditions which may be unique. Evaluations should point out things to be aware of."

"I tend to use evaluations for the design of new projects to get a historical experience. In-process evaluations don't tell you anything you don't already know. Projects in Egypt are so extraordinary compared to what AID/W does worldwide ... we need to find the past experience ... the historical lessons and pitfalls to be avoided. We don't develop this historical perspective and evaluations done by outside consultants may or may not look at the historical trends."

"The lessons learned from previous projects. When the evaluations says the project did or did not work you want to know why to know what to use and/or avoid."

"Evaluations of similar projects in similar countries to use in design."

"Need as many facts as possible as to why things happen. Need objective description of how things started and ended up and why. Evaluations tend to be chatty and do not describe objectively why things changes. Numbers are less important than trends. The lessons learned section is important though we try for these sometimes too soon. We need a set of recommendations as part of the mid-point evaluation to make corrections for future implementation. We need a set of recommendations in the final evaluation directed to the Host Country whether or not AID continues with a follow-on project."

"Status ... depersonalized and non-judgemental and collaborative. We tend to use other people's experience .. might get a quicker response by calling in a consultant."

"Clear approach to objectives of the project(s) and their definitions."

"Impact on beneficiaries; relationship of output to goals i.e., an assessment of the significance of intervening variables; timeliness of outputs, i.e., cause of lags and recommended remedial actions."

"Lessons learned to know what pitfalls to avoid in the design of new projects. I have also used PESS from similar projects to convince others of needed changes in the design identified in these evaluations."

"What is not useful is anecdotal type of information which often find in evaluations. What's useful is the identification of a projects strengths and weaknesses and why or why not. Should not be preoccupied with weakness but use the strengths in designs. Evaluations should show lessons learned

85

Question 4: Cont'd

and how these lessons can be applied to similar projects. Need to look at several levels, technology, management, operations, human relations, financial."

The PES really covers what's needed. To improve we need to make reports more concise. An evaluation of 100 pages is useless. We need more concise summaries."

"Clear and concise statements on the appropriateness of goals and purposes. Were these realistic and were they obtained. We need this both for design and implementation. This is not so much if goals were achieved or if the design was appropriate, but but show the problems and successes in a given environment, one that existed at the time the project was designed. This environment may be quite different at the time the evaluation is done. We need to track such changes in the evaluation."

"We need to know the background information. The evaluation should stand alone. We should know from the evaluation the background and how we got to the project...what was the conceptual framework ...and what happened. We need to track the history of the project elements. What happens in changes in the project. Too often the key actors move on before the evaluation takes place. Every evaluation needs to have a lessons learned section on both failure and success "

"Evaluation of on-going projects in near east areas to use for comparison. For re-design of on-going projects we need a set of measures of whether a project is meeting its goals and objectives and whether the implementation plan is valid. Also we need to know where we came into conflict with reality and how the project fared in the real world to get information on how to redesign or change the course of implementation."

"Ready access to concise information. For use in planning, implementing another project one needs a document which goes beyond input-output measurements to analyze and highlight significant conceptual or procedural innovations or problems."

"Lessons learned to better improve an implementation or design."

"Was the design of the original project adequate? If so were the objectives accomplished and if not why not. What was the country environment and what was the contractor's performance as well as the mission's. In design we need to know what to avoid in future projects. For implementation we need to know where are the weak points and if we are missing any key information or actors. If so, then how do we get a grip on this."

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

5. WHAT CHARACTERIZES A GOOD, USEFUL EVALUATION?

- (a) Finding something wrong or not hitting targets. But this isn't necessarily bad. No risk, no gain.

Good combination professional judgement and technical expertise;

Good definition of parameters of sources. Assessment of project technical/implementation schedule correct?;

brings together all actors HC and USAID;

Determines whether purposes are achievable. Need future oriented evaluation rather than "are we doing a good job";

Serves as communication mechanism between HC and USAID;

Analysis and recommendations;

Degree of depth, perceptions, action decisions;

Check list of key variable affecting project success or failure;

What to look for in follow-on projects.

Focussed evaluation with specific purpose for end use of evaluation findings;

Clear presentation of process in context of specific circumstances;

Well written, clear thought;

Absence of cliches, particularly in lessons learned section which are too often self evident platitudes;

Good section on lessons learned;

Well written executive summary.

Tues, 2:00 PM

5. What characterizes a good, useful evaluation?

"Lessons learned which have operational usefulness in the future."

"Correct, unbiased, objective material."

"Brevity."

"Good narrative description of where in actual implementation the project holds up or what the impediments are. This can be almost anecdotal."

"Recommendations which are constructive in their conclusions. Lessons learned not from a static environment from a constant changing one."

"Brevity, conciseness, objectivity and technical expertise on the part of the evaluators, i.e., some member(s) of the team should be a specialist in the technical area. Teams are stronger when provision is made for this."

"Objective. Focused on objectives and implementation plans of project (as expressed and summarized in the log frame). Realistic. Sensitive to real local situation and imperatives."

"Short; Concise."

"Clarity with clearly defined lessons learned."

"Frankness, brevity, focus, availability. Need more than a one page abstract. Lessons learned."

"One that produces information you can use to avoid faults and one that provide suggestions for good designs....not only design but also implementation."

"One which clearly identifies the local condition/environment. Need to have full picture particularly in designing new activities to avoid pitfalls."

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

6. HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT ACHIEVING THIS?

- (a) Use project officers from one country to do even routine evaluations in another. Evaluate Mission Directors on how well projects turn out after they leave; Need a panel to do this involving the MD so they will learn what happened;

Need examples of good evaluations;

Need experience going a good evaluation;

Evaluations should be left to missions and they should not be taken to task if they discover "dirty linen".

Need professional integrity;

AID needs to reward those who make hard decisions to end projects when evaluations so indicate need;

Better training for evaluations;

Need clarity on what findings are based on judgement and what on facts;

90

Need careful attention to scope of work at the outset and skilled evaluation team.

Ensure good _____ at outset;

Need well led, qualified evaluation teams;

Need more attention to development of logframe;

Suggest benchmarks for outputs presented in logframe as well as verifiable indicators;

Need long term investment in evaluation;

Need perspective;

Get good managers to focus on evaluation;

Obtain field project oriented personnel for team;

Annual workplans should include evaluation;

Provide section in PER for comment on evaluation skills;

High level mgt must pass evaluation;

Ensure evaluation officer fulfills his proscribed role with mgt.
support;

Need full time evaluation officer at region level;

Tues 2:00 AM

6. How would you go about achieving this? (See Question 5)

"Start with good baseline data (quantitative if possible) to derive what you expect to happen in the future. At some point in the future, check to see what you have achieved. If you have a lousey PP to start with in terms of the development of a good baseline, then you are wasting your time in trying to evaluate it in the future."

"Have evaluators call the "shots" in a write-up as they see them. Do not bend to pressures by others to compromise the reports."

"To give a flavor of the day to day carrying out of the project sets of tables or percentage measures are not very helpful. To get to this someone in the field (the project officer) should keep a log. This provides an implementation analysis of what's going on. Projects officers may need some training on how to keep such a log. If all of this documentation were well kept then the evaluation team's work would be done for them. To get objectivity, logs would have to be kept by more than one key participant for objectivity."

"More training (hands-on). More serious review ... rejecting or rewriting inadequate evaluations."

"The SOW is very important. We need to put more effort into this. Usually SOW's are too general or technical."

"The guidelines we have are all inclusive and cover all you need to look at. First you do an evaluation plan to insure bench marks are produced. Then you have something to evaluate in the future. The guidelines contain more than what you need though they tend to be too broad. The guidelines could be more focused."

"We need better contractor evaluations which tells you how well each advisor performed and how successful the contractor was in living up to commitments."

"Close attention to the staffing of the evaluation team. Also useful to have general guidance on how to do evaluations."

"The SOW sets the framework . . . how well thought out and detailed they are determines the type of report you will get back."

"Go to the the original PP and logframe and look at the indicators. Most project officers know if the project is a turkey and have a gut feeling of what's wrong. Therefore work from both ends. . . objective evaluation data combined with subjective evaluation of incites from key actors and the circumstances."

"More objectivity in evaluation teams, i.e., always have outside (other Bureau, non-AID presence) on the team."

"Go to the log frame and try to see what were the expected outputs and see if these were achieved and if not why not. Depends on the nature of the output. Then go back to the objectives. In some cases the outputs didn't match the objectives in the first place."

"Much more effort at the PID stage and prior to evaluation field work is required to develop suitable procedures and methodology."

92

Question 6: Cont'd

"1. Good preparatory work in terms of information and relations and attitudes of all those involved (including the USAIDs); 2. Technically competent and compatible/sensitive team; 3. independence and freedom of team to express evaluation conclusions; 4. adequate time; 5. Focus on project as planned vs. as implemented; 6. listen to and involve host country nationals; 7. develop action recommendations; 8. tie to key decision points in projects."

"Mix of people who have distance but are informed; share results and use it as a monitoring tool."

94

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

9. TO WHAT EXTENT ARE HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN EVALUATION OF OUR JOINT PROJECTS?

We don't work as partners any more;

Too much quick financing;

We aren't willing to share;

Quite a bit;

Should do all the time;

Varies a great deal;

HC should participate;

Doesn't happen very often;

When it does happen they have already been intimately involved in project itself;

Jordan and Syria they participate at every stage;

95

N/A;

If they are not, evaluation will be of little use.

To what extent are host country officials involved in evaluation of our joint projects?

"I don't know, but my best guess is they are not."

"Joint evaluations are most desirable, but HC officials have trouble in putting anything in writing. We need to involve them, but at the same time we need to deal with this constraint."

"Designs usually call for HC participation and I insist on having a HC representative go on field trips when I do an evaluation. I also provide entry and exit interviews to HC officials. I don't know how realistically you can go beyond this, but I feel we need to insure at least a nominal involvement."

"It varies, depending on the project, knowledge, interest, time . . . sometimes HC officials are extensively involved, othertimes their involvement is nil."

"In the one evaluation I worked on (Portugal), the HC officials were fully involved."

"This is up to the individual project manager. They tend to look at project management and exclude the HC . . . tend to water the comments down with respect to the HC to the point that the evaluation is useless."

"Depends upon the project. Most of the time an host country official is on the team or on the review panel. I don't have a feel whether this is a real input or not. In Yemen I don't think we have a strong HC involvement."

"Last June in Morocco, the Ministry of Labor was very much involved in the evaluation of a project. They gave one complete day. In Yemen, it takes time to get ministry clearance. This is caused by internal rivalries even though they participated in the evaluation."

"Quite a lot for information and historical sources."

"With the possible exception of Portugal, hardly at all in the NE/EUR countries."

"In Egypt - very much. In Yemen - much. In Tunisia - ask again in 3 weeks."

"Not officials. I have had HC contractors on evaluation teams. I feel evaluation teams should be made up of people involved in the project: the grantee, the host country and AID."

"It varies greatly. In Egypt HC officials feel they are shortchanged by the evaluation process. They feel the money could be used for the project rather than for evaluation. I feel there should be a separate evaluation budget for the Egypt program apart from the project budget."

"Host country officials have been deeply involved in the ones I have been associated with."

"Generally too little."

It depends on the country, but as a whole host country officials do not see the necessity of evaluations. They feel that if we want to evaluate, then the funding should not come from the project. A separate fund should be earmarked for this purpose, such as a PD&S account for evaluations only.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

10. WOULD HOST COUNTRY OFFICIALS BE INTERESTED IN OR BENEFIT FROM SOME FORM OF A ONE OR TWO DAY EVALUATION SEMINAR WITH MISSION PERSONNEL TO DISCUSS AID EVALUATION POLICIES, PURPOSES AND PROCESSES?

Yes, definitely;

They should know at least what our process is and why we ask the questions we do;

Probably;

Fear may be an impediment;

Yes, but need to be provided in a retreat setting to ensure total attention;

Depends on mission size and type of programs we have i.e., no for Oman, yes for Jordan and Egypt.

Would be useful in some cases, but not in every country;

Depends on seasons for particular programs;

Probably not really well in Egypt or is not necessary because we

99

have to move \$750 million;

Not good idea, these workshops at high cost to AID;

Probably not but it would be a nice trip;

Doesn't occur very often;

PES and logframe should be in local languages.

10. Would host country officials be interested in or benefit from some form of a one or two day evaluation seminar with mission personnel to discuss AID evaluation policies, purposes and processes?

"Don't know, but anytime we have evaluation built into a project we should include evaluation training for host country officials."

"Few would attend, unless paid to do so, I suspect."

"Not in NE/EUR countries."

"No. If you discuss evaluation in the generic sense maybe, but certainly don't bog them down with the 'AID package'".

"I suppose it would help them to understand our policies and processes better."

"Yes. but would have to be done in local language. In some missions (Morocco) a local FNDH could run the seminar, but would have to bring them to AID/W for training."

"Depends on the mission. Where the HC has some managerial capability fine, but I would think it would be of little value in Yemen."

"Useful if it has direct application."

"No. HC officials are so inundated with AID procedures that adding a seminar would be excessive. It would be better if at the time of the evaluation the Mission sit down with the HC officials concerned and explain the purposes of evaluation. The evaluation team needs to explain what it is trying to do and stay in contact with the HC officials."

"I would think yes. Sometimes outsiders as specialists could have more influence."

"I feel they would benefit from it, but whether they would be interested depends on their time availability, capacity and the specifics."

"Yes. At least in Egypt the HC is confused as to what evaluation is (they think it is an audit). A lot depends on how the project officer sets the mood. I don't know how you would get people from various implementing agencies involved, but the concept is valid."

"Not sure . . . take HC project people and run them through AID systems . . . since projects are diverse . . ."

"Not as it now stands. Now it would be another layer of bureaucracy rather than practical application. Too much would be in terms of filling in a PES form rather than substance."

"Yes. Not AID per se, but evaluation policy as a concept to be tailored to meet one's own needs."

"Yes, but only after the Mission itself is more sensitive to evaluation needs and the process. Otherwise this may prove to be detrimental."

"Yes, to eliminate the fear of evaluation."

They may benefit, but not necessarily be interested. Unless the attitude of Mission officials changes, then the seminars may not be such ~~an~~ a positive experience since their negativism will be transmitted.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

12. IS FEAR AN INHIBITING FACTOR IN EVALUATION? DOES IT AFFECT YOU, YOUR COLLEAGUES, MISSION LEADERSHIP, HOST GOVERNMENT? WHAT KIND OF FEAR?

Fear - not right word, "Anxiety", perhaps;

More like cover your "tail";

Anxiety or fear for HC's functions of not understanding our process;

Fear evaluation will cut off funds;

Evaluation is a finger-portion exercise;

Depends on who the Mission director is. Most want rough questions asked;

Concerned AID/W will not understand country situation so why alert them to problems to be solved in field;

Can be accused of "localities" biggest problem is project manager lives or dies by his relationship with his HC counterpart who may not want to be seen as "failing";

Sometimes AID/W tries to make itself look good by killing a project;

People are concerned about being held accountable for something out of their hands, either in HC or AID/W;

There are so many unknowns about our projects;

Evaluations should state positive purposes up front;

Evaluation too often accurate negative (in people's minds if not on paper);

A little fear is a good motivating factor for taking more care in design;

Fear of how others react to bad news -- not fear of project difficulties per se;

Not much can be done about fear;

Simply go on doing evaluations;

Evaluation can uncover fact that there are poor project officers or that Mission did not design properly;

There is fear. But the evaluation process can clear the air of misunderstanding between HC and USAID counterparts;

Fear is a factor because a good evaluation could get black balled as "troublesome";

Sometimes Mission and HC have a "convenient set of misunderstandings" which keep the project going. Evaluation could upset this;

There is too strong a tendency to avoid being "confrontational" with HC -- this would go down on PER. Fear is a factor. It may be shaped by the evaluation process.

I don't sense fear as such;

Can't say;

Less fear than more interest in working on the new;

105

No, most evaluations are so bland that the only fear is falling asleep;

AID doesn't have projects to evaluate, host country does all AID does is provide resources;

Should not be a factor;

There are people who fear outsiders will not understand the project/country climate. It is a problem because evaluation is not a natural part of the workplan;

It is a problem because people fear being criticized for something beyond their control;

12. Is fear an inhibiting factor in evaluation? Does it affect you, your colleagues, mission leadership, host government? What kind of fear?

"Not really."

"Yes . . . mission leadership in particular, no one wants an evaluation to say a design was poor . Maybe not so much fear but resentment on how conclusions will be interpreted. Missions don't want GS bureaucrats passing judgement based on an evaluation which may not track changes in the environment which may be largely changed by the time the evaluation comes along."

"Yes . . . Project officers feel their personal evaluation will be affected by an evaluation of projects for which they are responsible. If given a choice, the system encourages projects officers to cover themselves rather than see evaluation as a learning process."

"Yes . . . fear of being censured . . . or that an evaluation will be used to measure individual capability."

"Yes . . . seen as being judgemental and not creative . . . large time investment"

"Yes . . . me very little; colleagues some; mission leadership yes, host government yes." Fear of 'truth' ; fear of lost of prestige or funding; fear of revelation of badly developed projects, poor monitoring."

"Probably . . . fear of complex techniques; fear that methodologies will point up logical fallacies in the design of projects into which much effort has been devoted."

"Yes . . . to a certain extent, although I really would not use such a strong word to describe the inhibiting factors, perhaps reservations would be a better word."

"Yes . . . don't want to hurt people's feelings. When working with HC have to be careful to be constructively critical and not negative. When a Ministry is insecure you have to treat them with kid gloves. There is also fear on the mid-management of Mission leadership. If a particular director or deputy director likes or dislikes a particular project Mission staff may have trouble doing an objective evaluation of this project. Also a negative PES may lead to a negative PER."

"Yes . . . affects colleagues particularly in missions. Their fear is in having to do more paperwork. There is fear on the part of mission management that a bad PES reflects bad management. On the part of HC, they feel if the evaluation reveals a bad project they won't get more funds."

"At times yes . . . depends on who you are working under . . . times people would be less candid if it reflects badly on them."

"Don't know . . . doesn't for me."

"Yes . . . anytime you do an evaluation someone will feel threatened. I try to compensate for this by establishing a low key collegial approach. I

151

Question 12. Cont'd.

assume the fear is there and try to minimize it. I distance myself from audits and try to stay clear of financial information. I try to evaluate in a holistic sense rather than using gossipy tidbits. I let the HC have every benefit of the doubt. In the part of the HC they may fear evaluation and equate it to audit. They tend to stick close to you and lead you to their best projects (in doing an evaluation you need to compensate for this)."

"Mission leadership often feel paranoid about evaluations taking these to be audits. Also HC fear that if something is going wrong we will end the project."

Yes, since project officers do not want to be identified with the "failure" and the end use of evaluations is not clear.

Does it affect you, your colleagues, mission leadership, host government?
YES

What kind of fear?

It inhibits an honest flow and exchange of information since the fear experienced is usually that of keeping a job.

QUESTION AND ANSWERS

14. HOW OFTEN OR AT WHAT POINTS ARE EVALUATIONS MOST USEFUL?

Depends on type of evaluation and complexity of project elements;

Depends on complexity and nature of underlying assumptions;

Probably at least one project review every year if only to get HC and USAID senior personnel together;

Not every project every year;

AID/W may not need as often as Mission;

Capital projects, perhaps, only after completion of project with ministry review mid-way;

As management tool once a year;

Every year because it is also good information tool for HC Ministries;

Once a year to help clear the air between HC and USAID;

Phasing or key decision points are difficult to pre-determine because there are always delays.

Depends on type of project;

Perhaps better to do several projects in same sector at same time rather than project by project basis;

If a complex project may need more often;

Should at least have mission level project review using PES format once a year;

How do we attune people to sense when something is awry and then call for evaluation?;

Tues 2:00 PM

14. How often or at what points are evaluations most useful?

"Checking on project design; post project evaluation to find out if what you thought would happen did or did not to get lessons learned for future design."

"For project design - applying it to new activity in same sector or for follow-on. I doubt if annual evaluations are useful in terms of staff time, but evaluation timing should be flexible and it should be part of the design to determine the critical points to do evaluation."

"In a 5 year project a midpoint and a final unless the midpoint indicates serious problems. The midpoint would not necessarily be at the middle but would be tailored to each individual project. Need to time the midpoint when the activity is well underway. Project officer should determine the appropriate time for the evaluation."

"Depends on the effectiveness of the personnel involved. Seems after the project is operating about a year you need an evaluation to see if we are really getting what we want. Then maybe a mid point and then a terminal evaluation at a point when the real impact can be shown."

"As often as necessary. Once or twice during the project and once afterwards but time the impact evaluation at a period when full impact is realized. This depends on the project."

"Worth doing one early on even if little accomplished yet. At this point you can make radical changes if necessary. There should be heavy emphasis on the midpoint evaluation. The final evaluation should focus on lessons learned ... but rarely do we use these lessons."

"Need to separate monitoring from evaluation. May want an outside opinion for a monitoring review, but this should be clear from the start that it is monitoring. In terms of evaluation, every project needs to have an interim evaluation. Iffy projects need to be evaluated early into implementation to look to see how well it is going though this may be confused with monitoring. You should not wait until a project is completed to do an evaluation. Unless a project is in trouble you should not have more than two evaluations (interim and final)."

"Final evaluations are useful as a basis for the design of new projects. To be useful during implementation you need to evaluate at a point where recommendations can be used to strengthen the project's performance. The time should be determined by the project itself. Annual evaluations tend to be monitoring exercises."

"First you need to have good evaluation plans at the design phase. Sure no one can do a SOW at that time, but you can identify the key issues. By the time you get to the mid-point evaluation it is too late. At that time you can't hold people to anything if it wasn't in the original plan."

"Need on-going monitoring process. Official evaluation reports depend on the project . . . in design you pick the crucial points . . . in implementation other needs become apparent."

Question 14: Cont'd

"Several months before key technical or funding decision points are reached."

"Project specific - can't generalize."

"Design stage. Implementation decisions tend to be more country-specific than macro-planning issues."

"This depends on the duration of the project and the kind of activity or activities involved."

"Definitely at mid-point. Not necessarily useful at the end of the project for that project (other than to let you know if you got your outputs) most gain is for follow on or other missions."

"Prior to follow-on project. Also in process of putting together the OYB. If an evaluation indicates something is moving slowly I know I can slow the obligation rate down. When you are trying to decide whether to put funds into a project, thinking about changing contractors or in general trying to figure out whether to get out of a sector."

19. Not a real problem;

Yes;

Extent may vary country to country but it is possible;

Depends on your support with counterpart(s), Eval. has to be done at
_____ level;

Higher level may involve political considerations;

Yes. We have to evaluate or we are not doing our job.

Yes, but government frequently don't want studies; they want action;

Should be no problem for normal AID nuts and bolts projects but could be difficult if there are political issues or interests involved.

Perhaps not, some projects are done because they are _____ of key HC personnel;

We need to remember the original political assumptions behind projects;

Depends on relationship of Mission and HC personnel.

19. Do you believe effective evaluations are possible within the political context of our programs in the Middle East? (Evaluations which result in cooperative AID-HC efforts to change, drop, or initiate certain projects.)

"Yes, why not? Depends on country. Can't see why it can't be done for some projects in Egypt, though HC officials are busy they are not irrational. Most evaluation work should be done by the Host Country. Most lessons to be learned should be learned by HC officials."

"It is difficult to bring about changes, but you need to assess this. Some of our programs are unilaterally political and include factors which control design/implementation. We don't know how to analyze this. Thus given the political context of some of our programs, it is not likely you can do effective evaluations in the pure sense and it is not sure that change is possible."

"Yes. I believe you can have meaningful impact. You never can expect to see all of the recommendations implemented, but I feel you can make a constructive impact. . . . it can make a difference with the little stuff even though you can't change the big picture."

"I definitely do. Sometimes it makes it harder, i.e., Egypt knows they will get the money whether they do a good job or not. This lessens the effectiveness of the evaluation. But often the HC wants to have a good project and if there are ways to make it better or put pressure on their superiors evaluation helps. The bigger the project the harder to do, but evaluations are useful for the average sized project."

"Yes, if we recognize the political context. Too often we do evaluations and ignore the political environment. If the purpose was political in the first place and this political objective was achieved even if the project was a technical failure can we say the project was not a success?"

"Yes, although we have to recognize that political arguments may tip the balance, we still need to know the truth, i.e., what we are sacrificing by giving in to political realities."

"For West Bank/Gaza I would definitely say no. It is hard to do them there and those that are done are done in a very narrow structured framework. It is more difficult in the Near East to do objective effective upfront evaluations than in other Bureaus, i.e., decentralization sector assessment We need to balance the good with the bad. We need to highlight the good and if something is bad the evaluation needs to identify the steps to take to rectify the situation. Often evaluations tend to be more audits . . . there is confusion between the two . . . both are often treated the same and is true for Americans as well as HC officials."

"A qualified yes. Egypt is an exception though even here it is possible."

"Yes very much so especially if you are talking about Egypt. It can be shown that this is a way of avoiding embarrassment by bringing problems to light early enough to make corrections. Yes in Lebanon . . . part of our problem in the Near East is that many of our countries don't have governments in the strict sense . . ."

Question 19: Continued

"The political context is not that big of a deterrant to doing good evaluations though it does play a role in the selection of projects. We do a lot of paperwork which we call evaluation when the decision has already been made that the activity is pursued for political rationale. In this context, don't delude yourself by a paper exercise. I personally would like to see the Near East bureau spend more time on improved implementation rather than design or evaluation."

"Yes. an evaluation can point out the extent to which political considerations are factors in running the program. Political considerations are major factors in how and why projects are designed and we need to know the political consequences."

"Yes. If we have real evaluation with everyone on board then it leads to positive change."

"Yes for example Yemen Tihama. No for the most part in Egypt."

"Yes, but in particular instances we need to be very sensitive to the issues, sensitivities and timing."

"Yes, if the targets/goals/focus are project specific and the project itself has been designed realistically."

"Not really and especially not in Egypt."

"Depends on the project. Non-political TA projects yes. The political environment is more sensitive with capital projects and with health and family planning projects. You should add 'cultural' to this question."

Yes, ~~if~~ we are interested enough to really do them.

115

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

: See Distribution

DATE: APR 4 1983

FROM : NE/DP, Charles W. Johnson 

SUBJECT: Discussion on the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

You have all received a list of questions regarding the NE Bureau Evaluation Process. Many of you have participated in one-on-one interviews with Robert Zimmerman and Judith Wills of our PAE staff. We are now ready to move into the second phase of this effort to get your ideas about what our evaluation process is, should be and can be. In this second step we have divided the NE Bureau staff into relatively small groups for further group discussions on the findings of the first interviews as they relate to specific parts of our evaluation process and its documentation. We want an interactive reaction to the ideas developed during the one-on-one sessions. These group discussions will be focused on topics as indicated in the attachments. They will last at most 1 1/2 hours, perhaps less.

Our grouping of participants by subject is arbitrary in most cases and divided into groups of approximately fourteen each to facilitate discussion. If a few of you would prefer to be in another group, we may be able to make some adjustments, especially if you let Bob and Judy know your preference no later than noon 11 April. Obviously, there may be some who cannot attend the group they have been assigned to, at the time indicated, because of other scheduled conflicts. When this occurs you would be welcome to join another group. It would also be possible for you to attend more than one group if you wish.

We appreciate your cooperation so far. Those who have not been interviewed are not being discriminated against. We have had limited time and could do only so many. All Bureau staff are encouraged to be involved in this effort and if any who are interested are not included below, please contact PAE at 632-9114.

Attachments: a/s

DISTRIBUTION: See attachments

GROUP 1

Tuesday, April 12, 1983

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Room 6439

SUBJECT: NE Bureau Evaluation Process: Strength and Weaknesses
Evaluation Support: Roles of NE/DP/PAE and Backstop Officers
(Questions 1,2,7,8)

Participants

Jerre Manarolla, NE/DP
Peter Sellar, NE/DP
Dan Mackell, NE/PD
Steve Freundlich, NE/PD
Don Reese, NE/PD
Lyle Weiss, NE/PD
Genease Shivers, NE/PD
Lenni Kangas, TECH/HPN
Archie Hogan, TECH/AD
Carolyn Coleman, TECH/HRST
John Lewis, TECH/SARD
Don Cohen, NE/NENA
Ken Schofield, NE/E
Richard Burns, NE/ME/Regional

GROUP 2

Tuesday, April 12, 1983

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Room 4440-A

SUBJECT: Evaluation design, planning, review (PRC/NEAC) and characteristics of a good evaluation. (Questions 4,5,6,14,18)

Participants

Charles W. Johnson, NE/DP
Frank Martin, NE/DP
Robert Bell, NE/PD
Ault Nathanielsz, NE/PD
James Habron, NE/PD
Barbara Turner, TECH/HPN
John Burdick, TECH/HPN
Dick Cobb, TECH/AD
Barry Heyman, TECH/HRST
Bernie Salvo, TECH/SARD
Chris Crowley, NE/NENA/Y
Gerald Kamens, NE/ME
Marx Sterne, NE/EUR

GROUP 3

Wednesday, April 13, 1983

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Room 4440-A

SUBJECT: Host country involvement; problems of understanding, anxiety;
Political concerns (Questions 9, 10, 12, 19)

Participants

Richard Johnson, NE/DP
Sy Taubenblatt, NE/PD
Jud Williams, NE/PD
Tom Sterner, NE/PD
Al Hotvedt, NE/PD
Pam Johnson, TECH/HPN
George Miller, TECH/AD
Burt Behrens, TECH/AD
James Bever, TECH/HRST
Geroge Gardner, TECH/SARD
George Lewis, NE/NENA/TM
Gerald Gower, NE/E
Richard Archi, NE/ME
Ann Gooch, NE/EUR

GROUP 4

Thursday, April 14, 1983

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Room 4440-A

SUBJECT: Lessons learned: presentation/utilization; DIU
(Questions 3, 13, 17)

Participants

Leonard Rosenberg, NE/DP
Lance Downing, NE/DP
Keith Brown, NE/PD
Charles Shorter, NE/PD
Ronald Henrikson, NE/PD
Ken Sherper, NE/TECH
Arthur Braunstein, TECH/HPN
Lee Voth, TECH/AD
Edwin Chapman, TECH/HRST
Jane Nandy, TECH/SARD
Marilyn Arnold, NE/NENA/T
Bert Porter, NE/E
Henry Merrill, NE/ME/L
Russ Misheloff, NE/EUR

GROUP 5

Friday, April 15, 1983

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Room 4440-A

SUBJECT: Evaluation training; role of Mission Evaluation Officer

Participants

Robert Bonnaffon, NE/DP
Gerry Donnelly, NE/DP
Dorothy Kemp, NE/PD
Barbara Ormond, NE/PD
Larry Marshall, NE/PD
Wally Bowles, NE/PD
Holly Wise, TECH/HPN
Dave Songer, TECH/AD
George Armstrong, TECH/AD
William Miner, TECH/SARD
Jerry Miller, TECH/SARD
Dennis Morrissey, NE/E
Ed Krowitz, NE/E
Richard Brown, NE/ME/S&J

NOTE: The following individuals have been identified as being on leave or TDY. Please advise if their status changes or if we have overlooked anyone.

Steve Lintner, NE/PD
Davy McCall, NE/PD
July Weissman, NE/TECH/HPN
Kris Loken, NE/TECH/HPN
Gene Boostrom, NE/TECH/HPN
Ann Domidion, NE/TECH/HRST
Mona Hammam, NE/TECH/SARD

121

UNCLASSIFIED

AID/NE/DP/PAE:ROBERT ZIMMERMAN:AMR
03/31/83 PHONE: 632-9114
AID/AA/NE:W. ANTOINETTE FORD

AID/NE/DP:CH JOHNSON
AID/PPC/E:RBLUE {INFO}

AID/DAA/NE:BLANGMAID

PRIORITY AMMAN, BEIRUT PRIORITY, CAIRO PRIORITY, MUSCAT
PRIORITY, RABAT PRIORITY, SANAA PRIORITY, TUNIS PRIORITY
PRIORITY LISBON, DAMASCUS PRIORITY

AIDAC FOR MISSION DIRECTORS FROM FORD, AA/NE

E.O. 12065: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN THE NE BUREAU
EVALUATION PROCESS

1. THE NEAR EAST BUREAU'S PROJECT ANALYSIS AND
EVALUATION STAFF (NE/DP/PAE) ONCE AGAIN HAS ITS FULL
COMPLEMENT OF PERSONNEL. FOR THE PAST THREE MONTHS PAE
AND THE BUREAU'S SENIOR STAFF HAVE BEEN REVIEWING THE
CURRENT STATUS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BUREAU'S
EVALUATION PROCESS. I HAVE APPROVED AN EIGHT POINT PLAN
FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS PROCESS.
BRIEFLY STATED THESE EIGHT ELEMENTS ARE:

- A. ASSESSMENT WITH PROJECT OFFICERS (FIELD MISSIONS)
AND PROJECT BACKSTOP OFFICERS (AID/W) AND SENIOR STAFF
IN BOTH THE FIELD AND WASHINGTON OF THEIR UNDERSTANDING
AND PERCEPTION OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS, SPECIFICALLY
WHAT IS RIGHT, WRONG, USELESS, USEFUL OR POSSIBLE IN
APPROACHES, POLICIES AND DOCUMENTATION FOR EVALUATION;
- B. DEVELOPMENT OF NEW EVALUATION GUIDELINES AND
ADJUSTMENT IN THE EVALUATION PROCESS ON THE BASIS OF (A);
- C. REDEFINITION OF POLICY AND ROLE REGARDING MISSION

Best Available Document

WAF
RZ
CHJ
BL
PR

UNCLASSIFIED

EVALUATION OFFICERS:

D. POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF TRAINING SEMINARS AND/OR CASE STUDY PROJECTS UTILIZING THE NEW GUIDELINES:

E. ADJUSTMENTS IN THE PRC EVALUATION REVIEW AND FEEDBACK PROCESS:

F. MORE CAREFUL ATTENTION TO DESIGNING AND ENSURING FUNDING FOR EVALUATION PLANS DURING PID/PP PROCESS:

G. LOGGING, ABSTRACTING AND COMPUTER STORAGE (BILL) OF EVALUATION REPORTING DATA WITH A SPECIAL FOCUS ON LESSONS LEARNED AND

H. CLOSE ATTENTION TO FACILITATING AND MONITORING UTILIZATION OF EVALUATION FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED IN SUBSEQUENT PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION.

I. ACTION ON THE FIRST TWO OF THESE ELEMENTS HAS ALREADY BEGUN HERE IN WASHINGTON AND WILL BE CARRIED OUT IN THE FOLLOWING FASHION:

A. AID/W (21 MARCH - 15 APRIL 1983)

1. INTERVIEWS (ONE-ON-ONE) WITH SENIOR MANAGEMENT STAFF AND BACKSTOP OFFICERS. THESE INTERVIEWS WILL FOCUS ON THE STATUS OF CURRENT UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW EVALUATION PROCESS, INCLUDING PERSONNEL AND DOCUMENTATION INVOLVED FROM PID THROUGH FINAL PES OR OTHER EVALUATION REPORTS. WE WILL DISCUSS WHAT IS RIGHT, WRONG, USEFUL, USELESS AND POSSIBLE IN THE PROCESS AS WELL AS THE CRITERIA AND CHARACTERISTICS DESIRABLE FOR THE MOST EFFECTIVE EVALUATION PROCESS;

2. GROUP SESSIONS OF 5 TO 10 OFFICERS EACH TO FURTHER DISCUSS INFORMATION AND PERCEPTIONS OBTAINED FROM ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS, EACH GROUP FOCUSING ON A DISTINCT ASPECT OF THE PROCESS, THOUGH OBVIOUSLY THERE WILL BE A NEED TO TOUCH ON OTHER ASPECTS AS WELL;

3. QUALITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP TO SYNTHESIZE RESULTS OF THE ABOVE.

B. FIELD (18 APRIL - 18 MAY 1983)

INTERVIEWS (ONE-ON-ONE) WITH SENIOR MANAGEMENT STAFF AND PROJECT OFFICERS AND ONE GROUP SESSION IN EACH OF 6 FIELD MISSIONS. CONTENT WILL BE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS

UNCLASSIFIED

1 3

FOLLOWED IN AID/W AND INCLUDE THE SYNTHESIS DEVELOPED IN MISSION GROUP MEETINGS.

C. THE AID/W QUALITY DEVELOPMENT GROUP WILL MEET AGAIN DURING PERIOD FROM 16-27 MAY TO RESYNTHESIZE COMBINED FINDINGS OF ITS PREVIOUS EFFORT AND THE FINDINGS DEVELOPED DURING THE FIELD VISITS.

3- THE FINAL PRODUCTS OF THIS EFFORT, TO BE COMPLETED BY 31 MAY, WILL BE (A) A CLEAR DELINEATION OF QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS FOR EFFECTIVE AND USEFUL EVALUATIONS AND THE PROCESS FOR OBTAINING SAME AND (B) A REVISION OF THE BUREAU EVALUATION GUIDELINES RE EVALUATION POLICY, PLANS, PROCESS, PURPOSE AND UTILIZATION.

4. THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF REFINEMENT ON THE REMAINING SIX ELEMENTS WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST TWO AND WILL BE DEVELOPED DURING THE FOLLOWING THREE TO FOUR MONTHS.

5. THIS IS A SERIOUS EFFORT. IT WILL NOT SUCCEED, HOWEVER, WITHOUT TOTAL COOPERATION FROM ALL OF US. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO ENSURE THAT OUR EVALUATION PROCESS IS USEFUL. IT WILL BE SOMETHING WE ALL WILL UNDERSTAND AND WILL HAVE HAD A HAND IN CREATING. IF WE SUCCEED, THE NE BUREAU'S EVALUATION PROCESS WILL BECOME A DYNAMIC CONDITION WHEREIN:

(A) PROJECT OFFICERS, SUPPORTED BY MISSION LEADERSHIP, AND ALL BUREAU SUPPORT PERSONNEL WILL VIEW AND PRACTICE EVALUATION NOT AS A HOOP TO JUMP THROUGH OR A POTENTIAL FAULT FINDING EXERCISE BUT AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ORGANIZED USAID-HOST COUNTRY COOPERATIVE STUDY, THOUGHT, DISCUSSION AND RECORDING OF WHAT A GIVEN ASSISTANCE PROJECT OR PROGRAM IS ACCOMPLISHING, HOW IT WORKS OR DOESN'T AND WHY — ALL WITH A VIEW TO MAKING NECESSARY CHANGES IN COURSE AND OBJECTIVES OR FOR APPLICATION IN FUTURE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS;

(B) LESSONS LEARNED ARE CLEARLY, OBJECTIVELY AND COMPREHENSIVELY DELINEATED IN EVALUATION REPORTS AND EASILY RETRIEVABLE FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION AND APPLICATION DURING PROJECT/PROGRAM PLANNING AND DESIGN;

(C) OTHER NE BUREAU OFFICES AND PERSONNEL AND OTHER MISSIONS REGULARLY SEEK OUT THIS EVALUATION EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE AND APPLY IT WHENEVER AND WHEREVER FEASIBLE.

ROBERT ZIMMERMAN AND JUDITH WILLS OF OUR PAE STAFF

129

UNCLASSIFIED

ARE PLANNING TO VISIT EGYPT, JORDAN, LEBANON, MOROCCO, TUNISIA AND YEMEN BETWEEN 18 APRIL AND 17 MAY. CURRENT APPROXIMATE ITINERARIES ARE AS FOLLOWS: (A) ZIMMERMAN: SAHAA 19-21, BEIRUT 22-23, AMMAN 24-27, CAIRO 28 APRIL - 5 MAY, (B) WILLS: CAIRO 28 APRIL - 5 MAY, TUNIS 6 - 10 MAY, RABAT 11 - 15 MAY. THESE DATES ARE LIKELY TO BE ADJUSTED DEPENDING ON AIRLINE CONNECTION POSSIBILITIES AND MISSION SUGGETIONS.

7. I FULLY UNDERSTAND THAT MISSIONS WILL BE INVOLVED IN PREPARING THEIR ABS SUBMISSIONS DURING PART OF THIS PERIOD. THE ACTIVITIES WE ARE UNDERTAKING WILL NOT INTERFERE WITH YOUR ABS PREPARATIONS. THE INTERVIEWS WILL PROBABLY REQUIRE ONLY 1 TO 1 1/2 HRS. OF EACH OFFICER'S TIME AND THE GROUP SESSIONS PROBABLY ONLY 2 HRS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE MISSION CONCURRENCE AND COMMENTS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

8. FINALLY, YOU SHOULD ALL KNOW THAT THIS INITIAL PHASE IS ALSO BEING CAREFULLY MONITORED BY AGENCY SENIOR MANAGEMENT. THE NE BUREAU'S EVALUATION PROCESS AND THE QUALITY IMPROVEMENT EFFORT OUTLINED ABOVE ARE COINCIDENT WITH AND PART OF A LARGER AID EFFORT, SUPPORTED THROUGH A CONSULTANCY WITH W. EDWARDS DENING, TO STUDY AND TEST APPROACHES TO IMPROVE THE OVERALL QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR WORK. WE FULLY EXPECT THAT OUR FINAL PRODUCTS IN THIS NE BUREAU/FIELD MISSION EFFORT WILL HAVE FUTURE IMPACT AGENCY WIDE.

9. USAID'S LISBON, MUSCAT AND DAMASCUS WILL NOT BE VISITED AND WILL RECEIVE TEXT OF QUESTIONNAIRE VIA CABLE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RESPONSE BY ALL USDH CONCERNED BY MAY 18 BY POUCH. 44

125

27 MAY 1983

MEMORANDUM

TO : SEE DISTRIBUTION

FROM : DAA/NE, Bradshaw Langmaid *BL*

SUBJECT: Improving the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

For the past three months the NE/DP/PAE staff have undertaken an intense and extensive study of the NE Bureau Evaluation process. PAE has "tested" the quality and effectiveness of the Bureau's system for receiving, reviewing and utilizing evaluation reports, particularly in relation to our PID and PP development exercises. Based on apparent weaknesses they developed a list of questions for use in nearly 40 one-on-one interviews with Bureau staff at all levels. PAE then completed 5 group discussion sessions on the findings of these interviews concerning what is useful, useless and possible in evaluation. Next, PAE visited five field missions (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen), and interviewed another 60-odd USDH and held 6 small group discussions Egypt (3), Yemen (1), Jordan (1), Tunisia (1) using a questionnaire somewhat revised on the basis of our Bureau level efforts.

Attached is a draft discussion paper that represents the output of our effort to date. PAE does not intend to produce a separate formal report presenting and analysing the specific responses to the questions. Anyone interested in looking at the raw data as summarized may obtain a copy of the rough compilation from PAE. The thirteen problems, the causal factors and recommendations for addressing the problems presented in the attached draft all derive directly from the interviews. You will note that in some cases a problem may well be a causal factor for another problem. Some problems share causal factors and, obviously, some recommendations will address two or three different problems and their causes.

This discussion paper is precisely that — a paper for further discussion. PAE has tried to provide a degree of specificity in order to encourage even more specificity in critiques and proposals as others react to these recommendations. The next phase in PAE's effort to help ensure revitalization of an effective, useful NE Bureau evaluation process will involve a series of one hour group discussions on the attached paper. The purpose is to critique and refine recommendations and where necessary clarify problem statements and causal factors.

We are seeking volunteers for a group that will, in effect, constitute a preliminary quality working group. Those interested should contact Bob Zimmerman or Judy Willis not later than June 8, 1983. All Bureau staff however, are encouraged to take the time to review this paper and to offer comments or changes, preferably on the draft itself and return it to PAE. For those who participate in the group discussions, PAE intends to proceed problem by problem covering as many as possible in each meeting of 1 to 1 1/4 hours. There may, thus, be as many as 4 or 5 meetings as proposed in the following schedule:

126

14 June, Tuesday, at 2:00 pm in Room 4440-A
15 June, Wednesday, at 2:00 pm in Room 4440-A
17 June, Friday, at 2:00 pm in Room 4440-A
20 June, Monday, at 2:00 pm in Room 4440-A
21 June, Tuesday, at 2:00 pm in Room 4440-A

I realize that many of you will also be reviewing ABS submissions. Nevertheless, it should be possible to continue work on this effort to improve our evaluation process. We must maintain momentum.

For Field Missions: Your inputs are still vital to the success of this effort. I urge all Mission Directors to share this paper with their staffs and to encourage a serious effort to critique and offer suggestions. If possible, we would appreciate responses, keyed to problem, cause or recommendation (numbers and letters), by cable in time for our group discussions (14 - 20 June.) Even if you miss this deadline, however, your comments will be taken into account as the paper is redrafted and formally submitted by 29 June for Bureau Management consideration. We expect action decisions to be taken by the end of July 1983.

Attachment: a/s

DISTRIBUTION:

NE/DP, Charles W. Johnson (10)
NE/PD, Selig A. Taubenblatt (4)
NE/PD/PDS, Dorothy Kemp (3)
NE/PD/MENA, Davy McCall (5)
NE/PD/EGYPT, Thomas A. Sterner (3)
NE/PD/ENGR, James Habron (5)
NE/TECH, Kenneth H. Sherper (1)
NE/TECH/HPN, Lenni Kangas (8)
NE/TECH/AD, Richard Cobb (8)
NE/TECH/HRST, Barry Heyman (4)
NE/TECH/SARD, William Miner (9)
NE/E, Gerald Gower (4)
NE/NENA/TM, George Lewis (1)
NE/ME, Gerald Kamens (3)
NE/EUR, Russell Misheloff (2)

USAID/Cairo, Michael Stone, Director
Owen P. Cyulke, Deputy Director
Emily Baldwin, Evaluation Officer
USAID/Amman, Walter G. Bollinger, Director
Nancy Carmichael, Acting Evaluation Officer

127

USAID/Rabat, Robert C. Chase, Director
Harry J. Petriquin, Jr., Deputy Director
USAID/Muscat, Chester S. Bell, AID Representative
USAID/Lisbon, Donald R. Finberg, AID Representative
Michael Lukonski, Program Officer
USAID/Damascus, Edwin D. Callahan, AID Representative
Mary K. Huntington, Program Officer
USAID/Tunis, James R. Phippard, Director
Frank J. Kerber, Acting Program Officer
USAID/Sanaa, Charles F. Weden, Director
Theodore E. Bratrud, Evaluation Officer

THE NEAR EAST BUREAU EVALUATION PROCESS

PROBLEMS, CAUSAL FACTORS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

— DISCUSSION PAPER —

NE/DP/PAE

5/25/83

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

— DISCUSSION PAPER —

	<u>Page</u>
I. Uneven Quality of External Evaluation Reports.....	1
II. Heavy Reliance on External Evaluations (whether AID/W or contractor)..	4
III. Uneven AID/W Backstopping Support for Mission Level Evaluation Needs..	5
IV. Inconsistent Use of PES Format.....	6
V. Uneven and/or Nonutilization of Prior Experience in Either Project Design or Implementation.....	7
VI. Inadequate Conceptual Framework From Which Effective Evaluation is Possible.....	10
VII. Multiple Consumers With Different Information Needs.....	12
VIII. Limited Economic Impact Analysis.....	14
IX. Uneven Follow-up on Evaluation Recommendations.....	15
X. Lack of Trained and Experienced Mission Evaluation Officers with Clearly Defined and Understood Roles.....	17
XI. Uneven, Proforma, or Non-existent Host Country Participation in Evaluation Efforts.....	19
XII. Negative Attitudes Toward Evaluation.....	21
XIII. The Need for Training in Evaluation in Terms of the Process as Well as Methodology.....	22

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

I. Problem: Uneven quality of external evaluation reports.

External evaluation teams, whether contractor, AID/W TDY or a combination of both, often fail to produce timely, balanced, relevant reports with feasible recommendations useable by decision makers either in the field (both Mission and Host Country) or AID/W.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Contractor prepared reports:

- a. Poor or uneven quality contractor personnel;
- b. Lack of understanding of AID's evaluation process;
- c. Inability of outsiders to fully appreciate host country administrative, political and cultural environment;
- d. Lack of language capability, either spoken or written;
- e. Poorly prepared, understood and agreed upon scopes of work;
- f. Lack of predeparture preparation in terms of the project being evaluated;
- g. Preconceived biases particularly in the case of retired AID contractors;
- h. The perception that AID requires a large volume of written material to justify the cost of the contract;
- i. Poorly prepared or nonexistent executive summaries;
- j. Inadequate timeframes.

2. AID/W TDY prepared reports:

- a. Lack of experience or training in doing evaluation;
- b. Due to other work priorities, inability to complete reports on a timely basis;
- c. Insufficient time devoted to research in AID/W prior to going to the field;
- d. Inadequate preparation by the field for the evaluation;
- e. Inadequate timeframes for study, writing and reflection with the Mission and the Host Country personnel prior to return to AID/W;
- f. Lack of language capability, either spoken or written;
- g. Poorly prepared (sometimes non-existent), understood and agreed upon scopes of work;
- h. The perception that AID/W evaluators have "hidden agendas";
- i. Tendency to use evaluation as an audit and thus overlooking positive aspects of the project;
- j. Lack of staff with broad based technical capability;
- k. Lack of sensitivity to the cultural environment;
- l. A perception by some AID/W evaluators that due to Host Country sensitivities, field missions want sanitized reports.

131

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations:

1. Contractor prepared reports:

- a. IQC contractors who specialize in evaluation should be selected on the basis of proven capability. To assess this capability, AID needs to develop a contractor performance report for evaluation contractors to be filled out by the requesting office (either Mission or AID/W) at the conclusion of each evaluation. IQCs (or individuals within IQCs) who fail to provide quality work should be dropped from AID consideration for future evaluation work. This same criteria should be applied to individuals contracted for on the basis of PSCs.
- b. Performance bonds should be included in the contract for consultants doing AID evaluations. Missions who are funding the evaluation should be able to evoke this bond if the contractor fails to deliver a useable quality draft report. This could take the form of having the contractor remain in country (at no cost to AID) until such a draft is available. It would be at the Mission's discretion whether or not this bond would be waived.

For AID/W funded contracts, final payment should be withheld until a useable quality final report is made available. There should be a penalty clause in the contract for failure to submit this report in a timely fashion. It should be at AID/W's discretion whether or not additional funds are warranted to cover time extensions.

- c. Training in AID's evaluation process should be provided to all IQC contractors to include consultants which these contractors recommend for AID consideration.
- d. Provisions should be included in contractor scopes of work which require a review of related DIU documentation as well as an indepth review of project files prior to departure to the field to do the evaluation. This should also be reflected in the NE Bureau's evaluation guidelines.
- e. Contractors should be selected not only on their technical qualifications but on their facility with the local language and their familiarity with the local environment and culture as well as their proven experience in doing effective evaluations. This should be included in the NE Bureau evaluation guidelines.
- f. AID retirees whether contracted for through an IQC or a PSC should be brought up to date in terms of changes in the country environment during the intervening time period.
- g. Executive summaries which highlight key findings and recommendations

132

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued.

2. AID/W TDY prepared reports:

- a. Specialized training for potential AID/W evaluation staff needs to be developed addressing various levels of experience (see page 22 for recommendations on forms of training;
- b. As a standard operating procedure, AID/W TDY evaluators should complete a draft of the evaluation report for Mission review and acceptance prior to return to AID/W. If such a draft has not been completed by the time of the AID/W TDY's scheduled departure, then the TDY should be extended. By the same token, if the Mission is not satisfied with the quality or utility of the report, then the Mission should request extension of the TDY until a useable draft is completed;
- c. However, the integrity of the evaluation report should not be compromised. If the Mission or the Host Country hold dissenting views about any part of the evaluation, then these views should be included in the final version of the evaluation as separate sections;
- d. Suggestions on how one should prepare for an evaluation prior to departure should be included in the NE Bureau Evaluation Guidelines. Approaches developed for the Agency Impact Evaluations could be used as a model;
- e. A mutually agreed upon Scope of Work should be submitted to AID/W prior to the departure of AID/W TDY evaluators. This Scope of Work should have been shared with the Host Country and ideally reflect their direct input;
- f. AID/W should know prior to departure for the field the names and positions of the officials within the Mission and within the Host Country he/she will be working with in conducting the evaluation. This requirement should be included in the NE Bureau guidelines;
- g. Evaluations should be conducted using a team approach. Evaluations conducted by individual AID/W TDY evaluators tend to lack breadth. At a minimum, evaluation teams should include, in addition to the AID/W TDY evaluator, a Mission representative and an Host Country representative. In addition, consideration should be made to include junior officers (either AID/W or field) and Host Country social scientists and economists. This should be part of the NE Bureau Evaluation guidelines.
- h. AID/W TDY evaluators need to be made aware that entirely negative evaluations may be counterproductive. Faults found as a result of the evaluation should be presented in a positive constructive way. Positive aspects of the project should be presented as well as negative. Concrete doable suggestions for corrective action should be part of the recommendations.

133

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

Problem: Heavy reliance on external evaluations (whether AID/W or contractor).

The NE missions, with some exceptions, tend to rely very heavily on external evaluators (either AID/W TDY or contractor). Joint Mission/Host Country evaluations tend to be the exception and, as a consequence, the positive learning aspects of evaluation by participation in the process are lost to both Mission staff and the Host Country.

A. Causal Factors:

1. The perception that staff constraints and heavy workloads preclude some missions from encouraging joint Host Country/mission evaluations;
2. Lack of experience or training in doing evaluation on the part of project and evaluation staff both mission and Host Country;
3. Lack of full understanding of the evaluation process by both mission project and evaluation officers;
4. Misuse of the evaluation process for monitoring purposes at the expense of evaluation;
5. Perception that Mission conducted in-house evaluations lack credibility with AID/W;
6. Perception that inclusion of representatives from the Host Country Ministry on the evaluation team would prevent objectivity;
7. Perception that in-house evaluations are for Mission use and need not be shared with the Host Country;
8. Tendency of some Mission Evaluation Officers to base the PES on an external evaluator's report without doing first hand evaluation or consulting with the Host Country;
9. Lack of understanding of how to use the PES .

B. Recommendations:

1. The evaluation plan, data collection, and resources for evaluation need to be tightly interwoven into the project implementation plan;
 2. As a policy, the Agency should reduce its reliance on external contractors for evaluation. Operating expense funds need to be made available to Bureaus to cover both staffing costs (see discussion on Mission Evaluation Officer roles, page 17) and travel expenses for AID direct hire to engage in evaluation. Engaging in the evaluation process is a proven means of expanding an individual officer's understanding of the development process and retaining lessons learned through evaluation within the Agency;
 3. Greater effort should be made to identify and utilize host country social scientists and economists as members of evaluation teams whether inhouse or external;
 4. Training needs to be provided to mission evaluation and project officers (see discussion on training pages 22-23)
- 174

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

III. Problem: Uneven AID/W backstopping support for mission level evaluation needs.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Staffing and time constraints;
2. Inconsistent senior level management support for evaluation as reflected by:
 - a. Unwillingness to pressure contractors to perform according to the scope of work;
 - b. Lower priority for evaluation activities vs. programming for and obligating funds;
 - c. Periodic waivering of current NEAC and PRC evaluation review responsibilities and policies;
2. Varying degrees of interest in and commitment to evaluation backstopping role on the part of project backstop officers;
3. Excessive time required for documentation research;
4. Poor quality, inaccessible or non-existent evaluation material to draw on;
5. Confusion over and inadequate understanding of roles and responsibilities of various AID/W offices(ers) re the Bureau evaluation backstopping process.

B. Recommendations:

1. Establish a permanent NE Bureau Evaluation Review Committee (NEERC) chaired by the Deputy Assistant Administrator with organizational assistance from NE/DP/PAE, including representatives from each technical support division (TECH and PD) and from each geographic sub-region (desks).

This group would meet at least once every quarter to review (a) the general status of implementation of the Bureau Evaluation Plan, (b) issues such as confusion over specific project evaluation priorities, (c) inadequate contractor performance, (d) Bureau level evaluation interests, including funding and personnel requirements, and (e) particularly well done evaluations and appropriate Bureau response therefore;

2. Establish a Bureau evaluation quality working group to which the Bureau Evaluation Review Committee could refer special issues or problems as necessary. An initial activity of this group would be to develop revised guidelines for evaluation backstopping responsibilities of AID/W officers and offices and a set of standards by which Missions, the PRC and NEAC will judge the quality and usefulness of evaluation work. This working group would also prepare evaluation policy statements or guidelines as necessary.

135

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

IV. Problem: Inconsistent Use of PES Format.

Evaluation reports do not follow a consistent outline and are often poorly organized. The Agency's PES format provides a useful outline for categorizing and presenting findings, but many project officers, evaluators (both AID and contractor) are unfamiliar with or are uncomfortable with the PES guidelines.

A. Causal Factors:

1. The feeling that the PES is a lower form of evaluation most useful for inhouse evaluations or as a monitoring document;
2. Insufficient understanding of and capacity (among some AID staff) to apply existing evaluation guidelines and methodologies to evaluation;
3. Tendency of Missions and AID/W to accept evaluations as submitted without demanding these reports meet minimum quality standards;
4. Lack of clear understanding by all parties (AID/W, Mission, contractors if applicable) of what these minimum standards should encompass;
5. Multiple consumers of evaluation.

B. Recommendations:

1. The status of the PES as a valid framework for serious evaluation should be enhanced. Misuse of the PES for monitoring purposes should be discouraged and an alternate framework for annual monitoring reviews developed for Mission use.
2. The PES outline should be recirculated widely in AID/W and to the field. Comments should be solicited to determine what the perceived and real weaknesses are in using the PES as a framework for serious evaluation. Based upon this feedback, the NE Bureau should form a working group to develop guidelines for evaluation reports;
3. Quality standards for evaluation reports reflecting the Bureau, Mission and Host Country needs should be developed by the Bureau working group;
4. Training for AID/W and Mission evaluators in the use of the PES methodology (see page 22 for specific training recommendations);
5. Distinct guidelines developed for various forms of evaluations designed with the various consumers of evaluations in mind (see page 13 for specific recommendations dealing with multiple consumers).
6. Consistent policy of demanding quality in terms of evaluation work performed for or by AID (see pages 2-3 for recommendations on how to do this).

12/6

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

V. Problem: Uneven and/or Nonutilization of Prior Experience in Either Project Design or Implementation

The Near East Bureau as part of its Redelelegation of Authority to the field requires that prior experience be incorporated in project designs and used to improve project implementation. The evaluation process should be identifying "lessons learned" to feed into this system. Evaluations in many cases fail to delineate specific lessons and when addressed at all tend to be so broad and general that they are useless.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Lack of consensus of what "lessons" are and how these can be presented for utilization by others;
2. Attitude toward evaluation that it is an obstacle to rather than a help for effective implementation of projects. This attitude results in efforts designed to ensure proforma paper exercises called evaluation rather than serious attempts to think about and study project experience with a view to learning lessons;
3. Lack of historical experience and knowledge about the project on the part of successive project managers and/or evaluation teams who prepare evaluation reports;
4. Skepticism that "lessons" are transferable across cultures;
5. A feeling that only certain categories of evaluations are amenable to developing "lessons learned";
6. A feeling that "lessons" tend to be project specific with limited utility for design or implementation of even closely related projects;
7. Poor experience in trying to draw "lessons" from the Agency's memory bank (DIU);
8. Lack of access to AID "lessons" presented in a format which would encourage utilization by overworked field project officers;
9. Lack of Mission specific historical memories making utilization of lessons learned within individual country environments impossible.

B. Recommendations:

1. As part of the Redelelegation of Authority guidelines, the NE-Bureau should require Missions to institute a policy that each project managed by a particular project officer will be evaluated inhouse and a formal report submitted prior to that officer's departure for onward assignment;

137

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued

2. It has come to our attention that DIU may not have made use of a vast store of information in the form of retired files (both Mission and AID/W) which are stored in the State Department basement and Suitland, Md. DIU may consider hiring a contractor to go through these files on a systematic basis to find old evaluation reports and other documents which reveal lessons learned from past experience. This exercise is beyond the capacity of the NE Bureau to implement.
3. The NE Bureau (and the Agency) should not rely only on evaluation documentation for lessons learned information. The Bureau should consider instituting a periodic reporting requirement from field missions on what lessons are emerging during the implementation process (as revealed by contractor reports and first hand observation) as well as those identified through evaluation. Such a report should also note how the Mission is using (or plans to use) these lessons.
4. Clear guidelines on what is useful in terms of lessons learned information need to be developed. A NE Bureau working group with PPC/E participation should be formed to address this issue.
5. The NE Bureau has transferred responsibility of writing abstracts of current evaluation reports to the field. The Bureau working with DIU needs to look at abstracts received to date in terms of quality and develop guidelines to assist Missions to improve them;
6. The original project officer and/or the design-officer should be included as a team member or in review of the evaluation report. This is particularly important for impact evaluations. The primary input would be the identification of lessons learned;
7. DIU should consider assigning analysts to specific geographic regions to encourage a collegial working relationship; the Bureau needs to "internalize" the Agency's memory if that memory is to ever develop into a useful resource for project officers;
8. Training courses (both formal and informal) should address the attitudinal problem toward evaluation and provide the working tools by which project officers both develop and utilize lessons learned (see page 22);
9. Certain forms of evaluation (final vs. midproject), (impact vs. inprocess), (clustered vs. single) tend to be more conducive to generating lessons learned information. When such evaluations are planned, the generation of lessons learned information should be highlighted as a distinct reporting requirement in Scope of Work.

130

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued.

10. The informal process of using word of mouth experience in project design and in resolving implementation problems needs to be systematized. The Sector Councils could be asked to maintain lists of individuals with specific project experience with contact numbers and addresses. Larger missions could also prepare such a list for internal use.

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

VI. Problem: Inadequate conceptual framework from which effective evaluation is possible.

Many projects have poorly thought out and prepared logical frameworks (logframes). This is particularly true in terms of the output to purpose linkages, verifiable indicators which make sense and underlying assumption. Such logframes often reflect the fact that projects themselves are poorly designed and are not well understood. These weakness ultimately result in poorly focussed and confused evaluations.

Besides the logframe, project implementation plans tend to reflect arbitrary time limitations and as a consequence may predispose a negative evaluation when the project subsequently falls behind schedule.

A. Causal Factors:

1. The generation of project design officers who were inculcated with the logframe methodology has moved on to more senior level positions or have left the Agency. Present project design officers tend to prepare logframes as afterthoughts rather than using this methodology as the initial framework from which the project is developed. Consequently, the logframe has become an inadequate tool for future evaluation.
2. Funding levels tend to be determined more on the basis of short term political objectives rather than solely on developmental grounds. This situation places a premium on obligating and spending funds as quickly as possible for demonstration effect. Time for careful exploration with the Host Country of alternative approaches and useage of the funds is sacrificed.
3. The perception by field missions that realistic implementation plans would not receive favorable consideration by AID/W, that the game plan calls for intense implementation schedules which AID/W through experience certainly knows are unrealistic.
4. The tendency to tack on numerous peripheral objectives to satisfy the various interest groups within AID/W and assure AID/W approval which are subsequently dropped in implementation.
5. The tendency to add objectives to on-going projects to satisfy new interest groups within AID/W.

B. Recommendations:

1. A new round of training in the development and use of the logframe methodology is certainly called for;

- 11 -

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued.

2. As spelled out in the Redelelegation of Authority guidelines, the NE Bureau has a policy that PIDs will include a completed logframe and a preliminary evaluation plan. Failure to include these in the PID should be sufficient reason to defer decision on the PID by AID/W. The Bureau should be consistent in applying this policy;
 3. Additional guidelines on what NE expects to see in a project evaluation plan at both the PID and PP stages should be developed and sent to the field;
 4. Implementation plans need to be made more realistic. The Agency should do a study of the average timeframes for completing contractor selection, for receiving project commodities and for implementing various categories of projects as a standard from which missions can more realistically plan their projects;
 5. Pressures to obligate funds should not drive the project design process. When there are overriding political considerations, the Agency may wish to explore the possibility of obtaining Congressional approval for the establishment of escrow accounts for projects which may not be ready for obligation within a particular fiscal year;
 6. As a matter of policy, updated logframes should be included as an annex to the PES as necessary.
 7. Projects should be evaluated on the basis of the objectives set out in the project design. If the Agency is interested in possible effects of the project in other areas, i.e., private sector, these should be discussed under the section dealing with "Unplanned Effects" and should not be a gauge of overall project success.
 8. There is a need for more realism in what can be accomplished under any one project. Peripheral interest groups, i.e., WID, appropriate technology, etc., should continue to "educate" AID practitioners so that these interests are seen not as a special concern which must be addressed, but as integral to the project itself.
 9. Provision for data collection should be part of every project design. The expenditure for this should reflect the type of project (is it a pilot experimental activity?) and the magnitude of the overall investment.
 10. Depending on the project, provision for data collection for future impact evaluation should be included.
- 141

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

VII. Problem: Multiple Consumers With Different Information Needs

Evaluation is being asked to serve many purposes and many consumers. As a consequence, there is emerging confusion over the purposes of evaluation and a lack of clarity of what types of information are needed at what points in time by the different consumers.

A. Examples of different consumers and their purposes:

1. Field Missions are most interested in using evaluation to make midcourse corrections during project implementation and to make project designs more realistic. There is less interest in doing final evaluations unless there is a direct relationship to a follow-on project. Such evaluations are not in the true sense "final" evaluations as they need to be scheduled prior to the project's PACD to have information available for the design of the follow-on activity. Missions also use evaluation recommendations for leverage with their Host Country counterparts in making needed adjustments in ongoing projects.
2. Some project officers use evaluation as an annual monitoring tool.
3. Sometimes Host Country counterparts use evaluation to inform Ministry level leadership about projects and to focus attention on sectoral problems. They also use evaluation, when the evaluators are well respected people, to get key decision makers to act.
4. The NE Bureau uses evaluation to monitor field implementation and as a basis, through the PRC/NEAC review, to make constructive recommendations to the field. The NE Bureau also uses evaluation as a basis for funding decisions and for decisions dealing with new or phased projects.
5. The NE Bureau has sponsored some impact level evaluations and, in part due to staffing constraints, several missions are beginning to evaluate clusters of projects to determine impact and to provide information for future program decisions.
6. There seems to be marginal use of evaluation to support or verify CDSS objectives.
7. The Agency appears to be most interested in evaluations which yield lessons learned and gauge overall impact. These lessons are then used in formulating Agency policy and in supplying Congress with information about the overall Agency program.

EV

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations:

1. The NE Bureau should issue a policy statement that identifies the different consumers for evaluation and delineates the information requirements and evaluation responsibilities of each consumer.
2. The policy of doing more (and more) with fewer staff needs to be reconsidered. If the Agency is committed to evaluation at all levels (in-process to impact) then staff and resources need to be made available.
3. The NE Bureau should survey its information needs and integrate these into its annual evaluation planning exercise.
4. A format for annual project reviews needs to be developed for use by Missions on a discretionary basis. The PES methodology should be reserved for serious evaluation and not misused as a substitute for project monitoring.
5. The clustering of projects for overall evaluation should be encouraged.
6. Final evaluations should be deemphasized to be replaced by Project Completion Reports with particular emphasis on lessons learned.
7. A formalized system for requiring project managers to prepare end of tour reports on each of their projects needs to be established; alternatively, missions should consider scheduling inhouse evaluations of all projects managed by individual project officers prior to onward assignment. Ideally, that officer's replacement should be available to participate.
8. Given staff constraints, Missions by necessity must focus on current activities. Impact evaluations are not feasible until several years after project completion. The Bureau and the Agency must therefore continue to take the lead in sponsoring and staffing such evaluations. Impact evaluations at the Mission level should be at each Mission's discretion.
9. If the Agency is serious about determining impact, then the Agency needs to commit resources to ensure data will be collected over time usually several years after project completion. The Agency should therefore select particular project activities as test cases and build into the project the data collection components which would continue to be funded several years after project completion.
10. The NE Bureau should sponsor discrete evaluation activities designed to yield supportive information for use by individual missions and the Bureau for country and regional planning purposes.

113

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

VIII. Problem: Limited Economic impact analysis.

As part of the project design process, all project papers require some form of economic analysis. This requirement is not generally carried over to the evaluation plan even for those projects in which the project paper presents a quantified economic analysis. Rarely is the data collected to enable evaluators to gauge impact in economic terms. The exception tends to be in projects which require micro data to enable project implementors to make periodic adjustments in project design during implementation. Data for determining impact is usually tenuous to nonexistent at the design stage and a system for collecting baseline information (including total costs) is usually excluded from the design.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Host Country data collecting and analysis capacity is limited;
2. The costs involved for ongoing data collection are high and data collection is not perceived as a priority by host governments;
3. AID has not been consistent in its emphasis on economic analysis;
4. Within the NE Bureau, projects which appear to be more amenable to economic evaluation, i.e., capital projects, appear to be exempt from required evaluation.

B. Recommendations:

1. The NE Bureau should review its portfolio of projects and determine which projects should be evaluated in economic terms;
2. Projects which are justified on an economic basis should be evaluated;
3. Host Country capacity for analyzing and collecting data should be discussed in both the evaluation plan and the economic analysis of the project paper. When this capacity is considered weak and the type of project or magnitude of the investment warrants it steps to improve this capacity should be integrated into the project
4. If the Agency is interested in gauging impact in economic terms, then it should commit the resources necessary to ensure data will be collected over time for particular types of project activities.

1964

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

IX. Problem: Uneven follow-up on evaluation recommendations.

Evaluation recommendations are not always implemented. Subsequent evaluations many times reveal the same problems and contain identical recommendations which may or may not be implemented.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Follow-up on evaluation recommendations are often left to the project manager to implement. This officer may not have access to senior levels within the Host Country to have any influence. In Missions without a formal follow-up procedure, it is left up to the individual project manager to obtain senior Mission Management support at ministerial levels within the Host Country;
2. Missions may not agree with the recommendations made in the evaluation report; the Host Country may also not agree with the recommendations;
3. The Mission Evaluation Officer's role in following up on evaluation recommendations is not defined;
4. Evaluation recommendations may be too general to be useful as leverage with the Host Country;
5. Evaluation recommendations may not be fully supported by the narrative section of the report;
6. Some Host Country counterpart ministries may need technical assistance in implementing the evaluation recommendations;
7. Some evaluation recommendations require long periods of time to implement.

B. Recommendations:

1. Missions should established a formalized system for follow-up on evaluation recommendations. AID/W should be kept informed, perhaps through the Mission Quarterly Reports, but should not formalize such a system itself;
2. The role of the Mission Evaluation Officer in terms of follow-up on evaluation recommendations needs to be clearly defined;
3. When missions do not agree with particular evaluation recommendations, it should prepare a dissenting position paper for inclusion in the final evaluation report;
4. For external evaluations, the Mission should prepare a covering PES facesheet (for control purposes) listing proposed actions stemming from recommendations contained in the evaluation report;

145

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued

5. When evaluation recommendations are beyond the capacity of the Host Country to implement, then Missions may want to amend the project to provide technical assistance as necessary;
6. Evaluation recommendations which require long periods of time to implement should be addressed by the Mission as part of the Mission's position paper on the evaluation. Steps by which the Mission proposes to implement these recommendations should be identified and form part of the overall evaluation report.
7. Logframes should be updated as necessary as part of the final evaluation report;
8. Actions on recommendations in previous evaluations should be addressed in a separate section so entitled in each subsequent evaluation.

146

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

- x. Problem: Lack of trained and experienced mission evaluation officers with clearly defined and understood roles.

There is only one mission within the NE Bureau which has a full time evaluation officer. Mission evaluation officers usually have other work assignments which have priority over evaluation. In several cases, the mission evaluation officer is a junior officer and consequently has limited influence with senior management. In almost all cases, the role of the mission evaluation officer is defined by the officer occupying the position. This in turn is influenced by that officer's prior experience and personal attitude toward evaluation.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Mission staffing constraints;
2. Lack of an incentive/reward policy for the evaluation function;
3. Lack of standard, applied training programs in evaluation for project officers and mission evaluation officers;
4. Different priorities for and concepts of evaluation on the part of mission leadership;
5. Unfamiliarity of AID personnel with existing AID evaluation policies, guidance and other documentation;
6. Lack of a formal position description defining the role of the mission evaluation officer.

B. Recommendations:

1. Since most missions facing staff constraints are unable to designate full time mission evaluation officers, the Agency should consider the direct assignment of senior evaluation officers to clusters of countries and, where size warrants, to specific missions to oversee the evaluation function. These positions would be over and above the approved mission staffing levels. These would not be the same as regional evaluation specialists as the geographical coverage would be limited to assure full involvement of the individual assigned to a maximum of say two or three countries. The NE Bureau could effectively utilize three such positions with one of these slots assigned directly to the Egypt program in addition to that program's present evaluation officer;
2. The Bureau evaluation policy should seek to resolve the confusion over where the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the mission evaluation system lies, including the nature and scope of evaluation activities to be performed at the mission level;
3. Develop a clearly defined role for mission evaluation process managers, including the degree of autonomy therefor;

147

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued.

4. Undertake one regional meeting of mission evaluation process managers each year to exchange ideas, experience and new information relevant to the implementation of the Bureau evaluation plan;
5. Develop guidelines for minimum qualifications for mission evaluation officers to include some prior experience in managing project implementation, budget and programming experience, and stated interest;
6. Provide specialized training for a cadre of evaluation officers for onward assignment as mission evaluation process managers;
7. The Agency itself should establish an ASOC for evaluation officers;
8. Personnel evaluation reports should include space for or encourage comment on employee performance of and participation in evaluation exercises.

100

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

- XI. Problem: Uneven, proforma, or non-existent Host Country participation in evaluation efforts.

This problem varies from country to country. For all countries in the region, however, there is the perception that the Arab culture is not attuned to evaluation, that evaluation equates to audit and inspection, and that evaluation as a learning process is an American management tool which will take time to transfer to the local environment.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Inadequate effort on the part of Mission Management and project personnel to seek and ensure meaningful host country participation;
2. As noted above, cultural aversion to evaluation;
3. Language barriers;
4. Low priority by the host country for evaluation;
5. Conflicting concepts re evaluation purposes and approaches; fear that a negative evaluation may result in project termination;
6. Host country staffing and time constraints;
7. Unequal and inadequate financial resources to support host country field level participation;
8. Lack of shared commitment to the project at hand;
9. Confusion about AID evaluation processes, documentation and purposes.

B. Recommendations:

1. Include in the NE Bureau guidance for developing project evaluation plans in the PID and PP a requirement that the design officer discuss the degree of host country interest in and capacity for participation in the planned evaluations of the project. Where interest and capacity are shown to be weak, include in the evaluation plan what the Mission proposes to do to address these weaknesses whether through the project itself or through some other approach.
2. The Evaluation Plan from the project paper should as a matter of policy be included in total as part of the ProAg;
3. Encourage missions to develop and report on efforts to establish regular liaison with Host Country offices or agencies concerned with evaluation;
4. Encourage missions to undertake evaluation workshops with Host Country personnel (perhaps Host Country could be identified to participate in proposed evaluation workshops for AID personnel);

149

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

B. Recommendations: Continued.

5. For Morocco and Tunisia, explore the possibility of a joint NE/AFR regional seminar in French on evaluation; also, continue to explore the idea of a less structured approach to providing training to host country counterparts using FSNs as trainers;
6. A similar effort should be undertaken in the remainder of the NE region possibly using FSNs as trainers with Arabic as the language of instruction;
7. Explore the possibility of approaching other doners including UNDP and the World Bank to cooperate in a senior level evaluation seminar to ministerial level Host Country counterparts;
8. Explore the feasibility of developing evaluation training programs in cooperation with Host Country universities;
9. Translate AID evaluation policies and documentation into Arabic and encourage missions to engage host country agencies in exchanges of views thereon. (It is our understanding that the logframe and logframe methodology have already been translated into Arabic.)
10. Designate the mission evaluation process manager's position as a language position;
11. Encourage missions to rely less on outside evaluators (either AID/W or contractor) and to do more joint evaluations with Host Country counterparts and social scientists (see discussion on joint Host Country/Mission inhouse evaluations, pages 4-5).

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

XII. Problem: Negative attitudes toward evaluation.

Some project officers and senior management personnel tend to maintain hostile and cynical attitudes toward evaluation and feel the whole exercise is time consuming and not cost effective.

A. Causal Factors:

1. Lack of clear cut Agency or NE Bureau policies on evaluation;
2. Lack of clearly defined objectives in terms of evaluation;
3. Inconsistent application of existing policies;
4. The feeling that some country programs or categories of projects are exempt from evaluation;
5. Unfamiliarity with evaluation documentation and its application, as well as guidelines and existing evaluation policy;
6. Inadequate training in evaluation and "acculturation" of AID personnel;
7. Staffing and financial resource constraints that force attention toward implementation activities and away from evaluation which is seen as a "luxury" to be sacrificed to the pressures of time available for implementation;
8. Confusion over what constitutes monitoring and evaluation;
9. Scarcity of quality evaluations that have demonstrated usefulness of evaluation as a management or design tool;
10. Lack of incentive and reward for quality evaluation work.

B. Recommendations:

1. The Near East Bureau should develop a policy statement on evaluation along with specific guidelines for its implementation;
2. The annual Evaluation Planning exercise should develop clearcut objectives for the coming two fiscal years;
3. Training courses (both formal and informal) should address the attitudinal problem toward evaluation and provide the working tools by which project officers are able to maximize the benefits from evaluation. Senior management personnel should be included in these training exercises;
4. Exceptional work on evaluation should be recognized formally by the NE Bureau;
5. Examples of good evaluation work should be distributed widely within the Bureau and overseas.

151

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

XIII. Problem: The need for training in evaluation in terms of the process as well as methodology.

The need for training both in AID/W and the field in evaluation has been cited as a recommendation under most, if not all, of the problems identified. Given different levels of experience and different audiences, it is obvious that several training approaches need to be developed. The following recommendations are focused primarily on training for AID/W and Mission (both USDH and FSN) staff. Recommendations for training for Host Country staff are included under the problem dealing with limited host country participation (see page).

A. Recommendations:

1. NE/DP/PAE should survey AID/W Bureau staff to determine the extent of formal training (PD&E or other) completed. This information would then be provided to the proposed Bureau Quality Working Group for a joint working session with PM/Training to determine what form of inhouse training programs should be developed. A series of inhouse training seminars would then be developed to deal with such subjects as developing a logframe, writing scopes of work, utilizing the PES methodology, etc.
2. From the experience gained in conducting the above inhouse seminars, develop a project related field seminar format for a series of seminars in selected missions.
3. On an informal basis, NE/DP/PAE could develop occasional seminars using experienced Bureau evaluators as trainers to critique methodologies used for a selection of evaluations and pass on skills and personal approaches developed through actual experience.
4. Junior officers should be included on evaluation teams in an apprenticeship role. These officers could take over the burdensome responsibility of handling administrative arrangement, pulling related documents together for use by the team, etc. Middle level officers should be given the opportunity to participate on an Agency or Bureau impact evaluation. This should become part of a standard career development program particularly for those officers in Washington on rotation assignment.
5. Missions should make time available for officers on their staff to participate on evaluation teams evaluating similar projects in nearby countries and invite participation of officers from other country programs on teams doing evaluations locally.
6. Missions should encourage officers from one sector to participate in evaluation of projects in another sector within the Mission.

122

The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process
Problems, Causal Factors and Recommendations

A. Recommendations: Continued

7. The NE Bureau could conduct training workshops in field missions as well as at the Bureau level on the application of PES documentation to different types of projects. As part of the workshop an evaluation of a specific project using the PES could be undertaken and then critiqued on the spot. Senior Mission management should participate in such workshops.
8. Senior Management within the NE Bureau should consider whether or not an investment in language training (French and Arabic) and Area Studies is a valid investment is a worthwhile investment.

157

Attachment I

MEMORANDUM

TO : A-AA/NE, Bradshaw Langmaid
THRU : A-NE/DP, Peter O. Sellar
FROM : NE/DP/PAE, Robert F. Zimmerman
SUBJECT: Improving the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process: Final Report

Attached is the final report on our effort to delineate strengths and weaknesses in the NE Bureau evaluation process and to propose approaches for overcoming the weaknesses. The next step is for the Office Directors, yourself and Mrs. Ford, to review this report. In approximately two weeks, o/a 14 September 1983, Judy and I would like to make a more formal presentation of the report to all of you, accompanied by Holly Wise, Ken Schofield, Pamela Johnson and Bob Caccia representing Mr. Deming. At that time we would hope to exchange views on the report and respond to questions raised by the Bureau's senior staff. We would also discuss the next steps that are relevant to the Deming exercise and possibly a Bureau presentation directly to the Administrator.

- cc: NE/DP, Charles W. Johnson
- NE/PD, Selig A. Taubenblatt
- NE/TECH, Kenneth H. Sherper
- NE/E, Richard Blue
- NE/ME, Gerald Kamens
- NE/EUR, Russell Misheloff
- NE/HEMA, Tom Reese
- PPC/E, Molly Hageboeck
- AA/N, R. T. Rollis, Jr.

154

IMPROVING THE NEAR EAST BUREAU EVALUATION PROCESS

NE/DP/PAE

August, 1983

155

-- NOTE OF SPECIAL APPRECIATION --

NE/DP/PAE would like to express its appreciation for the cooperation and support received throughout the NE Bureau and in the field since the inception of this project. A great many people participated and contributed in many different ways. But special commendation must go to Holly Wise, Ken Schofield and Pamela Johnson who became key members of our quality working group for preparing this report over the final six weeks. We had nearly a dozen meetings and went through many drafts.

Finally, but certainly not least, we would like to commend our secretary, Ms. Ann Reid, for her excellent work in keeping us supplied with one clean working draft after another. Deciphering our inserts and changes and retyping over and over again is tedious and sometimes demoralizing. Ann, however, did not weaken. She deserves our special thanks.

Robert F. Zimmerman

Judith N. Willis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the final product of a five month study of the Near East Bureau's evaluation process. The purpose of this effort was to define the strengths and weaknesses in the Bureau's evaluation process and to develop specific responses for overcoming identified weaknesses. Drawing on perceptions shared by project backstop officers and project managers in AID/W and the field as well as mission and Bureau management, the findings indicate that the NE Bureau's evaluation system is only partially effective in terms of its utility for evaluation and management of the Bureau's ongoing project portfolio, in the design and planning of new project activities, and in laying the framework for the design of overall assistance programs and strategies. It is a system overburdened with monitoring information requirements that should be addressed routinely through a management information system rather than through the evaluation system. This situation derives from a lack of mutual understanding of what the evaluation process is or should be and a lack of a formalized management information system which addresses both mission and Bureau information needs.

Parts I and II describe the methodology used in preparing this study and discuss the current NE Bureau Evaluation Process, its problems and the objectives for an effective evaluation process. These objectives are:

1. Project officers, supported by mission leadership, view and practice evaluation not as a hoop to jump through or a potential fault finding exercise but an opportunity for organized USAID-Host Country

cooperative study, thought, discussion and recording of what a given assistance project or program is accomplishing, how it works or doesn't and why -- all with a view to making necessary changes in course and objectives or for application in future development efforts;

2. Lessons learned are clearly, objectively and comprehensively delineated in evaluation reports and easily retrievable for future consideration and application during project/program planning and design;
3. NE Bureau offices and NE missions regularly seek out this evaluation experience and knowledge and apply it whenever and wherever feasible.

Part III identifies the elements of an effective evaluation and information process. This section attempts to delineate both Bureau and mission evaluation and information needs and discusses evaluation and information products currently being generated. A major problem identified, though not discussed in the report, is a lack of evaluation history in the major sectors in which the Bureau's strategy is focused (population, urbanization and water) and a preponderance of information in technical areas which are given less importance in the Bureau's forward planning (health, education and rural development). Other more generic problems include: the uneven quality of impact evaluations; profusion of monitoring systems and reports; confusion over purposes, types and timing for evaluations and special assessments; uneven AID/W backstopping support; and, inadequate conceptual framework for evaluation efforts.

155

Part IV addresses problem areas which cut across all of the evaluation work being done by the Bureau. These include the varying quality of external evaluation reports (both contractor and AID/W TDY prepared); proforma or non-existent host country participation in evaluation; confusion among personnel both in AID/W and the field about evaluation policies, documentation and techniques; and, a lack of trained and experienced evaluation officers with clearly defined and understood roles. This section also addresses evaluation training requirements and takes a preliminary look at the state of economic analysis in our evaluation work.

Both Sections III and IV include recommendations for Bureau management (and in some cases Agency management) consideration. The major recommendations in priority order are as follows:

- approved by working group - reporting back to NEAC quarterly or as needed.*

1. Establish a permanent NE Bureau Senior Evaluation Committee (NESEC) chaired by the Deputy Assistant Administrator and including *have Bob Jumper chair it. (PRC in effect)* representatives from DP, from each technical support division (TECH and PD) and from each geographic subregion (desks). This committee would meet quarterly to reach decisions regarding: Bureau level evaluation policies, priorities and interests including funding and personnel requirements; inadequate contractor performance; recognition for well done evaluation work; and, requirements for support or coordination with other bureaus. (Page 21)
- Implement with 10/84 workshop (we will have database available)*

2. Establish a new Management/Monitoring/Implementation report possibly drawing on USAID/Cairo's Project Program Implementation Report as a model, and, except for the Alert List, discontinue all other quarterly status reports now being cabled to AID/W. (Page 18)

Turns quarterly report compared target & reality

3. Require that an assessment of economic impact be included in evaluations of projects that were originally justified on an economic basis. This requirement must be set out during the project design stage with appropriate funding resources and data collection needs clearly identified. (Page 35)

OK

EK
for now

4. Require that scopes of work for evaluations that involve AID/W TDY or contractor evaluators be screened by AID/W project specific PRCs and agreement reached with missions. (Page 21 and 30)

(Leave something to mission) Must end attention where Problem up front

5. Establish a budget within the PD&S account for evaluation to be administered by NE/DP/PAE on approval of plans by the NESEC. This could be supplemented by funds from other Bureaus (PPC or S&T) where warranted. (Not addressed directly in the report.)

unable to get work cutting across in order to get budget

6. Reinstate contractor performance reports. Require contractors to be familiar with AID evaluation policies and documentation requirements as well as specific project background data prior to departure for the field. Include in the contract some form of performance guaranty which can be invoked on the scene to enable field missions or AID/W leverage over the quality of the work being submitted. (Page 28)

*?
Missions process
Pre training process*

7. Require that missions define who is primarily responsible for evaluation at the mission level. This issue should first be reviewed by the NESEC. (Page 22 and 28)

This is a problem - Evaluation officers confuse w/ require to review revised handbooks etc.

objection - Evaluation officers don't have clout.

Problem is broadness of terms

one time intro

CK 8. Be very selective in doing impact evaluations. The Bureau should determine which projects will require impact evaluations and should help fund and administer them, perhaps in cooperation with other bureaus. (Page 16)

CK 9. Revise NE Bureau guidance on Project Paper (PP) evaluation plans to include:

(a) A management information system for the project including identification of the means of collecting routine monitoring information addressing progress on achieving outputs, etc.

(b) Relationship to host country's information and evaluation procedures/systems and interest in and capacity for participation in planned evaluations of the project.

*new - to
handbook*

(c) Discussion of utility and need for formal evaluation which, when indicated, would include baseline data collection. *Baseline data - define measurable identified up front -* *in what cases can it be done?* *experimented maybe not done really.*

(d) Budgetary or personnel requirements for proposed MIS/Evaluation Plan. (Page 22)

NOTE: The above is not at variance with Handbook III, but needs to be

reinforced through the NE Bureau Redefinition of Authority Guidelines.

what is status of re-writing handbook - one was issued last year

10. Conduct training workshops in field. These workshops would deal with Bureau evaluation policies and documentation and perhaps actually

perform project specific evaluations as training exercises in selected missions. (Page 34 and 40)

11. Establish an awards system for outstanding evaluation performance.

Issue special guidance for EER reporting on positive or negative contributions to the evaluation process. (Not addressed directly in the report.)

Awards should occur when it happens - contradiction with merit pay.

12. Allocate a small portion of OE money to provide for AID/W and third mission participation in evaluations which have import beyond the confines of a given mission program. OE or PD&S funds also should be available to seed cross fertilization of lessons learned within the Bureau. (Not addressed directly in the report.)

Set up of semi office for cross fertilization.

Part V of this report describes activities NE/DP/PAE is already initiating or intends to begin unless otherwise instructed.

Discussing with Rollis

Put budget in your annual evaluation plan

T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary	
I. Introduction	1
II. <u>The Current Near East Bureau Evaluation Process</u>	4
A. Project Officer/Mission Attitude and Practice	4
B. Near East Bureau Backstop Officers	6
C. The Development Information Unit	6
D. PRC/NEAC Meetings	7
E. The Project Analysis and Evaluation Staff (PAE)	8
F. Conclusion: Problem and Objective	9
III. <u>Toward an Effective Evaluation and Information Process</u>	11
A. Near East Bureau and Mission Evaluation and Information Needs	11
Project Design	11
Project Implementation	12
Country Development Status and AID Strategies	13
AID History	13
B. Evaluation and Information Products	14
1. Impact Evaluation	15
Current Problems	16
Recommendations	16
2. Progress/Implementation Reports and Portfolio Reviews	17
Problems	17
Recommendations	18
3. Periodic, Issue Driven Evaluations of Individual Projects	19
Problems	
- Uneven AID/W Backstopping Support for Mission Level	
Evaluation Needs	20
- Inadequate Conceptual Framework and/or Scopes of Work	
from which Effective Evaluation is Possible	20
- Uneven Follow-up on Evaluation Recommendations	
Recommendations	21
- Recommendations	21
4. <u>Assessments and Special Studies</u>	23
Problems	24
Recommendations	24
5. <u>End of Project Evaluations/Reports</u>	25
Problems	25
Recommendations	26

	<u>Page</u>
IV. <u>Major Cross Cutting Problem Areas</u>	27
A. Lack of Trained and Experienced Mission Evaluation Officers with Clearly defined and Understood Roles Recommendations	27 28
B. Uneven Quality of External Evaluation Reports Recommendations (Contractor prepared reports) Recommendations (AID/W TDY prepared reports)	28 28 30
C. Uneven, Proforma, or non-existent Host Country Participation in Evaluation Efforts Recommendations	31 31
D. Heavy Reliance on External Evaluations Recommendations	32 33
E. The Need for Training in Evaluation in Terms of the Process as well as Methodology Recommendations	33 34
F. Limited Economic Impact Analysis Recommendations	35 35
V. <u>Current and Planned PAE Activities re Selected Problem Areas</u>	37
A. Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned	37
B. Backstopping	38
C. Evaluation Documentation	39
D. Training	40

Improving the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

I. Introduction

This report is the final product of a five month effort to study the Near East Bureau's evaluation process and to develop recommendations for improving its effectiveness. The report briefly discusses the nature of the current process and its weaknesses as revealed by the study. It sets forth the basic elements of a process that we believe will most effectively meet the needs of the Bureau and its field missions. We define evaluation as we intend to apply it. We delineate information needs, the types of evaluation activities and documentation that meets those needs, key problems that affect current activities and documentation relevant to those needs and who should be responsible for providing evaluation and information, how and when. The report also presents in a separate section a brief list of key crosscutting problems that affect not only our current process but that which we intend to develop with the proposed changes in that process. In this section we also provide for senior management review some key recommendations to resolve these problem areas. Finally, there is a section that lists the next steps and actions that the PAE staff can and will undertake over the next several months unless otherwise instructed.

The study process that led to this report took a total of five months, of which approximately two months was full time. It began with a preliminary PAE test of the quality and effectiveness of the current Bureau's system for receiving, reviewing and utilizing evaluation reports, particularly in

165

relation to our PID and PP development exercises. Based on apparent weaknesses, we developed a list of questions for use in nearly 40 one-on-one interviews with Bureau staff at all levels. PAE then completed five group discussion sessions on the findings of these interviews concerning what is useful, useless and possible in evaluation. Next, PAE professional staff, using a somewhat revised questionnaire, visited five field missions (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen), and interviewed another 60-odd USDH and held six small group discussions in Egypt (3), Yemen (1), Jordan (1) and Tunisia (1). Based on the results of these interviews, we then prepared a discussion paper that outlined thirteen problem areas, their causal factors and recommendations for addressing the problems. This discussion paper was distributed throughout the Bureau, to PPC/E and to field missions for additional comment and critique. We then held a series of five one hour meetings to provide opportunity for interested Bureau staff and others to discuss the recommendations. Unfortunately, very few officers participated in these meetings. In any event, we then ended up with a five person task force including Holly Wise, Ken Schofield and Pam Johnson from the Desk and TECH offices and Judy Wills and Bob Zimmerman of PAE. This group met nine more times in order to produce this document.

PAE is especially grateful to these three people and to those twelve or so other Bureau staff who attended the five one hour meetings or provided written comments which we could take into account for our last discussion paper. In addition, USAID/Cairo provided comments by cable followed up by an extensive letter by Emily Baldwin, the Mission's Evaluation Officer. Our missions in Damascus and Lisbon also provided perspectives that have helped our deliberations.

1/10/80

This final report is both an end and a beginning. It is the end of a process of active participation to one degree or another by well over 100 AID personnel across a wide spectrum of responsibilities, experience and perspectives to define a more relevant evaluation process. It is a beginning in that it is now up to the senior management of this Bureau and its missions, with PAE as process manager, to see that what we have proposed here becomes operational reality rather than simply another document that is honored more in word than in deed.

II. The Current NE Bureau Evaluation Process

The Near East Bureau is charged with overseeing the implementation of all evaluation activities initiated and planned at both Bureau and mission levels, improvement in the quality of this evaluation activity, increased utilization of evaluation findings in program and project design and management of the evaluation system for receipt, logging, review and distribution of project evaluation reports.

The NE Bureau's evaluation process is interactive and dependent upon: (a) project officer and mission attitudes toward and performance of high quality project evaluations; (b) the attitude, time and capacity of project backstop officers in Washington; (c) the effectiveness of PRC and NEAC review and discussion of evaluation reports, including follow-up thereon; (d) the attitude, the time, personnel, opportunity and capacity of the PAE staff to provide additional backstopping and guidance at Bureau and occasionally even at mission level; (e) the retrievability and quality of AID experience and knowledge through the DIU; and finally, (f) the political constraints imposed by our greater national interests and objectives in the Middle East.

A. Project Officer/Mission Attitude and Practice

The general attitude toward and practice of evaluation in our field missions is confused. All too often evaluation is not taken seriously and is still seen as simply another "hoop" to jump through. There is often little

168

appreciation of the differences between project monitoring and evaluation. With few exceptions, the evaluations we have reviewed are not high quality. Timing of evaluations is often not related to key decision points in project implementation. Few evaluations even bother to distill lessons learned. The evaluation plans provided in PP's are generally simple statements of intent with a few dates thrown in. There is seldom any discussion of purposes of proposed evaluations, possible methodologies or the nature and scope of host government involvement. Even when bibliographies include reference to an evaluation document, there is seldom any discussion in PID's and PP's of past experience or which lessons are being drawn upon in the design of the project proposed. Finally, the record of missions requesting such references is mixed, a not unexpected situation given the poor quality of evaluations already submitted and/or the difficulty of retrieving documentation from DIU.

The political interests and objectives of the United States in the Near East also appear to affect the attitudes and priorities of mission and Bureau staff at all levels. The majority of those interviewed generally believe that when push comes to shove effective evaluation and utilization of past experience will be overridden or compromised for larger political interests. There does not appear to be a full appreciation of the need for a creative balance between political and developmental objectives. Perceptions that the political aspects of our programs are overriding must be countered. Projects which are indeed based solely on political imperatives should be evaluated in terms of political impacts with lessor weight placed on the developmental aspects of the projects. For the great majority of projects, however, the

169

basic rationale for our involvement is firmly based on developmental objectives. The political environment, while it does affect project development and implementation, is an outside factor and should be addressed in an evaluation context accordingly.

B. Near East Bureau Backstop Officers

Many project backstop officers do not appear to have the time, even given the inclination, to become familiar enough with all the possible sources and available literature to be able to respond quickly to mission inquiries for evaluation materials. Occasionally, they can and do respond to mission requests when the mission provides specific references or if by chance the backstop officer has worked in a given field or office long enough to be familiar with the relevant literature. In addition, the backstop officers can only be as helpful as the quality of the inputs (i.e., evaluations or other AID documentation) permits them to be. Backstop officers are also handicapped by weaknesses in AID's retrieval system. One activity in which backstop officers often are most helpful is in PRC meetings and subsequent actions decided thereby (see below).

C. The Development Information Unit (DIU)

DIU has been most cooperative in trying to provide documentation relevant to project design and has provided an informative orientation on its actual and potential service capability to NE Bureau staff. Nevertheless, the DIU has so

170

far been unable to provide much assistance to PAE or many other backstop officers in their attempts to retrieve AID evaluation reports or essential lessons that can be used either during PRC meetings or sent to missions. DIU's weaknesses, however, do not appear to be of their own making. They are so understaffed, underfunded and clearly innundated with innumerable ad-hoc requests that even basic processing of incoming information for later retrieval is hopelessly backlogged. In addition, the poor quality of evaluation reports received, with few seriously attempting to discuss lessons learned and their possible implications, only reconfirms the adage, "garbage in garbage out". The gap between AID's expectation of and commitment to DIU could not be wider.

D. PRC/NEAC Meetings

The PRC/NEAC meetings are effective and result in helpful support for field missions. They are, probably, the best current source of relevant evaluative experience for immediate application in project planning or for reviewing project evaluations. The current practice of submitting evaluation reports for PRC/NEAC review is effective and should continue. The PRC/NEAC in effect is the Bureau's quality control forum. They also provide opportunity for Bureau staff to apply their collective service experience, often with some debate which makes the exchanges all the more interesting. It is clearly apparent during these meetings that AID personnel do have knowledge, can evaluate objectively and assess lessons learned from their experience.

171

E. The Project Analysis and Evaluation Staff (PAE)

PAE currently performs an essentially overview role in the Bureau evaluation process. PAE manages the system that has been established to review, log and distribute evaluation documentation received from field missions and is expected to help ensure utilization of evaluation materials by missions, though project backstop officers continue to be responsible for the actual collection and provision of evaluation material. PAE also attempts to improve the quality of evaluation planning through its participation in PRC and NEAC review of PIDs and PPs. PAE, as opportunities permit, works to improve the quality of specific mission generated evaluations by reviewing scopes of work and collaborating with project backstop officers.

PAE has two foreign service professional staff assisted by one secretary who is being trained in computer techniques in order to access DIU. PAE tries, within staff and time constraints, to assist project backstop officers in our Bureau wide effort to improve utilization of relevant evaluation materials. The staff also participates in PRC meetings on all reviews of evaluation reports and, if necessary and possible, helps make revisions to improve the quality and future utility of these reports.

To date, however, PAE and its role and competencies still need to be fully established. The staff will always be operating under the very real constraints imposed by our being only three people who will often have to deal with short time frames and competing demands from every Bureau office. Also

1/12

because both the professional staff are foreign service and will be returning to overseas duty, the system developed will, by necessity, continue to be decentralized with project backstop officers holding the principle role in terms of AID/W backstopping of evaluations.

F. Conclusion: Problem and Objective

Drawing on perceptions shared by project officers, project backstop officers and mission and Bureau management alike, our working group concluded that our evaluation system is not very effective in terms of its utility for either management and implementation or design and planning of assistance programs and projects, and further, that this situation derives in large measure from a lack of mutual understanding of what the evaluation system is supposed to do or can be expected to produce.

The purpose of this study, including particularly the extensive exchange of views with staff at both the Bureau and mission levels, has been to improve the quality and effectiveness of the NE Bureau's evaluation process. The primary measure of our success will be the production and utilization of quality, timely evaluation reports and information by or for Near East field missions. We seek, in sum, an evaluation process wherein:

1. Project officers, supported by mission leadership, view and practice evaluation not as a hoop to jump through or a potential fault finding exercise but an opportunity for organized USAID-Host Country cooperative study, thought, discussion and recording of what a given assistance project or program is accomplishing, how it works or doesn't and why -- all with a view to making necessary changes in course and objectives or for application in future development efforts;

2. Lessons learned are clearly, objectively and comprehensively delineated in evaluation reports and easily retrievable for future consideration and application during project/program planning and design;
3. NE Bureau offices and NE missions regularly seek out this evaluation experience and knowledge and apply it whenever and wherever feasible.

III. Toward an Effective Evaluation and Information Process

A. Near East Bureau and Mission Evaluation and Information Needs

The Bureau and the NE missions have a range of needs for information on project design and implementation, the developmental progress of the countries we work with, and what AID has contributed to the development of individual countries. Some of this information is gathered through evaluation, some through other management information systems. This section attempts to provide a perspective on where evaluations should fit within our broader information systems.

The Bureau and missions require information on: (a) project design; (b) project implementation; (c) country development status; development strategies; and (d) AID history. Bureau and mission needs are similar, but not the same, and information is obtained from different sources. Host countries are usually only interested in a fraction of the information we generate.

Project Design

The Bureau, missions, and host countries want access to good project design information and previous project experience to help design new projects. Information on project design is generated in-country by pilot projects, obtained from impact evaluations done in several countries, or obtained from

the experience of contractors and AID staff who have worked with similar projects in the past. Sometimes host country personnel are sent to other countries to observe successful projects. Most project experience is shared through people not documents. Periodic information on the status of the project design is provided in budget documents such as the ABS, periodic project development reports and cables.

Project Implementation

Of primary concern to missions and host countries is the monitoring of project progress and effectiveness, and the identification of implementation bottlenecks or problems. Mission management relies on meetings with host country and project officers, quarterly project reports, portfolio reviews, evaluations, and audits. The Bureau is not as involved in project monitoring, except to the extent that problems are identified which require Bureau awareness or attention. The Bureau used to rely primarily on monitoring and audits to identify major problems but has recently instituted an Alert List system to bring problems to Bureau management attention on a monthly basis.

The Bureau desires information on the contracting process to be able to respond to inquiries from US technical assistance, commodity, and construction services suppliers, and information on project progress and achievements to be able to provide effective backstop support to missions and to defend projects, programs and the Agency as questions surface, especially from the Hill. The first is provided through the NE Bureau's quarterly Project/Program Assistance

176

Implementation report, the remainder through portfolio reviews, Congressional Presentation (CP) submissions, and evaluations.

Country Development Status and AID Strategies

The Bureau and missions must defend country programs on the basis of the impact of AID's projects on the socio-economic development of those countries. In addition to information on progress toward achievement of project purpose and the impact of individual projects, the Bureau and missions need information on sector and macro-economic trends. Missions theoretically use host country socio-economic data series and special studies, surveys and assessments and periodic project evaluations to follow development progress to identify assistance requirements and opportunities and to measure the effectiveness of that assistance. This information usually is presented to the Bureau in summary form in the CDSS.

AID History

Because of the continual transfer of AID personnel, it is important that each mission keep track of what AID has financed in its country. This can be done through final evaluations, project completion reports, or through a comprehensive program review.

177

B. Evaluation and Information Products

As shown in the previous section, on the one hand evaluations are not the only or even principal source of information used to satisfy our program information needs. On the other hand, we tend to use "evaluations" to satisfy a wide range of information needs some of which may not be appropriate for the evaluation function. It is important therefore to be clear at the outset, that evaluation and implementation monitoring are two different processes with different purposes.

Implementation monitoring is the means for assuring that resources for a given project are available and adequate, that implementation actions are occurring on schedule and that planned outputs are being achieved.

Evaluation, on the other hand, seeks to answer three basic questions relevant to all forms of economic assistance:

- Effectiveness - Are the targets for outputs and purposes being achieved?
What are the reasons for success or failure? Are the lessons learned then utilized to improve implementation? Are they being incorporated into new project designs?
- Significance - Will the achievement of the targets contribute to economic development or other higher goals beyond the project purpose? To what extent? What are the activity's advantages

178

over possible alternatives? What about unintended, unplanned effects (positive or negative)?

Efficiency - Do the benefits justify the cost? Are there more efficient means of achieving the same targets?

Evaluation reviews and examines all aspects of the project design including the feasibility of purpose and output targets, the viability of the causative linkages between outputs and project objectives, and the underlying implicit and explicit assumptions.

With these definitions in hand we can now proceed to a discussion of the types of information products which missions and the Bureau might produce to meet specific needs. The following sub-sections describe a variety of evaluation and information products and discusses when each might be appropriate and who should be responsible for producing them.

1. Impact Evaluations

Impact evaluations should provide the Agency with information on: (a) the types and magnitude of benefits to be expected from specific projects and programs; (b) the effectiveness of past projects and programs; and (c) the factors which influence whether or not the potential benefits of a project or program are likely to be achieved. Impact evaluation should be able to isolate causal relationships and often look at goal level impacts. They are likely to be expensive, time consuming and complicated.

Current Problems

One of the major problems with impact evaluations is that the results don't tend to be available when you need them; a related problem that cuts across all types of evaluation reports, is their uneven quality. Impact evaluations may be available for projects which are no longer in vogue, or AID's or the host country's eagerness to begin a new project outweighs our willingness to wait several years for evaluation results of a similar project in another country. Getting the timing right requires people guessing correctly as to future AID program priorities and information needs so that data collection for impact evaluations can be started today. In addition, host countries are often not interested in using "their" AID funds to cover an "evaluation overhead".

----Recommendations

Impact evaluations should be done sparingly to study project approaches with which the Agency has had little experience, often in relation to pilot or demonstration projects. The Bureau should be responsible for identifying which sectors and projects should receive impact evaluations and help fund and administer them, perhaps in cooperation with other Bureaus. The quality problem is addressed in section IV of this report. (Agency/Bureau)

2. Progress/Implementation Reports and Portfolio Reviews

This category covers the variety of monitoring systems used by the Bureau and missions to provide reliable information on what is happening, or not happening, in AID-financed projects. Management information systems should be keeping track of the procurement process, status of outputs, and problems and their resolution. Evaluation should not be necessary to provide this information.

Problems

Monitoring systems vary from country to country and have not provided useful information in all three areas. The quarterly Project/Program Assistance Implementation report has been refocused on procurement to respond to outside suppliers. This change has lessened its value as a management tool. There is no one report which provides periodic information on the status of project implementation against planned targets. As a result, a variety of measures including the evaluation process have been developed or used to fill this gap. For example, in Egypt, the semi-annual portfolio reviews have been developed to provide progress information and to highlight problems. The Alert List has recently been developed to surface problem issues on a monthly basis. Various forms of quarterly implementation status reports are cabled in by missions, but this information is not pulled together in a usable format to enable project backstop officers or senior management in AID/W to have a current up-to-date overview of where the project stands in terms of progress

toward outputs. Some missions continue to perform annual project evaluations for selected projects as a monitoring tool even though this practice is discouraged.

----Recommendations

a. The Bureau should review its non-evaluation project information systems to see if useful and timely information can be provided in a structured format which addresses progress toward achieving output targets and implementation problems. Such a report would be in addition to the Project/Program Assistance Implementation report which would be continued for its special audience, i.e., potential contractors. We would recommend that the title of that report be changed to reflect the nature of the report. The Management Monitoring/Implementation report being proposed here would have as its primary audience both mission and Bureau management. In its preparation, the report would first serve mission needs in supplying timely monitoring/implementation information. For this purpose it is suggested the newly revised USAID/Cairo Project Program Implementation report may serve as a potential model, though the Bureau would want to add some entries which reflect specific Bureau information needs. With the exception of the Alert List, all other quarterly status reports currently being cabled to AID/W would be discontinued as this information would be contained in the above report. In the interest of timeliness, it is recommended the WANG system be used to its fullest capacity with missions supplying updated information in diskette form. Upon receipt, the report would be run and reproduced for full internal NE Bureau distribution. (Bureau)

152

b. Establish a formalized system for requiring project managers to prepare end of tour reports on each of their projects; alternatively, mission could consider scheduling inhouse evaluations of all projects managed by individual project officers prior to onward assignment. Ideally, that officer's replacement would be available to participate. (Bureau/Missions)

3. Periodic, issue driven evaluations of individual projects

There are a number of reasons why the Bureau and missions may want to conduct an evaluation, for example: (a) to review issues which were raised during project design which could only be resolved during implementation, (b) to find solutions to intractable implementation problems, (c) to document success stories or failures, (d) to bring a project to the attention of high-level host country officials, (e) to relate progress toward outputs to purpose and reassess periodically the continued relevance of project purpose, assumptions and the whys of implementation difficulties.

Problems

The overall problem here is that the current evaluation system has not facilitated obtaining formal Bureau/USAID agreement on what types of evaluations are needed, the purpose for carrying out such evaluations, the detailed scopes of the evaluations, and their timing. There are often communications problems as to what constitutes evaluation. As a result, the Bureau may not be satisfied with evaluations received from the field and find

that, from its perspective, they appear to be focussed on the wrong issues and not useful for decision making. In addition, the following specific problems complicate this situation and hinder implementation of an evaluation process that provides the information on the issues listed above.

Uneven AID/W backstopping support for mission-level evaluation needs

AID/W support for mission-level evaluation varies according to the project backstop officer's other work priorities, availability of related evaluation materials, confusion over and inadequate understanding of roles, and the nature of senior level management support for evaluation.

Inadequate conceptual framework and/or scopes of work from which effective evaluation is possible

Evaluations often end up being ad hoc and/or poorly planned resulting in reports which are not satisfactory for either the missions or AID/W. It is unrealistic to expect evaluators (either AID/W TDY or contractor) to generate the quality reporting we are seeking unless the terms of reference for their work are carefully laid out prior to the evaluation. Experience has shown that unless evaluation is planned for during the design stage, the framework and the data collection for effective evaluation will not be developed.

Finally, projects evolve. Logframes developed during the design stage in many cases do not reflect the reality of the project being implemented.

134

Uneven follow-up on evaluation recommendations

Evaluation recommendations are not always implemented. Subsequent evaluations many times reveal the same problems and contain identical recommendations which may or may not be implemented.

----Recommendations

a. Establish a permanent NE Bureau Senior Evaluation Committee (NESEC) chaired by the Deputy Assistant Administrator with organizational assistance from NE/DP/PAE, including representatives from NE/DP, the technical support divisions (TECH and PD) and from each geographic subregions (desks). (Bureau)

This group would meet at least once every quarter to (1) review the general status of implementation of the Bureau Evaluation Plan; (2) establish selected project evaluation priorities; (3) consider instances of inadequate contractor performance; (4) delineate Bureau level evaluation interests, including funding and personnel requirements, (5) review and act as necessary on special studies or assessments proposed by either an individual mission or an office within the NE Bureau; (6) consider requirements for support from PPC/E and other central offices; and (7) determine appropriate Bureau responses such as formal recognition, for exceptional work in evaluation.

b. The PRC should have a role in drafting scopes of work, particularly to ensure that all evaluations utilizing AID/W TDY personnel or contractors

utilize scopes of work agreed to by both AID/W and field missions. The PRC is the appropriate mechanism for reviewing and finally reaching agreement with missions on scopes of work initiated in the field or AID/W. (Bureau)

c. Consistently apply the Redefinition of Authority guidelines which require that PIDs include a completed logframe and a preliminary evaluation plan. Failure to include these in the PID should be sufficient reason to defer decision on the PID by AID/W. (Bureau)

d. Ensure that provisions (including funding if necessary) for information needs are part of every project design. There must, for example, be a close relationship between the evaluation plan and proposed data collection efforts. The expenditure for data collection and evaluation should reflect the type of project (is it a pilot or experimental activity?) and the magnitude of the overall investment. (Mission)

e. Require as a matter of policy, that updated logframes be included as necessary as an annex to the PES. Note: Radical change may require prior AID/W concurrence and possible PP amendment in accordance with the Redefinition of Authority guidelines. (Bureau)

f. Require that missions clearly define who is primarily responsible for evaluation at the mission level, and then clarify the role of the Mission Evaluation Officer and establish a formalized system for mission follow-up on evaluation recommendations. AID/W should be kept informed, perhaps through

the Mission Quarterly Management/Implementation reports recommended in Section C.2. above. (Bureau)

g. When missions do not agree with particular evaluation recommendations, they should include their views in the final evaluation report as an attachment. (Mission)

h. Address actions on recommendations in previous evaluations in a separate section, so entitled, in each subsequent evaluation. (Mission)

i. When evaluation recommendations are beyond the capacity of the host country to implement, then missions should consider the desirability of minor revisions in the project to provide technical or other assistance as necessary. (Mission)

needs to be recorded.

4. Assessments and Special Studies

Assessments and special studies are used to examine cross cutting issues within one sector or across several sectors. They may be country specific or involve similar experience or issues in several countries. They may be evaluations when prior AID experience is a major focus on the study or their purpose may be to develop new information in an area where AID's experience is limited. Rarely are they project specific though they may involve a review of clusters of projects (or sub-projects under a very large umbrella project) within a given sector. The impetus for doing assessments or special studies

may come from the field, the NE Bureau or from PPC/E as part of their overall impact evaluation series. These studies are usually issues driven and may be focused, on AID or host country policies.

Problems

The current evaluation system has not facilitated obtaining formal Bureau/USAID agreement on whether a special evaluation or assessment is needed, the purposes for carrying out such studies, the detailed scopes of the evaluations or studies, and their timing. For Bureau sponsored studies or evaluations as well as backstopping for field initiated activities, there is no one office within the NE Bureau filling a coordinating role. As a result Bureau support is fragmented among several offices and information is not always shared.

Recommendations

*need organized way to feasibility studies
what studies can you do? ~~backstopping~~
let PRC review those
feasible to determine resp.*

a. All proposed assessments and/or special studies, including their scopes of work, whether initiated by the field or the Bureau should be submitted to the NE Bureau Senior Evaluation Committee (NESEC) for review and concurrence (see page 22). (Bureau)

b. NE/DP/PAE should be a member of all Bureau special interest working groups and PRC's called to review proposed assessments and special studies whether of an evaluative nature or not. PAE's primary role will be to act as

representative from the NESEC though PAE may take a more active role when dealing with studies or assessments which fall within the broad definition of evaluation. As a standing member of all such committees, PAE can facilitate exchange of information between all concerned offices. (Bureau)

5. End of Project Evaluations/Reports

There are two types of reports that may be carried out at the end of a project. (a) final evaluations and (b) project completion reports. Final evaluations tend to look at a project's impact on beneficiaries, possible economic return and lessons learned while completion reports emphasize inputs, outputs and end of project status indicators, though lessons learned should be highlighted. Another key difference is that while final evaluations usually involve several evaluators at some cost to the mission or project, a Project Completion Report is usually prepared by the USAID Project Officer on site.

Problem

The Bureau does not have a policy which requires either report to be produced at the end of a project even though the Handbook III guidelines indicate that at a minimum a Project Completion Report is required to close out a project. There is the possibility of losing part of AID's history in a country if neither is produced.

----Recommendation

In line with Handbook III, that project completion reports be required of all AID-financed projects, including PVO activities. That this requirement be waived if it is decided that a final evaluation is appropriate. The automatic inclusion of final evaluations in PIDs and PPs should be discontinued.

(Bureau)

IV. Major Cross Cutting Problem Areas

This section of the report addresses several cross cutting problem areas that affect to one degree or another all evaluation activities. The problems are fairly well known and came up repeatedly throughout our interviews and general discussions. We are simply presenting each problem in order of priority with a brief expansion on its nature and then recommending action(s) to respond to the problem. The recommendations presented here are those for which formal agreement at the top management level is required.

A. Lack of trained and experienced mission evaluation officers with clearly defined and understood roles

In accordance with Agency policy, the Mission Director or Deputy Mission Director is "de jure" the Mission Evaluation Officer. The officer who usually holds the title, however, serves more in the role as an Evaluation Process Manager. The degree to which this officer also serves as an "evaluator" varies from mission to mission. There is only one mission within the NE Bureau which has a full time evaluation officer, i.e., staff level. Mission staff level evaluation officers usually have other work assignments which have priority over evaluation. In several cases, the Mission Evaluation Officer is an Assistant Program Officer and consequently may have limited influence with project development staff and senior management. In almost all cases, the role of the mission staff evaluation officer is defined by the officer occupying the position. This in turn is influenced by that officer's prior

experience and personal attitude toward evaluation.

----Recommendations

As a first order of business, the Near East Senior Evaluation Committee should (a) resolve the confusion over where the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the mission evaluation system lies, including the nature and scope of evaluation activities to be performed at the mission level, (b) develop a clearly defined role for Mission Evaluation Officers, including the degree of autonomy therefor, and (c) include as criteria for minimum qualifications for Mission Evaluation Officers some prior experience in project design, managing project implementation, budget and programming experience, and stated interest. (Bureau)

B. Uneven quality of external evaluation reports

External evaluation teams, whether contractor, AID/W TDY or a combination of both, often fail to produce timely, balanced, relevant reports with feasible recommendations usable by decision makers either in the field (both mission and host country) or AID/W.

----Recommendations (Contractor prepared reports)

1. Select IQC contractors on the basis of proven capability. To assess this capability, AID needs to reinstate the contractor performance report for

contractors performing evaluations to be filled out by the requesting office (either mission or AID/W) at the conclusion of each evaluation. IQCs (or individuals within IQCs) who fail to provide quality work should be dropped from AID consideration for future evaluation work. This same criteria would be applied to individuals contracted for on the basis of PSCs. Copies of contractor performance reports would be maintained by NE/DP/PAE for Bureau reference. (Agency/Bureau)

2. Include in contractor scopes of work provisions requiring a review of AID evaluation policies and documentation requirements, a review of project related DIU documentation and an indepth review of project files prior to departure to the field to do the evaluation. (Bureau)

3. Require that every contractor prepared report include executive summaries which follow the PES format and which highlight key findings and recommendations. These executive summaries should not be confused with one page abstracts, which should also be required, but are used for entry into the DIU system. (Bureau)

*Quality } Talbotton & Jan about this
of quantity }*

Performance Guaranties

4. Include in the contract for consultants doing AID evaluations some form of performance guaranty which can be invoked on the scene either by a USAID Mission or by AID/W. Payment should not be based only upon the level of effort of the individual consultants, but rather on the quality of the product, the evaluation report, for which these services were contracted. Missions in particular need to have some leverage with the contractor while

the contractor is still in the field should the initial draft prove to be unacceptable. This leverage could take the form of the mission advising the contractor that they are prepared to recommend withholding payment until the report is revised to meet their quality expectations. Approval for time extensions and/or additional funding to make such revisions should be at the discretion of either the mission for mission funded evaluations or AID/W. These provisions should be clearly stated in the contract, in either the scope of work or the standard contract language. Further discussion on this with appropriate Agency offices (SER/CM) is required. (Agency/Bureau)

----Recommendations: (AID/W TDY Prepared Reports)

1. Require that AID/W via the PRC and the mission reach a mutual agreement upon the Scope of Work prior to the departure of AID/W TDY evaluators. This Scope of Work should have been shared with the host country and ideally reflect their direct input. (Bureau)
2. As a standard operating procedure, require that AID/W TDY evaluators complete a draft of the evaluation report for mission review and acceptance prior to return to AID/W. If such a draft has not been completed or the mission is not satisfied with the quality or utility of the report, by the time of the AID/W TDY's scheduled departure, then the mission should consider extension of the TDY until a usable draft is completed. (Bureau/Mission)

However, the integrity of the evaluation report should not be compromised. If the mission or the host country hold dissenting views about part of the evaluation, then these views should be included as separate attachments to the final version of the evaluation.

C. Uneven, proforma, or non-existent host country participation in evaluation efforts

This problem varies from country to country. For all countries in the region, however, there is the perception that the host country is not attuned to evaluation, that evaluation equates to audit and inspection, and that evaluation as a learning process is an American management tool which will take time to transfer to the local environment. Missions generally are not consistently seeking to engage host country personnel or agencies in dialogue and action regarding joint evaluations.

----Recommendations

1. Include in the NE Bureau guidance for developing PID or PP evaluation plans a requirement that the design officer discuss the degree of host country interest in and capacity for participation in the planned evaluations of the project. Where interest and capacity are shown to be weak, include in the evaluation plan what the mission proposes to do to address these weaknesses whether through the project itself or through some other approach. (Bureau)

2. As matter of policy, require that missions provide the full text of the project evaluation plan to the host country either as an annex to the ProAg or in a PIL. (Bureau)

3. Require missions to develop and report on efforts to establish regular liaison with host country offices or agencies concerned with evaluation. (Bureau)

~~4. Designate the Mission Evaluation Officer's position as a language position. (Bureau)~~

5. When appropriate provide technical assistance or training to counterpart evaluation agencies or organizations. *In past - Catalog published*

cross cutting across agencies

Heavy reliance on external evaluations

*Host countries - no evaluation
rather than evaluation*

ford found this

(note: there are some projects re-evaluating in their government)

The NE missions, with some exceptions, tend to rely very heavily on external evaluators (contractors). Joint mission/host country evaluations tend to be the exception and, as a consequence, the positive learning aspects of evaluation by participation in the process are lost to mission staff, AID/W TDY staff and the host country.

1966

Ching

It's always easier to get outside money.

Recommendations

1. As a policy, reduce Bureau reliance on external contractors for evaluation. Make available operating expense funds earmarked for evaluation to cover travel expenses for AID direct hire employees to engage in evaluation. (Bureau)
2. Encourage missions to do most routine evaluations using inhouse and host country staff. (Bureau)
3. During the design process, ensure that the evaluation plan, data collection requirements and resources for evaluation are tightly interwoven into the project implementation plan. (Mission)
4. Identify and utilize host country social scientists and economists as members of both inhouse and external evaluation teams. (Mission)

E. The need for training in evaluation in terms of the process as well as methodology

There is considerable confusion among AID personnel both in AID/W and the field about evaluation policies, documentation and techniques. This confusion clearly contributes to most, if not all, of the problems identified in this report. Given different levels of experience and different audiences, it is obvious that several training approaches need to be developed. The following

147

recommendations are focused primarily on training for AID/W and mission staff (both USDH and FSN).

----Recommendations

1. Conduct training workshops in missions as well as at the Bureau level on the application of the PES methodology to different types of projects. As part of the workshop, an evaluation of a specific project using the PES could be undertaken and then critiqued on the spot. Senior mission management should participate in such workshops. (Bureau) (See Section V, Page 40 for further information)
2. Provide opportunities for middle level officers to participate on an Agency or Bureau impact evaluation team. This should become part of a standard career development program particularly for those officers in Washington on rotation assignment. (Bureau)
3. Recommend that missions make time available for officers on their staffs to participate on evaluation teams evaluating similar projects in nearby countries and invite participation of officers from other country programs on teams doing evaluation locally. (Bureau/Missions)
4. Recommend that missions encourage officers from one sector to participate in evaluation of projects in another sector within the mission.
(Bureau/Missions)

198

F. Limited Economic Impact Analysis

As part of the project design process, all project papers require some form of economic analysis. This requirement is not generally carried over to the evaluation plan even for those projects in which the project paper presents a quantified economic analysis. Rarely is the data collected to enable evaluators to gauge impact in economic terms. The exception tends to be in projects which require micro data to enable project implementors to make periodic adjustments in project design during implementation. Data for determining impact is usually tenuous to nonexistent at the design stage and a system for collecting baseline information (including total costs) is usually excluded from the design.

----Recommendations

1. Require that whenever projects justified on an economic basis are to be evaluated they also include in the evaluation an assessment of economic impact. As part of this effort, during the design stage, provide the resources necessary to ensure data will be collected over time for this purpose. (Bureau)
2. Require discussion of host country capacity for analyzing and collecting data in both the evaluation plan and the economic analysis of the project paper. When the host country capacity is considered weak and the type of project or magnitude of the investment warrants it, training elements to

1/19

improve this capacity should be integrated into the project. (Bureau)

Current and Planned PAE Activities re Selected Problem Areas

During the course of this study we have identified many activities that PAE, in cooperation with other Bureau offices and field missions, already carries on to some degree or can begin initiating immediately. These efforts relate primarily to three problem areas: utilization of prior experience in either project design or implementation, AID/W backstopping and some aspects of training. Unless otherwise directed PAE will continue to expand and intensify these activities.

A. Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned

AID, in addition to its difficult to retrieve store of knowledge in the printed word, still possesses a wealth of experience in its employees. This experience makes itself felt during PRC and other Bureau level meetings. We believe this experience can also be applied even more directly during the project design stage if individual project backstop officers have reliable information about other AID personnel who have had experience relevant to the project at hand.

PAE Action:

1. PAE intends, in cooperation with the Office of Personnel and the Sector Councils, to try to develop and test the utility of lists of AID personnel on

201

rotation assignment in AID/W with specific project experience and include their current telephone numbers and addresses. This information will be provided to all Bureau backstop officers to facilitate direct contact. PAE, in cooperation with PPC/E, will also attempt to develop clearer guidelines (for review and approval by the NESEC) delineating the types of lessons learned that we are most interested in searching for as we evaluate projects or programs. We will include discussion of the particular types of evaluations (i.e., final and impact vs. mid project and/or interim and clustered vs. single) which tend to be more conducive to generating lessons learned information.

2. NE/DP/PAE will attempt to work with DIU in reviewing abstracts received to date in terms of quality and developing guidelines to assist missions to improve them.

B. Backstopping

PAE Action:

1. PAE has already begun distributing examples of good evaluation work and recommending for DAA approval commendatory memoranda for the employees or missions who prepared the reports. We will continue this practice.

2. PAE will also develop guidelines that delineate evaluation backstopping responsibilities of AID/W officers and offices and a set of standards by which

202

missions, the PRC and NEAC will judge the quality and usefulness of evaluation work. The NESEC will review and approve these guidelines.

3. PAE will develop guidelines for the evaluation of capital projects and guidelines which delineate what the Bureau expects missions to address within a PID/PP Evaluation Plan for capital projects.

4. PAE will develop guidelines in cooperation with PPC/E on how to prepare for an evaluation prior to departure for all contractor and AID/W TDY evaluators to follow.

5. During its participation on PRC evaluation review meetings, PAE will increasingly focus on issues related to the quality and appropriateness of evaluation methodology and presentation.

C. Evaluation Documentation:

Evaluation reports do not follow a consistent outline and are often poorly organized. The Agency's PES format provides a useful outline for categorizing and presenting findings, but many project officers, evaluators (both AID and Contractor) are unfamiliar with or are uncomfortable with the PES guidelines.

203

----Recommendations

Enhance the status of the PES as a valid framework for evaluations. NE/DP/PAE should expand guidelines for using the PES including a more readable format and issue these to field missions. In addition, the PES should be the standard format for AID/W TDY prepared evaluation reports.

D. Training

During the course of our study it became increasingly apparent that a great many AID personnel are unaware of existing AID policies regarding evaluation and the documentation relevant thereto. Few officers could remember ever having had evaluation training or, if they did have training, they found it ineffective.

PAE Action

1. PAE will begin working with PM/Training to determine what form of inhouse training programs should be developed to deal with such subjects as developing a logframe, writing scopes of work, utilizing the PES methodology, etc.
2. From the experience gained in conducting inhouse training exercises, we will develop a project related field seminar format for a series of seminars in selected missions. These seminars would actually do an evaluation of a mission project and then critique it as part of the training course.

204

3. Finally, we intend to encourage missions to undertake evaluation workshops with host country personnel (perhaps host country personnel could be identified to participate in proposed evaluation workshops for AID personnel) and to provide evaluation training for USAID FSNs.

OCT 1X to discuss
input input system
where Evaluation fits in
what its role is
Standards for post folio review
Accept lists etc.

Check of food can she input time on 12/14/83
some intro by JAG }
Other Bureau Reps }
Kinnaman
Contracting

Copy of K & Boh —
Copy of Scales Report —
Yeager tab work —
Contracting not attending —

ATTACHMENT J

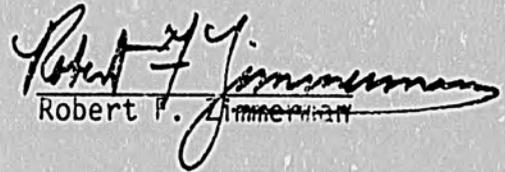
IMPROVING THE NEAR EAST BUREAU EVALUATION PROCESS

NE/DP/PAE
August, 1983

-- NOTE OF SPECIAL APPRECIATION --

NE/DP/PAE would like to express its appreciation for the cooperation and support received throughout the NE Bureau and in the field since the inception of this project. A great many people participated and contributed in many different ways. But special commendation must go to Holly Niss, Ron Sanderson and Pamela Johnson who became key members of our quality working group for preparing this report over the final six weeks. We had nearly a dozen meetings and went through many drafts.

Finally, but certainly not least, we would like to commend our secretary, Ms. Ann Reid, for her excellent work in keeping us supplied with one clean working draft after another. Deciphering our inserts and changes and retyping over and over again is tedious and sometimes demoralizing. Ann, however, did not weaken. She deserves our special thanks.


Robert F. Zimmerman


Judith N. Wills

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the final product of a five month study of the Near East Bureau's evaluation process. The purpose of this effort was to define strengths and weaknesses in the Bureau's evaluation process and to provide specific responses for overcoming identified weaknesses. The perceptions shared by project backstop officers and project managers in the field as well as mission and Bureau management are found in the data that the NE Bureau's evaluation system is only partially effective in terms of its utility for evaluation and management of the Bureau's ongoing project portfolio, in the design and planning of new project activities, and in laying the framework for the design of overall assistance programs and strategies. It is a system overburdened with monitoring information requirements that should be addressed routinely through a management information system rather than through the evaluation system. This situation derives from a lack of mutual understanding of what the evaluation process is or should be and a lack of a formalized management information system which addresses both mission and Bureau information needs.

Parts I and II describe the methodology used in preparing this study and discuss the current NE Bureau Evaluation Process, its problems and the objectives for an effective evaluation process. These objectives are:

1. Project officers, supported by mission leadership, view and practice evaluation not as a hoop to jump through or a potential fault finding exercise but an opportunity for organized USAID-Host Country cooperative study, thought, discussion and recording of what a given assistance project or program is accomplishing, how it works or doesn't and why -- all with a view to making necessary changes in course and objectives or for application in future development efforts;
2. Lessons learned are clearly, objectively and comprehensively delineated in evaluation reports and easily retrievable for future consideration and application during project/program planning and design;
3. NE Bureau offices and NE missions regularly seek out this evaluation experience and knowledge and apply it whenever and wherever feasible.

Part III identifies the elements of an effective evaluation and information process. This section attempts to delineate both Bureau and mission evaluation and information needs and discusses evaluation and information products currently being generated. A major problem identified, though not discussed in the report, is a lack of evaluation history in the major sectors in which the Bureau's strategy is focused (population, urbanization and water) and a preponderance of information in technical areas which are given less importance in the Bureau's forward planning (health, education and rural development). Other more generic problems include: the uneven quality of

Best Available Document

208

impact evaluations; profusion of monitoring systems and reports; confusion over purposes, types and timing for evaluations and special assessments; uneven AID/W backstopping support; and, inadequate conceptual framework for evaluation efforts.

Part IV addresses problem areas which cut across all of the areas mentioned above and being done by the Bureau. These include the varying quality of reports, evaluation reports (both contractor and AID/W prepared), professional non-existent host country participation in evaluations; confusion among personnel both in AID/W and the field about evaluation policies, coordination and techniques; and, a lack of trained and experienced evaluation officers with clearly defined and understood roles. This section also addresses evaluation training requirements and takes a preliminary look at the state of economic analysis in our evaluation work.

Both Sections III and IV include recommendations for Bureau management (and in some cases Agency management) consideration. The major recommendations in priority order are as follows:

1. Establish a permanent NE Bureau Senior Evaluation Committee (NESEC) chaired by the Deputy Assistant Administrator and including representatives from DP, from each technical support division (TECH and PD) and from each geographic subregion (desks). This committee would meet quarterly to reach decisions regarding: Bureau level evaluation policies, priorities and interests including funding and personnel requirements; inadequate contractor performance; recognition for well done evaluation work; and, requirements for support or coordination with other bureaus. (Page 12)

NEAC Decision:

NEAC decided another senior level committee was unnecessary. A Project Evaluation Review Committee (PERC) chaired by NE/DP/PAE including the same office representation as above would be sufficient. Controversial issues would be subject to NEAC review.

2. Establish a new Management/Monitoring/Implementation report possibly drawing on USAID/Tunisia's Project Program Implementation Report as a model, and, except for the Alert List, discontinue all other quarterly status reports now being cabled to AID/W. (Pages 10 - 11)

NEAC Decision:

Planned October 14, 1983 workshop on the NE Bureau's MIS process is first step in implementing this recommendation.

3. Require that an assessment of economic impact be included in evaluations of projects that were originally justified on an economic basis. This requirement must be set out during the project design stage with appropriate funding resources and data collection needs clearly identified. (Pages 21-22)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

209

4. Require that scopes of work for evaluations that involve AID/W TDY or contractor evaluators be screened by AID/W project specific PRCs and agreement reached with missions. (Pages 21 and 30)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

5. Establish a budget within the PD&S account for evaluation to be administered by NE/DP/PAE on approval of plans by the NESEC. This could be supplemented by funds from other Bureaus (PPC or S&T) where warranted. (Not addressed directly in the report.)

NEAC Decision:

Unnecessary. PAE to submit PD&S request as part of annual Evaluation Planning exercise.

6. Reinstate contractor performance reports. Require contractors to be familiar with AID evaluation policies and documentation requirements as well as specific project background data prior to departure for the field. Include in the contract some form of performance guaranty which can be invoked on the scene to enable field missions or AID/W leverage over the quality of the evaluation work being submitted. (Page 17)

NEAC Decision:

Not approved pending further exploration of legal constraints and possible alternative approaches (See page 17)

7. Require that missions define who is primarily responsible for evaluation at the mission level. This issue should first be reviewed by the NESEC. (Pages 13 - 16)

NEAC Decision:

Approved. Guidelines to be developed as part of revision of the Evaluation Chapter in the NE Bureau's Project Officer's Handbook.

8. Be very selective in doing impact evaluations. The Bureau should determine which projects will require impact evaluations and should help fund and administer them, perhaps in cooperation with other bureaus. (Page 9)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

9. Revise NE Bureau guidance on Project Paper (PP) evaluation plans to include:
- (a) Management information system for the project including identification of the means of collecting country mission information addressing progress on achieving the project goals.
 - (b) Relationship of host country's information and evaluation procedures/systems and interest in and capacity for participation in planned evaluations of the project.
 - (c) Discussion of utility and need for formal evaluation which, when indicated, would include information gathering as necessary.
 - (d) Budgetary or personnel requirements for proposed MIS/Evaluation Plan. (Page 13 - 24)

NOTE: The above is not at variance with Handbook III, but needs to be reinforced through the NE Bureau Redlegation of Authority Guidelines.

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

10. Conduct training workshops in field. These workshops would deal with Bureau evaluation policies and documentation and perhaps actually perform project specific evaluations as training exercises in selected missions. (Pages 34 and 40)

NEAC Decision:

Approved. NEAC suggested incorporation into already scheduled project implementation workshops.

11. Establish an awards system for outstanding evaluation performance. Issue special guidance for EER reporting on positive or negative contributions to the evaluation process. (Not addressed directly in the report.)

NEAC Decision:

Special NE Bureau award system not approved. Deemed more appropriate for Agency consideration.

12. Allocate a small portion of OE money to provide for AID/W and third mission participation in evaluations which have import beyond the confines of a given mission program. OE or PD&S funds also should be available to seed cross fertilization of lessons learned within the Bureau. (Not addressed directly in the report.)

NEAC Decision:

Not approved. Viewed as unnecessary.

Part V of this report describes activities NE/DP/PAE is already initiating or intends to begin unless otherwise instructed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary		---
I.	Introduction	---
II.	<u>The Current Near East Bureau Evaluation Process</u>	---
	A. Project Officer/Mission Attitude and Practice	---
	B. Near East Bureau Backstop Officers	---
	C. The Development Information Unit	---
	D. PRC/NEAC Meetings	---
	E. The Project Analysis and Evaluation Staff (PAE)	5
	F. Conclusion: Problem and Objective	5
III.	<u>Toward an Effective Evaluation and Information Process</u>	7
	A. Near East Bureau and Mission Evaluation and Information Needs	7
	Project Design	7
	Project Implementation	7
	Country Development Status and AID Strategies	8
	AID History	8
	B. Evaluation and Information Products	8
	1. Impact Evaluation	9
	Current Problems	9
	Recommendations	9
	2. Progress/Implementation Reports and Portfolio Reviews	10
	Problems	10
	Recommendations	10
	3. Periodic, Issue Driven Evaluations of Individual Projects	11
	- Problems	11
	- Uneven AID/W Backstopping Support for Mission Level Evaluation Needs	11
	- Inadequate Conceptual Framework and/or Scopes of Work from which Effective Evaluation is Possible	11
	- Uneven Follow-up on Evaluation Recommendations	12
	- Recommendations	12
	4. <u>Assessments and Special Studies</u>	14
	Problems	14
	Recommendations	14
	5. <u>End of Project Evaluations/Reports</u>	15
	Problems	15
	Recommendations	15

	<u>Page</u>
IV. <u>Major Cross Cutting Problem Areas</u>	
A. Lack of Trained and Experienced Mission Evaluation Officers with Clearly defined and Understood Roles Recommendations	16 16
B. Uneven Quality of External Evaluation Reports Recommendations (Contractor prepared reports) Recommendations (AID/W TDY prepared reports)	16 17 18
C. Uneven, Proforma, or non-existent Host Country Participation in Evaluation Efforts Recommendations	18 19
D. Heavy Reliance on External Evaluations Recommendations	19 20
E. The Need for Training in Evaluation in Terms of the Process as well as Methodology Recommendations	20 20
F. Limited Economic Impact Analysis Recommendations	21 22
V. <u>Current and Planned PAE Activities re Selected Problem Areas</u>	23
A. Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned	23
B. Backstopping	23
C. Evaluation Documentation	24
D. Training	24

Improving the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

I. Introduction

This report is the final product of a five month effort to study the Near East Bureau's evaluation process and to develop recommendations for improving its effectiveness. The report briefly discusses the nature of the current process and its weaknesses as revealed by the study. It sets forth the basic elements of a process that we believe will most effectively meet the needs of the Bureau and its field missions. We define evaluation as we intend to apply it. We delineate information needs, the types of evaluation activities and

Improving the Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

I. Introduction

This report is the final product of a five month effort to study the Near East Bureau's evaluation process and to develop recommendations for improving its effectiveness. The report briefly discusses the nature of the current process and its weaknesses as revealed by the study. It sets out the basic elements of a process that we believe will most effectively meet the needs of the Bureau and its field missions. We define evaluation as the means to apply it. We delineate information needs, the types of evaluation activities and documentation that meets those needs, key problems that affect current activities and documentation relevant to those needs and who should be responsible for providing evaluation and information now and when. The report also presents in a separate section a brief list of key crosscutting problems that affect not only our current process but that which we intend to develop with the proposed changes in that process. In this section we also provide for senior management review some key recommendations to resolve these problem areas. Finally, there is a section that lists the next steps and actions that the PAE staff can and will undertake over the next several months unless otherwise instructed.

The study process that led to this report took a total of five months, of which approximately two months was full time. It began with a preliminary PAE test of the quality and effectiveness of the current Bureau's system for receiving, reviewing and utilizing evaluation reports, particularly in relation to our PID and PP development exercises. Based on apparent weaknesses, we developed a list of questions for use in nearly 40 one-on-one interviews with Bureau staff at all levels. PAE then completed five group discussion sessions on the findings of these interviews concerning what is useful, useless and possible in evaluation. Next, PAE professional staff, using a somewhat revised questionnaire, visited five field missions (Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen), and interviewed another 60-odd USDH and held six small group discussions in Egypt (3), Yemen (1), Jordan (1) and Tunisia (1). Based on the results of these interviews, we then prepared a discussion paper that outlined thirteen problem areas, their causal factors and recommendations for addressing the problems. This discussion paper was distributed throughout the Bureau, to PPC/E and to field missions for additional comment and critique. We then held a series of five one hour meetings to provide opportunity for interested Bureau staff and others to discuss the recommendations. Unfortunately, very few officers participated in these meetings. In any event, we then ended up with a five person task force including Holly Wise, Ken Schofield and Pam Johnson from the Desk and TECH offices and Judy Wills and Bob Zimmerman of PAE. This group met nine more times in order to produce this document.

PAE is especially grateful to these three people and to those twelve or so other Bureau staff who attended the five one hour meetings or provided written comments which we could take into account for our last discussion paper. In addition, USAID/Cairo provided comments by cable followed up by an extensive

Most Available Document

214

letter by Emily Baldwin, the Mission's Evaluation Officer. Our missions in Damascus and Lisbon also provided perspectives that have helped our deliberations.

This final report is both an end and a beginning. It is the end of a process of active participation to one degree or another by well over 100 AID personnel across a wide spectrum of responsibilities, experience and perspectives to define a more relevant evaluation process. It is a beginning in that it is now up to the senior management of this Bureau and its missions, with PAE as process manager, to see that what we have proposed here becomes operational reality rather than simply another document that is honored more in word than in deed.

II. The Current NE Bureau Evaluation Process

The Near East Bureau is charged with overseeing the implementation of all evaluation activities initiated and planned at both Bureau and Mission levels, improvement in the quality of this evaluation activity, increased utilization of evaluation findings in program and project design and management of the evaluation system for receipts, logging, review and distribution of project evaluation reports.

The NE Bureau's evaluation process is interactive and dependent upon: (a) project officer and mission attitudes toward and performance of high quality project evaluations; (b) the attitude, time and capacity of project backstop officers in Washington; (c) the effectiveness of PRO and NEAC review and discussion of evaluation reports, including follow-up thereon; (d) the attitude, the time, personnel, opportunity and capacity of the PAE staff to provide additional backstopping and guidance at Bureau and occasionally even at mission level; (e) the retrievability and quality of AID experience and knowledge through the DIU; and finally, (f) the political constraints imposed by our greater national interests and objectives in the Middle East.

A. Project Officer/Mission Attitude and Practice

The general attitude toward and practice of evaluation in our field missions is confused. All too often evaluation is not taken seriously and is still seen as simply another "hoop" to jump through. There is often little appreciation of the differences between project monitoring and evaluation. With few exceptions, the evaluations we have reviewed are not high quality. Timing of evaluations is often not related to key decision points in project implementation. Few evaluations even bother to distill lessons learned. The evaluation plans provided in PP's are generally simple statements of intent with a few dates thrown in. There is seldom any discussion of purposes of proposed evaluations, possible methodologies or the nature and scope of host government involvement. Even when bibliographies include reference to an evaluation document, there is seldom any discussion in PID's and PP's of past experience or which lessons are being drawn upon in the design of the project proposed. Finally, the record of missions requesting such references is mixed, a not unexpected situation given the poor quality of evaluations already submitted and/or the difficulty of retrieving documentation from DIU.

The political interests and objectives of the United States in the Near East also appear to affect the attitudes and priorities of mission and Bureau staff at all levels. The majority of those interviewed generally believe that when push comes to shove effective evaluation and utilization of past experience will be overridden or compromised for larger political interests. There does not appear to be a full appreciation of the need for a creative balance between political and developmental objectives. Perceptions that the political aspects of our programs are overriding must be countered. Projects which are indeed based solely on political imperatives should be evaluated in terms of political impacts with lessor weight placed on the developmental aspects of the projects. For the great majority of projects, however, the

basic rationale for the involvement is finally based on project objectives. The political environment, while it may influence the development of the project, is an outside factor and should not be an evaluation context accordingly.

B. Near East Bureau Backstop Officers

Many project backstop officers do not appear to have the time, even given the inclination, to become familiar either with all the possible sources and available literature to be able to respond quickly to requests for evaluation materials. Occasionally, they can and do respond to mission requests when the mission provides specific references or if by chance the backstop officer has worked in a given field or office long enough to be familiar with the relevant literature. In addition, the backstop officers can only be as helpful as the quality of the inputs (i.e., evaluations or other AID documentation) permits them to be. Backstop officers are also handicapped by weaknesses in AID's retrieval system. One activity in which backstop officers often are most helpful is in PRC meetings and subsequent actions decided thereby (see below).

C. The Development Information Unit (DIU)

DIU has been most cooperative in trying to provide documentation relevant to project design and has provided an informative orientation on its actual and potential service capability to NE Bureau staff. Nevertheless, the DIU has so far been unable to provide much assistance to PAE or many other backstop officers in their attempts to retrieve AID evaluation reports or essential lessons that can be used either during PRC meetings or sent to missions. DIU's weaknesses, however, do not appear to be of their own making. They are so understaffed, underfunded and clearly innundated with innumerable ad-hoc requests that even basic processing of incoming information for later retrieval is hopelessly backlogged. In addition, the poor quality of evaluation reports received, with few seriously attempting to discuss lessons learned and their possible implications, only reconfirms the adage, "garbage in garbage out". The gap between AID's expectation of and commitment to DIU could not be wider.

D. PRC/NEAC Meetings

The PRC/NEAC meetings are effective and result in helpful support for field missions. They are, probably, the best current source of relevant evaluative experience for immediate application in project planning or for reviewing project evaluations. The current practice of submitting evaluation reports for PRC/NEAC review is effective and should continue. The PRC/NEAC in effect is the Bureau's quality control forum. These meetings also provide opportunity for Bureau staff to apply their collective service experience, often with some debate which makes the exchanges all the more interesting. It is clearly apparent during these meetings that AID personnel do have knowledge, can evaluate objectively and assess lessons learned from their experience.

E. Training and Evaluation Staff Role

PAE currently performs an essentially clerical role in the evaluation process. PAE manages the system that has been established for reviewing, tagging and distribute evaluation documentation received from field missions, and is expected to help ensure utilization of evaluation materials by missions. Though project backstop officers continue to be responsible for the actual collection and provision of evaluation material, PAE also attempts to improve the quality of evaluation through its participation in PRC and NEAC review of PIDs and PPs. PAE, as opportunities permit, works to improve the quality of specific mission generated evaluations by reviewing scopes of work and collaborating with project backstop officers.

PAE has two foreign service professional staff assisted by one secretary who is being trained in computer techniques in order to access DIU. PAE tries, within staff and time constraints, to assist project backstop officers in our Bureau wide effort to improve utilization of relevant evaluation materials. The staff also participated in PRC meetings on all reviews of evaluation reports and, if necessary and possible, helps make revisions to improve the quality and future utility of these reports.

To date, however, PAE and its role and competencies still need to be fully established. The staff will always be operating under the very real constraints imposed by our being only three people who will often have to deal with short time frames and competing demands from every Bureau office. Also because both the professional staff are foreign service and will be returning to overseas duty, the system developed will, by necessity, continue to be decentralized with project backstop officers holding the principle role in terms of AID/W backstopping of evaluations.

F. Conclusion: Problem and Objective

Drawing on perceptions shared by project officers, project backstop officers and mission and Bureau management alike, our working group concluded that our evaluation system is not very effective in terms of its utility for either management and implementation or design and planning of assistance programs and projects, and further, that this situation derives in large measure from a lack of mutual understanding of what the evaluation system is supposed to do or can be expected to produce.

The ultimate purpose of this study, including particularly the extensive exchange of views with staff at both the Bureau and mission levels, has been to improve the quality and effectiveness of the NE Bureau's evaluation process. The primary measure of our success will be the production and utilization of quality, timely evaluation reports and information by or for Near East field missions. We seek, in sum, an evaluation process wherein:

1. Project officers, supported by mission leadership, view and practice evaluation not as a hoop to jump through or a potential fault finding exercise but an opportunity for organized USAID-Host Country

cooperative study, thought, discussion and recording of what a given assistance project or program is accomplishing and how it works or doesn't and why -- all with a view to making necessary changes in course and objectives or for application in future development efforts;

2. Lessons learned are clearly, objectively and comprehensively delineated in evaluation reports and easily retrievable for future consideration and application during project/program planning and design;
3. NE Bureau offices and NE missions regularly seek out this evaluation experience and knowledge and apply it whenever and wherever feasible.

III. Toward an Effective Evaluation and Information Process

A. Near East Bureau and Mission Evaluation and Information Needs

The Bureau and the NE missions have a range of needs for information on project design and implementation, the developmental progress of the countries we work with, and what AID has contributed to the development of individual countries. Some of this information is gathered through evaluation, some through other management information systems. This section attempts to provide a perspective on where evaluations should fit within our broader information systems.

The Bureau and missions require information on: (a) project design; (b) project implementation; (c) country development status; development strategies; and (d) AID history. Bureau and mission needs are similar, but not the same, and information is obtained from different sources. Host countries are usually only interested in a fraction of the information we generate.

Project Design

The Bureau, missions, and host countries want access to good project design information and previous project experience to help design new projects. Information on project design is generated in-country by pilot projects, obtained from impact evaluations done in several countries, or obtained from the experience of contractors and AID staff who have worked with similar projects in the past. Sometimes host country personnel are sent to other countries to observe successful projects. Most project experience is shared through people not documents. Periodic information on the status of the project design is provided in budget documents such as the ABS, periodic project development reports and cables.

Project Implementation

Of primary concern to missions and host countries is the monitoring of project progress and effectiveness, and the identification of implementation bottlenecks or problems. Mission management relies on meetings with host country and project officers, quarterly project reports, portfolio reviews, evaluations, and audits. The Bureau is not as involved in project monitoring, except to the extent that problems are identified which require Bureau awareness or attention. The Bureau used to rely primarily on monitoring and audits to identify major problems but has recently instituted an Alert List system to bring problems to Bureau management attention on a monthly basis.

The Bureau desires information on the contracting process to be able to respond to inquiries from US technical assistance, commodity, and construction services suppliers, and information on project progress and achievements to be able to provide effective backstop support to missions and to defend projects, programs and the Agency as questions surface, especially from the Hill. The first is provided through the NE Bureau's quarterly Project/Program Assistance

Best Available Document

222

Implementation reports will be prepared through periodic reports and final evaluations.

Country Development Plans and AID Strategies

The Bureau and Missions must develop country programs on the basis of the impact of AID's projects on the socio-economic development of these countries. In addition to information on progress toward achievement of project purpose and the status of individual projects, the Bureau and Missions need information on sector and macro-economic trends. Missions theoretically use host country socio-economic data series and special studies, surveys and assessments and periodic project evaluations to follow development progress to identify assistance requirements and opportunities and to measure the effectiveness of that assistance. This information usually is presented to the Bureau in summary form in the Country Development Strategy Statement (CDSS).

AID History

Because of the continual transfer of AID personnel, it is important that each mission keep track of what AID has financed in its country. This can be done through final evaluations, project completion reports, or through a comprehensive program review.

B. Evaluation and Information Products

As shown in the previous section, on the one hand evaluations are not the only or even principal source of information used to satisfy our program information needs. On the other hand, we tend to use "evaluations" to satisfy a wide range of information needs some of which may not be appropriate for the evaluation function. It is important therefore to be clear at the outset, that evaluation and implementation monitoring are two different processes with different purposes.

Implementation monitoring is the means for assuring that resources for a given project are available and adequate, that implementation actions are occurring on schedule and that planned outputs are being achieved.

Evaluation, on the other hand, seeks to answer three basic questions relevant to all forms of economic assistance:

- Effectiveness - Are the targets for outputs and purposes being achieved? What are the reasons for success or failure? Are the lessons learned then utilized to improve implementation? Are they being incorporated into new project designs?
- Significance - Will the achievement of the targets contribute to economic development or other higher goals beyond the project purpose? To what extent? What are the activity's advantages over possible alternatives? What about unintended, unplanned effects (positive or negative)?

223

Efficiency - Do the benefits justify the cost? Are there more efficient means of achieving the same targets?

Evaluation reviews and examines all aspects of the project including the feasibility of purpose and output targets, the viability of the causal linkages between outputs and project objectives, and the underlying implicit and explicit assumptions.

With these definitions in hand we can now proceed to a discussion of the types of information products which missions and the Bureau might produce to meet specific needs. The following sub-sections describe a variety of evaluation and information products and discusses when each might be appropriate and who should be responsible for producing them.

1. Impact Evaluations

Impact evaluations should provide the Agency with information on: (a) the types and magnitude of benefits from specific projects and programs; (b) the effectiveness of past projects and programs; and (c) the factors which influence whether or not the potential benefits of a project or program are likely to be or have been achieved. Impact evaluation should be able to isolate causal relationships and often look at goal level impacts. They are likely to be expensive, time consuming and complicated.

Current Problems

One of the major problems with impact evaluations is that the results don't tend to be available when we need them; a related problem that cuts across all types of evaluation reports, is their uneven quality. Impact evaluations may be available for projects which are no longer in vogue, or AID's or the host country's eagerness to begin a new project outweighs our willingness to wait several years for evaluation results of a similar project in another country. Getting the timing right requires people guessing correctly as to future AID program priorities and information needs so that data collection for impact evaluations can be started today. In addition, host countries are often not interested in using "their" AID funds to cover an "evaluation overhead".

---Recommendations

Impact evaluations should be done sparingly to study project approaches with which the Agency has had little experience, often in relation to pilot or demonstration projects. The Bureau should be responsible for identifying which sectors and projects should receive impact evaluations and help fund and administer them, perhaps in cooperation with other Bureaus. The quality problem is addressed in Section IV of this report. (Agency/Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

224

2. Process/Implementation Reports and Portfolio Review

This category covers the variety of monitoring systems used by missions to provide reliable information on what is happening in AID-financed projects. Management information systems are keeping track of the procurement process, status of program toward outputs and problems and their resolution. Evaluation should not be necessary to provide this information.

Problems

Monitoring systems vary from country to country and have not provided useful information in all three areas. The quarterly Project/Program Assistance Implementation report has been refocused on procurement to respond to outside suppliers. This change has lessened its value as a management tool. There is no one report which provides periodic information on the status of project implementation against planned targets. As a result, a variety of mechanisms including the evaluation process have been developed or used to fill this gap. For example, in Egypt, the semi-annual portfolio reviews have been developed to provide progress information and to highlight problems. The Alert List has recently been developed to surface problem issues on a monthly basis. Various forms of quarterly implementation status reports are cabled in by missions, but this information is not pulled together in a usable format to enable project backstop officers or senior management in AID/W to have a current up-to-date overview of where the project stands in terms of progress toward outputs. Some missions continue to perform annual project evaluations for selected projects as a monitoring tool even though this practice is discouraged.

----Recommendations

a. The Bureau should review its non-evaluation project information systems to see if useful and timely information can be provided in a structured format which addresses progress toward achieving output targets and resolving implementation problems. Such a report would be in addition to the Project/Program Assistance Implementation report which would be continued for its special audience, i.e., potential contractors. We would recommend that the title of that report be changed to reflect the nature of the report. The Management Monitoring/Implementation report being proposed here would have as its primary audience both mission and Bureau management. In its preparation, the report would first serve mission needs in supplying timely monitoring/implementation information. For this purpose it is suggested the USAID/Tunisia quarterly Project Implementation Status report may serve as a potential model, though the Bureau would want to add some entries which reflect specific Bureau information needs. With the exception of the Alert List and certain financial reports, all other quarterly status reports currently being cabled to AID/W would be discontinued as this information would be contained in the above report. In the interest of timeliness, it is recommended the WANG system be used to its fullest capacity with missions supplying updated information in diskette form. Upon receipt, the report would be run and reproduced for full internal NE Bureau distribution. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved in principle. October 14 workshop on NE Bureau's MIO projects was as first step towards this end.

b. Establish a formalized system for requiring project managers to prepare end of tour reports on each of their projects; alternatively, mission could consider scheduling inhouse evaluations of all projects managed by individual project officers prior to onward assignment. Ideally, that officer's replacement would be available to participate. (Bureau/Missions)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

3. Periodic, issue driven evaluations of individual projects

There are a number of reasons why the Bureau and missions may want to conduct an evaluation, for example: (a) to review issues which were raised during project design which could only be resolved during implementation, (b) to find solutions to intractable implementation problems, (c) to document success stories or failures, (d) to bring a project to the attention of high-level host country officials, (e) to relate progress toward outputs to purpose and reassess periodically the continued relevance of project purpose, assumptions and the whys of implementation difficulties.

Problems

The overall problem here is that the current evaluation system has not facilitated obtaining formal Bureau/USAID agreement on what types of evaluations are needed, the purpose for carrying out such evaluations, the detailed scopes of the evaluations, and their timing. There are often communications problems as to what constitutes evaluation. As a result, the Bureau may not be satisfied with evaluations received from the field and find that, from its perspective, they appear to be focussed on the wrong issues and not useful for decision making. In addition, the following specific problems complicate this situation and hinder implementation of an evaluation process that provides the information on the issues listed above.

Uneven AID/W backstopping support for mission-level evaluation needs

AID/W support for mission-level evaluation varies according to the project backstop officer's other work priorities, availability of related evaluation materials, confusion over and inadequate understanding of roles, and the nature of senior level management support for evaluation.

Inadequate conceptual framework and/or scopes of work from which effective evaluation is possible

226

Evaluations often end up being ad hoc and/or poorly planned resulting in reports which are not satisfactory for either the missions or AID/W. It is unrealistic to expect evaluators (either AID/W TDY or contractor) to generate the quality reporting we are seeking unless the terms of reference for their work are carefully laid out prior to the evaluation. Experience has shown that unless evaluation is planned for during the design stage, the framework and the data collection for effective evaluation will not be developed. Finally, projects evolve. Logframes developed during the design stage in many cases do not reflect the reality of the project being implemented.

Uneven follow-up on evaluation recommendations

Evaluation recommendations are not always implemented. Subsequent evaluations many times reveal the same problems and contain identical recommendations which may or may not be implemented.

----Recommendations

a. Establish a permanent NE Bureau Senior Evaluation Committee (NESEC) chaired by the Deputy Assistant Administrator with organizational assistance from NE/DP/PAE, including representatives from NE/DP, the technical support divisions (TECH and PD) and from each geographic subregions (desks). (Bureau)

This group would meet at least once every quarter to (1) review the general status of implementation of the Bureau Evaluation Plan; (2) establish selected project evaluation priorities; (3) consider instances of inadequate contractor performance; (4) delineate Bureau level evaluation interests, including funding and personnel requirements, (5) review and act as necessary on special studies or assessments proposed by either an individual mission or an office within the NE Bureau; (6) consider requirements for support from PPC/E and other central offices; and (7) determine appropriate Bureau responses such as formal recognition for exceptional work in evaluation.

NEAC Decision:

NEAC decided another senior level committee was unnecessary. A Project Evaluation Review Committee (PERC) chaired by NE/DP/PAE including the same office representation as above would be sufficient. Controversial issues would be subject to NEAC review.

b. The PRC should have a role in drafting scopes of work, particularly to ensure that all evaluations utilizing AID/W TDY personnel or contractors utilize scopes of work agreed to by both AID/W and field missions. The PRC is the appropriate mechanism for reviewing and finally reaching agreement with missions on scopes of work initiated in the field or AID/W. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

227

c. Consistently apply the Redefinition of Authority guidelines which require that PIDs include a draft logframe (columns one and four) and a preliminary evaluation plan. Failure to include these in the PID should be sufficient reason to defer decision on the PID by AID/W. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

d. Ensure that provisions (including funding if necessary) for information needs are part of every project design. There must, for example, be a close relationship between the evaluation plan and proposed data collection efforts. The expenditure for data collection and evaluation should reflect the type of project (is it a pilot or experimental activity?) and the magnitude of the overall investment. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

e. Require as a matter of policy, that original logframes as well as a draft updated logframe (if necessary) be included as an annex to the PES. Note: Radical change may require prior AID/W concurrence and possible PP amendment in accordance with the Redefinition of Authority guidelines. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

f. Require that missions clearly define who is primarily responsible for evaluation at the mission level, and then clarify the role of the Mission Evaluation Officer and establish a formalized system for mission follow-up on evaluation recommendations. AID/W should be kept informed, perhaps through the Mission Quarterly Management/Implementation reports recommended in Section C.2. above. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

g. When missions do not agree with particular evaluation recommendations, they should include their views in the final evaluation report as an attachment. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

h. Address actions on recommendations in previous evaluations in a separate section, so entitled, in each subsequent evaluation. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

i. When evaluation recommendations are beyond the capacity of the host country to implement, then missions should consider the desirability of revisions in the project to provide technical or other assistance as necessary. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

4. Assessments and Special Studies

Assessments and special studies are used to examine cross cutting issues within one sector or across several sectors. They may be country specific or involve similar experience or issues in several countries. They may be evaluations when prior AID experience is a major focus on the study or their purpose may be to develop new information in an area where AID's experience is limited. Rarely are they project specific though they may involve a review of clusters of projects (or sub-projects under a very large umbrella project) within a given sector. The impetus for doing assessments or special studies may come from the field, the NE Bureau or from PPC/E as part of their overall impact evaluation series. These studies are usually issues driven and may be focused on AID or host country policies.

Problems

The current evaluation system has not facilitated obtaining formal Bureau/USAID agreement on whether a special evaluation or assessment is needed, the purposes for carrying out such studies, the detailed scopes of the evaluations or studies, and their timing. For Bureau sponsored studies or evaluations as well as backstopping for field initiated activities, there is no one office within the NE Bureau filling a coordinating role. As a result Bureau support is fragmented among several offices and information is not always shared.

----Recommendations

a. All proposed assessments and/or special studies, including their scopes of work, whether initiated by the field or the Bureau should be submitted to the NE Bureau Senior Evaluation Committee (NESEC) for review and concurrence (see page 12). (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved -- substitute PERC for NESEC.

229

b. NE/DP/PAE should be a member of all Bureau special interest working groups and PRC's called to review proposed assessments and special studies whether of an evaluative nature or not. PAE's primary role will be to act as representative from the NESEC though PAE may take a more active role when dealing with studies or assessments which fall within the broad definition of evaluation. As a standing member of all such committees, PAE can facilitate exchange of information between all concerned offices. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved on trial basis.

5. End of Project Evaluations/Reports

There are two types of reports that may be carried out at the end of a project. (a) final evaluations and (b) project completion reports. Final evaluations tend to look at a project's impact on beneficiaries, possible economic return and lessons learned while completion reports emphasize inputs, outputs and end of project status indicators, though lessons learned should be highlighted. Another key difference is that while final evaluations usually involve several evaluators at some cost to the mission or project, a Project Completion Report is usually prepared by the USAID Project Officer on site.

Problem

The Bureau does not have a policy which requires either report to be produced at the end of a project even though the Handbook III guidelines indicate that at a minimum a Project Completion Report is required to close out a project. There is the possibility of losing part of AID's history in a country if neither is produced.

----Recommendation

In line with Handbook III, that project completion reports be required of all AID-financed projects, including PVO activities. That this requirement be waived if it is decided that a final evaluation is appropriate. The automatic inclusion of final evaluations in PIDs and PPs should be discontinued. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

230

IV. Major Cross Cutting Problem Areas

This section of the report addresses several cross cutting problem areas that affect to one degree or another all evaluation activities. The problems are fairly well known and came up repeatedly throughout our interviews and general discussions. We are simply presenting each problem in order of priority with a brief expansion on its nature and then recommending action(s) to respond to the problem. The recommendations presented here are those for which formal agreement at the top management level is required.

A. Lack of trained and experienced mission evaluation officers with clearly defined and understood roles

In accordance with Agency policy, the Mission Director or Deputy Mission Director is "de jure" the Mission Evaluation Officer. The officer who usually holds the title, however, serves more in the role of an Evaluation Process Manager. The degree to which this officer also serves as an "evaluator" varies from mission to mission. There is only one mission within the NE Bureau which has a full time evaluation officer, i.e., staff level. Mission staff level evaluation officers usually have other work assignments which have priority over evaluation. In several cases, the Mission Evaluation Officer is an Assistant Program Officer and consequently may have limited influence with project development staff and senior management. In almost all cases, the role of the mission staff evaluation officer is defined by the officer occupying the position. This in turn is influenced by that officer's prior experience and personal attitude toward evaluation.

----Recommendations

As a first order of business, the Near East Senior Evaluation Committee should (a) resolve the confusion over where the primary responsibility for the development and implementation of the mission evaluation system lies, including the nature and scope of evaluation activities to be performed at the mission level, (b) develop a clearly defined role for Mission Evaluation Officers, including the degree of autonomy therefor, and (c) include as criteria for minimum qualifications for Mission Evaluation Officers some prior experience in project design, managing project implementation, budget and programming experience, and stated interest. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved for development of guidelines for review by the PERC and approval by the NEAC.

B. Uneven quality of external evaluation reports

External evaluation teams, whether contractor, AID/W TDY or a combination of both, often fail to produce timely, balanced, relevant reports with feasible recommendations usable by decision makers either in the field (both mission and host country) or AID/W.

---Recommendations (Contractor prepared reports)

1. Select IQC contractors on the basis of proven capability. To assess this capability, AID needs to reinstate the contractor performance report for contractors performing evaluations to be filled out by the requesting office (either mission or AID/W) at the conclusion of each evaluation. IQCs (or individuals within IQCs) who fail to provide quality work should be dropped from AID consideration for future evaluation work. This same criteria would be applied to individuals contracted for on the basis of PSDs. Copies of contractor performance reports would be maintained by NE/DP/PAE for Bureau reference. (Agency/Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Not approved -- pending further exploration of legal constraints and alternative approaches. General agreement that greater specificity in delineating expectations from contractors would facilitate subsequent control of contractor performance.

2. Include in contractor scopes of work provisions requiring a review of AID evaluation policies and documentation requirements, a review of project related DIU documentation and an indepth review of project files prior to departure to the field to do the evaluation. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

3. Require that every contractor prepared report include executive summaries which follow the PES format and which highlight key findings and recommendations. These executive summaries should not be confused with one page abstracts, which should also be required, but are used for entry into the DIU system. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

4. Include in the contract for consultants doing AID evaluations some form of performance guaranty which can be invoked on the scene either by a USAID Mission or by AID/W. Payment should not be based only upon the level of effort of the individual consultants, but rather on the quality of the product, the evaluation report, for which these services were contracted. Missions in particular need to have some leverage with the contractor while the contractor is still in the field should the initial draft prove to be unacceptable. This leverage could take the form of the mission advising the contractor that they are prepared to recommend withholding payment until the report is revised to meet their quality expectations. Approval for time extensions and/or additional funding to make such revisions should be at the discretion of either the mission for mission funded evaluations or AID/W.

232

These provisions should be clearly stated in the contract, in either the scope of work or the standard contract language. Further discussion on this with appropriate Agency offices (SER/CM) is required. (Agency/Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Not approved. Same considerations apply as for Recommendation Number 1 in this section.

---Recommendations: (AID/W TDY Prepared Reports)

1. Require that AID/W via the FRC and the mission reach a mutual agreement upon the Scope of Work prior to the departure of AID/W TDY evaluators. This Scope of Work should have been shared with the host country and ideally reflect their direct input. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

2. As a standard operating procedure, require that AID/W TDY evaluators complete a draft of the evaluation report for mission review and acceptance prior to return to AID/W. If such a draft has not been completed or the mission is not satisfied with the quality or utility of the report, by the time of the AID/W TDY's scheduled departure, then the mission should consider extension of the TDY until a usable draft is completed. (Bureau/Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved on a case by case basis.

However, the integrity of the evaluation report should not be compromised. If the mission or the host country hold dissenting views about part of the evaluation, then these views should be included as separate attachments to the final version of the evaluation.

NEAC Decision:

Agree.

C. Uneven, proforma, or non-existent host country participation in evaluation efforts

This problem varies from country to country. For all countries in the region, however, there is the perception that the host country is not attuned to evaluation, that evaluation equates to audit and inspection, and that evaluation as a learning process is an American management tool which will take time to transfer to the local environment. Missions generally are not consistently seeking to engage host country personnel or agencies in dialogue and action regarding joint evaluations.

233

----Recommendations

1. Include in the NE Bureau guidance for developing PID or PP evaluation plans a requirement that the design officer discuss the degree of host country interest in and capacity for participation in the planned evaluations of the project. Where interest and capacity are shown to be weak, include in the evaluation plan what the mission proposes to do to address these weaknesses whether through the project itself or through some other approach. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

2. As matter of policy, require that missions provide the full text of the project evaluation plan to the host country either as an annex to the Project Agreement or in a Project Implementation Letter (PIL). (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

3. Require missions to develop and report on efforts to establish regular liaison with host country offices or agencies concerned with evaluation. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

4. Designate the Mission Evaluation Officer's position as a language position. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Not approved.

5. When appropriate provide technical assistance or training to counterpart evaluation agencies or organizations. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Concurred in principle.

D. Heavy reliance on external evaluations

The NE missions, with some exceptions, tend to rely very heavily on external evaluators (contractors). Joint mission/host country evaluations tend to be the exception and, as a consequence, the positive learning aspects of evaluation by participation in the process are lost to mission staff, AID/W TDY staff and the host country.

224

----Recommendations

1. As a policy, reduce Bureau reliance on external contractors for evaluation. Make available operating expense funds earmarked for evaluation to cover travel expenses for AID direct hire employees to engage in evaluation. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved in principle.

2. Encourage missions to do most routine evaluations using inhouse and host country staff. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved in principle.

3. During the design process, ensure that the evaluation plan, data collection requirements and resources for evaluation are tightly interwoven into the project implementation plan. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved in principle.

4. Identify and utilize host country social scientists and economists as members of both inhouse and external evaluation teams. (Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved in principle.

E. The need for training in evaluation in terms of the process as well as methodology

There is considerable confusion among AID personnel both in AID/W and the field about evaluation policies, documentation and techniques. This confusion clearly contributes to most, if not all, of the problems identified in this report. Given different levels of experience and different audiences, it is obvious that several training approaches need to be developed. The following recommendations are focused primarily on training for AID/W and mission staff (both USDH and FSN).

----Recommendations

1. Conduct training workshops in missions as well as at the Bureau level on the application of the PES methodology to different types of projects. As part of the workshop, an evaluation of a specific project using the PES could be undertaken and then critiqued on the spot. Senior mission management

235

should participate in such workshops. (Bureau) (See Section V, Page 24 for further information.)

NEAC Decision:

While not disapproved, there was general agreement that we should first seek to incorporate training into existing training programs.

2. Provide opportunities for middle level officers to participate on an Agency or Bureau impact evaluation team. This should become part of a standard career development program particularly for those officers in Washington on rotation assignment. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

3. Recommend that missions make time available for officers on their staffs to participate on evaluation teams evaluating similar projects in nearby countries and invite participation of officers from other country programs on teams doing evaluation locally. (Bureau/Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved in principle.

4. Recommend that missions encourage officers from one sector to participate in evaluation of projects in another sector within the mission. (Bureau/Mission)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

F. Limited Economic Impact Analysis

As part of the project design process, all project papers require some form of economic analysis. This requirement is not generally carried over to the evaluation plan even for those projects in which the project paper presents a quantified economic analysis. Rarely is the data collected to enable evaluators to gauge impact in economic terms. The exception tends to be in projects which require micro data to enable project implementors to make periodic adjustments in project design during implementation. Data for determining impact is usually tenuous to nonexistent at the design stage and a system for collecting baseline information (including total costs) is usually excluded from the design.

----Recommendations

1. Require that whenever projects justified on an economic basis are to be evaluated, they also include in the evaluation an assessment of economic impact. As part of this effort, during the design stage, provide the resources necessary to ensure data will be collected over time for this purpose. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

2. Require discussion of host country capacity for analyzing and collecting data in both the evaluation plan and the economic analysis of the project paper. When the host country capacity is considered weak and the type of project or magnitude of the investment warrants it, training elements to improve this capacity should be integrated into the project. (Bureau)

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

FYI: The Bureau is considering developing during FY 1984 a special handbook addressing economic analysis and evaluation using economic parameters.

V. Current and Planned PAE Activities re Selected Problem Areas

During the course of this study we have identified many activities that PAE, in cooperation with other Bureau offices and field missions, already carries on to some degree or can begin initiating immediately. These efforts relate primarily to three problem areas: utilization of prior experience in either project design or implementation, AID/W backstopping and some aspects of training. Unless otherwise directed PAE will continue to expand and intensify these activities.

NEAC Decision:

Approved.

A. Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned

AID, in addition to its difficult to retrieve store of knowledge in the printed word, still possesses a wealth of experience in its employees. This experience makes itself felt during PKC and other Bureau level meetings. We believe this experience can also be applied even more directly during the project design stage if individual project backstop officers have reliable information about other AID personnel who have had experience relevant to the project at hand.

PAE Action:

1. PAE intends, in cooperation with the Office of Personnel Management and the Sector Councils, to try to develop and test the utility of lists of AID personnel on rotation assignment in AID/W with specific project experience and include their current telephone numbers and addresses. This information will be provided to all Bureau backstop officers to facilitate direct contact. PAE, in cooperation with PPC/E, will also attempt to develop clearer guidelines (for review and approval by the PERC) delineating the types of lessons learned that we are most interested in searching for as we evaluate projects or programs. We will include discussion of the particular types of evaluations (i.e., final and impact vs. mid project and/or interim and clustered vs. single) which tend to be more conducive to generating lessons learned information.
2. NE/DP/PAE will attempt to work with DIU in reviewing abstracts received to date in terms of quality and developing guidelines to assist missions to improve them.

B. Backstopping

PAE Action:

1. PAE has already begun distributing examples of good evaluation work and recommending for DAA approval commendatory memoranda for the employees or

missions who prepared the reports. We will continue this practice.

2. PAE will also develop guidelines that delineate evaluation backstopping responsibilities of AID/W officers and offices and a set of standards by which missions, the PRC and NEAC will judge the quality and soundness of evaluation work. The PRC will review and approve these guidelines.
3. PAE will develop guidelines in cooperation with AE/PO for the evaluation of capital projects and guidelines which delineate what the Bureau expects missions to address within a PID/PP Evaluation Plan for capital projects.
4. PAE will develop guidelines in cooperation with CPC/E on how to prepare for an evaluation prior to departure for all contractor and AID/W TDY evaluators to follow.
5. During its participation on PRC evaluation review meetings, PAE will increasingly focus on issues related to the quality and appropriateness of evaluation methodology and presentation.

C. Evaluation Documentation:

Evaluation reports do not follow a consistent outline and are often poorly organized. The Agency's PES format provides a useful outline for categorizing and presenting findings, but many project officers, evaluators (both AID and Contractor) are unfamiliar with or are uncomfortable with the PES guidelines.

----Recommendations

Enhance the status of the PES as a valid framework for evaluations. PAE should expand guidelines for using the PES, including a more readable format and issue these to field missions. In addition, the PES should be the standard format for AID/W TDY prepared evaluation reports.

D. Training

During the course of our study it became increasingly apparent that a great many AID personnel are unaware of existing AID policies regarding evaluation and the documentation relevant thereto. Few officers could remember ever having had evaluation training or, if they did have training, they found it ineffective.

PAE Action

1. PAE will begin working with PM/Training to determine what form of inhouse training programs should be developed to deal with such subjects as developing a logframe, writing scopes of work, utilizing the PES methodology, etc.
2. From the experience gained in conducting inhouse training exercises, we will develop a project related field seminar format for a series of seminars in selected missions. These seminars would actually do an evaluation of a

239

mission project and then critique it as part of the training course.

3. Finally, we intend to encourage missions to undertake evaluation workshops with host country personnel (perhaps host country personnel could be identified to participate in proposed evaluation workshops for AID personnel) and to provide evaluation training for USAID FSMs.

JUN 1 1984

MEMORANDUM

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION
 FROM: NE/DP/E, *JWS* Judith N. Wills
 SUBJECT: Near East Bureau Evaluation Guidelines

Attached is the final draft of the NE Bureau Evaluation Guidelines. Your comments and suggestions made on the earlier draft have been incorporated into this version. Two major concerns, tone and length, have been addressed and some new guidelines added. We have decided not to list the appendices following each chapter. This eliminates the confusion on how to use the guidelines. Instead, the list of reference materials is contained in a bibliography. Sets will be sent to each Mission evaluation officer. Additional copies of the reference materials will be made available upon request.

Since most offices will be engaged in preparation for the upcoming ABS reviews, we do not plan to call a formal PRC meeting. Rather, we would appreciate receiving your comments directly either as marginal notations on the draft or in memo form. You may also, of course, drop by the office to discuss the guidelines in person if this is more convenient.

Our target date for sending these guidelines down for reproduction is Wednesday, June 13, 1984. If we have not heard from you by that date, we will assume this version of the guidelines meets with your approval.

Attachment: a/s

DISTRIBUTION:

DAA/NE, B. Langmaid
 NE/DP, C. Johnson
 NE/TECH, K. Sherper
 NE/TECH, B. Turner
 NE/PD, R. Bell
 NE/PD, R. Venezia
 NE/E, R. Blue
 NE/E, R. Zimmerman
 NE/ME, G. Kamens
 NE/NENA, T. Reese
 NE/EUR, R. Misheloff

241

EVALUATION GUIDELINES

NE/DP/E
June 1, 1984

242

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
I. Definition.	2
II. Applicability of the Guidelines	4
III. The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process	6
Step 1. Deciding Whether to Evaluate, When and in What Form	7
A. Determining at Design Stage the Nature and Scope of Evaluation Effort Required.	7
B. Scheduling an Evaluation	7
C. Unscheduled Evaluations.	8
D. Forms of Evaluation.	8
(1) Periodic Evaluations	8
(2) Project Completion Reports/Final Evaluation.	8
(3) Impact Evaluations.	9
(4) Special Studies	9
(5) End of Tour Reports	9
E. Sources of Information	9
Step 2. Preparing an Evaluation Plan During the Design of the project.	12
A. Project Identification Documen (PID)	12
B. Project Paper.	12
Step 3. Developing a Scope of Work for an Evaluation	14
A. The Scope of Work	14
B. AID/W Review of Evaluation Scopes of Work.	14
C. Suggested Outline for NE Bureau Evaluation Scopes of Work	14
Step 4. Assembling and Orienting the Evaluation Team	21
A. Team Composition	21
B. Team Orientation	22

243

	<u>Page</u>
Step 5. Backstopping the Evaluation.	24
A. When a Decision to Evaluate Has Been Made	24
B. Two Months Prior to the Evaluation	24
C. Issue Final PIO/T	25
D. One Month Prior to the Evaluation	25
E. Ten Days Prior to the Evaluation Team ETA	25
F. Upon Arrival of the Evaluation Team	25
Step 6. Reporting the Findings	26
A. Project Evaluation Summary (PES) - Part I Facesheet.	26
B. Mission/Host Country Comments.	26
C. Project Evaluation Summary (PES) - Part II	30
D. Near East Evaluation Abstract.	32
Step 7. Submission, Logging and Distribution Procedures. . .	32
A. Submission	32
B. Logging.	32
C. Distribution	33
Step 8. AID/W Review of Evaluation Reports	34
A. Forms of Review.	34
1. Informal	34
a. Team Debriefing.	34
b. Technical Review of Draft Reports.	34
c. Level III Review	34
2. Formal	34
a. Level II (PRC) Review.	34
b. Level II Review of Draft Reports	34
c. Level I (NEAC) Review.	36
B. AID/W Review Guidelines.	37
Step 9. Providing Feedback on Reviews	38
Step 10. Follow-up on the Evaluation Recommendations	39

244

	<u>Page</u>
IV. The Mission Evaluation Process: Roles and Responsibilities. . .	40
A. Responsibilities	40
B. Project Evaluation Review.	41
(1) Organization	41
(2) Purpose	42
V. Host Country Involvement	43
VI. Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned	44
A. Utilization of Evaluation Findings	44
B. Lessons Learned.	44
Bibliography	45

295

CHAPTER I

Guidelines for Evaluation In the Near East Bureau

Introduction

Evaluation is an indispensable tool for every level of Mission, Bureau and Agency management. It provides information for improved project implementation and, if done well, helps the Bureau avoid pitfalls during the design and implementation of future projects.^{1/} Evaluative questions are part of the basic framework for mission portfolio reviews. Annual evaluation planning is closely linked to ABS Action Plans and future programming decisions. Lessons learned, identified through the evaluation process, help justify our programs to Congress. Aggregate evaluation findings create an information base for both country and regional planning.

These guidelines describe a process for evaluation within the Near East Bureau. They were developed for use by both AID/W and field staffs. The approach, as outlined here, is based upon existing AID guidance on how, when, and why an evaluation should be undertaken. Since more of the evaluations conducted by the Near East Bureau are project specific, these guidelines tend to focus on the evaluation needs of Mission and Bureau staffs directly involved in project activities.

Sections I and II define the terms and applicability of the guidelines. Section III details the ten steps prescribed by the Bureau for the planning, implementation, review and use of evaluations. Section IV poses considerations for missions in defining the roles of mission evaluation officers. Section V provides guidance on host country participation in the evaluation process and suggests ways missions can increase this participation. Section VI discusses applying prior experience to planned or ongoing programs and projects. Additional sections on the application of economic and social analyses in evaluating projects and the integration of evaluation into the development of long term country and regional strategies are being developed and will be distributed separately as Near East Bureau discussion memos.

^{1/} These guidelines refer to all AID development efforts as projects. When there is a need to differentiate between project and program evaluations, it will be done. Unless specifically stated otherwise, these guidelines apply equally to both.

I. Definition

Evaluation differs from the day-to-day monitoring conducted by a project officer. A project evaluation is designed to analyze the achievements and problems encountered during project implementation, relate these findings to the project's purpose and implementation plan, and assess the probability of achieving the project's purpose. An evaluation should challenge the continued relevance of the project's purpose and the assumptions upon which the project is based.

A project officer, until he or she has an indication otherwise, generally accepts the project's purpose and underlying design assumptions as valid and within that framework tracks actual or planned project activity. The project officer seeks to ensure that:

- resource inputs are properly selected, procured, delivered, processed, and installed in accordance with official procedures and with the project implementation plan;
- implementation actions are accomplished in accordance with the implementation plan and in compliance with accepted AID management standards;
- outputs are being achieved according to plan.

The key difference between a project evaluation and monitoring is that;

- (a) monitoring provides the immediate information the project officer needs for his/her daily decisions in implementing the project or in making tactical adjustments to the implementation plan as required;
- (b) evaluation is a time specific, indepth, analytical exercise that provides a basis for strategic, long term program decisions.

Evaluation is not merely a descriptive statement of a project's status. A good evaluation seeks to answer three basic questions relevant to all forms of economic assistance:

- Effectiveness** - Are the project's outputs and purposes being achieved? What are the reasons for success or failure? Is the project being modified to make use of lessons learned? Is the experience gained during project implementation being incorporated into new project designs?
- Significance** - Will achievement of the targets contribute to economic development or other higher goals beyond the project's purpose? To what extent? What are the activity's advantages over possible alternatives? What about unintended, unplanned effects (positive or negative)?
- Efficiency** - Do the benefits justify the cost? Are there more efficient means of achieving the project's purpose?

242

Evaluation examines all aspects of the project's design including the feasibility of purpose and output targets, the viability of the causative linkages between outputs and project objectives, and the underlying implicit and explicit assumptions. An evaluation also investigates changes in the socio-economic setting which affect the project, unplanned or unanticipated effects, and impact on the project's targetted beneficiaries. For some evaluations, answers to issues which cut across more than one project may be sought. For others, the evaluation may focus on how the project fits into the total program strategy. The level of interest in each of these areas depends upon the type of evaluation being conducted and the stage of implementation of the activity being evaluated.

209

CHAPTER II

258

II. Applicability of the Guidelines

These guidelines apply to all economic assistance projects and programs planned and implemented by the Near East Bureau. No project is arbitrarily excluded from evaluation or subjected to only one form of evaluation, e.g., final reports for "capital projects". Regardless of the internal mix of resources, the capital inputs are not the purpose of any AID project. The planned sum of the outputs defines the project's purpose to which the capital inputs contribute. The degree of success in achieving the project's purpose and its impact on the larger sector goal can and need to be evaluated. For example, the construction of a fertilizer plant could be meaningless unless a whole series of supporting institutions are functioning well enough to allow a farming family to increase their income by using the fertilizer. Project failure could arise due to factors such as lack of policy change (artificially depressed farm gate prices), difficulties with related projects (transport) or institutional problems (lack of extension services).

Because of these factors, the Bureau assumes these guidelines will be flexibly applied to all projects in order to meet the various information and evaluation needs of missions and the Bureau.

Seldom, if ever, would a single project evaluation be expected to cover or respond to all of the concerns addressed here. The applicable criteria and approaches should be determined by project-specific conditions and should directly serve the purpose of the particular evaluation. The most important consideration is utility. Project evaluation, regardless of its scope and nature, must be designed to serve a particular purpose of project, mission or Bureau management.

In using these guidelines, the reader should bear in mind lessons learned about evaluation which have emerged from AID's past experience. While these lessons may appear to be truisms, they warrant repetition.

1. The effectiveness of the evaluation process is largely dependent upon the quality, explicitness and rigor of program or project design and monitoring.
2. Evaluation must comprehend the total program or project. It is neither feasible nor productive to limit the evaluation process to the fractional resource input of a single source or donor.
3. The responsibility for evaluation should be placed as close as possible, both functionally and organizationally, to the user who will base his or her decision on the evaluation findings.
4. The host country should play an active role in evaluating donor assisted projects. Where the host country does not have adequate capacity for evaluation, the donors should offer training in evaluation methods.

251

5. In designing and implementing evaluation studies, maximum use should be made of host country skills and resources, e.g., local universities, consulting firms, etc.
6. Clear understandings should be reached prior to undertaking an evaluation with regard to the roles of various participants. Each person's role should be so defined that their experience will be used effectively and compatible arrangements will be agreed upon.
7. Evaluation findings should serve as guidelines rather than intractable laws.
8. Evaluation should be viewed as a learning process and not as an audit.
9. Evaluation procedures should be as simple as possible with rapid feedback on recommendations and conclusions.
10. Evaluation should occur on all levels of a project, e.g., national, regional, district, village (or community), household and individual levels.

CHAPTER III

257

III. The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

The ten steps in the Near East Bureau's evaluation process are detailed in the following pages and address both the Bureau's and Agency's views on evaluation.

These steps are:

1. Deciding whether to evaluate, when and in what form.
2. Preparing an evaluation plan during the design of the project.
3. Developing a scope of work for an evaluation.
4. Assembling and orienting the evaluation team.
5. Backstopping the evaluation.
6. Reporting the findings.
7. Submission, logging and distribution procedures.
8. AID/W review of evaluation reports.
9. Providing feedback on reviews.
10. Follow-up on evaluation recommendations.

254

Step 1. Deciding Whether to Evaluate, When and in What Form

A. Determining at design stage the nature and scope of evaluation effort required.

AID no longer requires that all projects must be evaluated annually. The nature of the project itself dictates the timing for evaluation. Though most projects should be evaluated at least once, there are some projects which may require more frequent evaluations. The depth and frequency of the evaluation required to ensure successful project implementation are determined during project design and explained in the project evaluation plan.

In determining whether a project should receive extensive evaluation, the following criteria should be applied. Meeting any one could be sufficient justification for including a more elaborate evaluation plan in the project paper.

- The project is of an experimental nature, e.g., pilot projects.
- The project is intended to have significant impact for a large number of beneficiaries.
- In addition to a specific development purpose, the project is also intended to expand or improve the quality of Host Country/U.S. policy dialogue and has implications for other U.S. interests.
- Project success will have important political implications for internal stability.
- The project includes a significant institution-building component.
- Considerable funding is involved and/or the project life spans a long (5-10 year) period of time calling for several interim evaluations.

B. Scheduling an Evaluation

Evaluations should be planned to relate to critical events during the implementation of a project. They should help the project officer to affirm that the critical event has, or hasn't, taken place and what effect it will have on the project. An evaluation prior to a key decision point in the implementation of the project should provide information upon which decisions can be based. The focus of the evaluation will be dictated by the information required for these decisions. Evaluation schedules should be flexible to accommodate delays during project implementation.

C. Unscheduled Evaluations

Events may require an evaluation which may not have been planned in the original project design. Such evaluations should be undertaken in the following circumstances:

- When monitoring evidence indicates that a project is having serious difficulties, e.g., implementation schedules are not being met, an amendment may be needed, or conditions which gave rise to the project no longer pertain. Multiple purposes may be served by such an evaluation, including raising the level of attention given to the project by the host government, providing the objective basis for a change in the activity, or gaining a different perspective on what is going on in a project and why.
- When a number of projects within one country begin to show common problems, such as construction delays and poor technical assistance performance, comparative evaluations can be structured to determine why these generic problems exist.

D. Forms of Evaluation

The forms of evaluation most often used by the Near East Bureau are:

(a) periodic evaluations; (b) final evaluations/project completion reports; (c) impact evaluations; (d) special studies (and even end of tour reports). In practice, we find that many project evaluations are hybrid in form. Brief descriptions of each form of evaluation follow.

(1) Periodic Evaluations

Periodic evaluations are the most common and are carried out at various points during project implementation. Such evaluations might be conducted for any of a number of reasons such as: (1) to review issues which were raised during project design but could only be resolved during implementation; (2) to find solutions to intractable implementation problems; (3) to document the reason for a project's success or failure; (4) to relate progress toward outputs to the project's purpose, reassess periodically the continued relevance of the purpose and underlying assumptions, and take a preliminary look at the project's impact. Also referred to as process evaluations, these evaluations rely heavily upon the existence of a good project monitoring system.

(2) Project Completion Reports/Final Evaluations

There are two types of evaluations that may be carried out at the end of a project: (a) Project Completion Reports and (b) final evaluations. Project Completion Reports emphasize inputs, outputs, end-of-project status indicators, give a preliminary estimate of the project's impact and lessons learned. Final evaluations provide an in-depth preliminary judgement of a project's immediate impact on beneficiaries, possible economic return and

5/6

lessons learned. The key differences between a Project Completion Report and a final evaluation are the intensity of the review, its scope and the resources committed to each. The Project Completion Report can be prepared by the project officer. A final evaluation may require the services of one or more contractors and involve a considerable period of time. Therefore a mission should invest in final evaluations only when it is believed significant information will be gained by conducting such an evaluation. At a minimum a Project Completion Report is required to close out a project.

(3) Impact Evaluations

Impact evaluations are intended to provide the Agency with information on: (1) the types and magnitude of benefits from specific projects and programs; (2) the effectiveness of past projects and programs; and (3) the factors which influence whether or not the potential benefits of a project or program are likely to be or have been achieved. Impact evaluations should be able to isolate causal relationships and often look at goal level impacts. Because a project's benefits are often not fully realized during the course of the project, impact evaluations are normally conducted several years after the project is completed.

(4) Special Studies

Special studies examine issues which cut across one or more sectors. They may be country-specific or involve similar experience or issues in several countries. The examination of AID's experience in a given area may be the focus of the study or the purpose may be to develop new information in an area where AID's experience is limited. To the extent prior experience is being examined, special studies qualify as a form of evaluation. Rarely are special studies project-specific, though they may involve a review of several projects or sub-projects under an umbrella project within a given sector. They are usually issues-driven and may be focused on AID or host country policies.

(5) End of Tour Reports

While not usually thought of as an evaluation, End of Tour Reports provide a valuable source of information from the project officer's perspective of his/her experience in managing one or more projects. Such reports help provide continuity and can be of a personalized nature. Missions are encouraged to establish a procedure whereby End of Tour Reports are required of departing project officers. In addition, the Mission could schedule inhouse reviews of all projects managed by a project officer prior to his/her onward assignment.

E. Sources of Information

The general approach used in evaluation is determined at the time the project is designed and when the form and extent of data collection during project implementation is decided upon. The majority of AID evaluations do not involve elaborate social science research approaches. It is often impossible

257

to ensure rigorous adherence to accepted data (baseline or progress) collection methodologies and to control the "integrity" or "purity" of the research and analysis process. It is also too costly for most projects and thus is reserved for those few experimental projects for which AID is attempting to break new ground in "proving" the effectiveness of certain technological interventions or for those projects which represent a first entry into sectors for which AID's experience is limited.

This does not mean that data is not available or that limited social science research techniques can't be applied. For most projects the data base will consist of project documentation and a few key progress indicators usually reported in quarterly implementation reports. Additional data can be obtained through simple survey techniques or through the development of case studies. In most cases, however, elaborate, complicated techniques involving extensive field research is not necessary to reach fairly reliable conclusions and identify useful lessons. The following schematic provides an overview of the usual sources of information and data for most AID evaluations.

238

SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND DATA FOR A.I.D. EVALUATIONS

INTERNAL SOURCES

Secondary and Contextual Data (Usually available either in AID/W or at the USAID Mission.)

AID Policy Papers (as pertinent)
CDSS and NE Regional Strategies
PIDs and Project Papers
Project files (Monthly reports, prior evaluations, memos, letters, cables, etc.)
Project Papers and evaluations of similar AID projects
Sector Assessments

Primary Data (Available at the USAID Mission or can be obtained through the Host Government.)

Sector survey data
Prefeasibility/feasibility study data
Periodic data collected against key indicators
Host Government data (e.g., census, surveys, etc.)
Host Country, USAID Mission, Contractor and Project Beneficiary interviews

EXTERNAL SOURCES

Secondary and Contextual Data (Often available at the USAID Mission, the US Embassy, Counterpart Agencies, Other donors, etc.)

Host country development plans and policies
Host country project records, reports
Private Sector organizations' reports
Books, periodicals and journals
Research studies
Other bilateral/multilateral donor project and program documentation
Informant reports/Expert Opinions
World Bank Reports/Studies.

Primary Data (Often unavailable or inadequate unless the project design makes specific provision for collection during the project implementation.)

Experiment/pilot - As part of a research design, may include before/after surveys or use of control groups.
Observation - Participation or non-participant. The latter could be developed as part of regular site visits by project staff.
Survey - Through interviews or by using structured questionnaires.
Other - Case studies of before/after conditions
- Record keeping by project staff in the form of journals, etc.
- Group sessions to stimulate discussion re project experience and lessons learned.

Step 2. Preparing an Evaluation Plan During the Design of the Project

A. Project Identification Document (PID)

A fully developed evaluation plan is not required at the PID stage. Missions will be expected to follow Handbook 3 which requires a discussion of the linkage between what the project proposes to achieve (the EOPS) and the means by which the Mission plans to measure and evaluate the results against the stated objectives. At the PID stage this will be tentative, but the Mission should make the effort to bridge the gap in this discussion between stated objectives and steps proposed to verify the accomplishment of these objectives, particularly if baseline must be constructed as part of the process. For those projects in which evaluation will play a critical role during project implementation, the PID should describe steps planned for the design of the evaluation components of the project. In such cases, e.g., evaluation plans for pilot or phased projects, evaluation becomes a critical output of the project and requires the same degree of attention as any other component of the project during the design process.

B. Project Paper (PP)

To be able to evaluate the project, the project paper must provide precise definitions of those elements which are the benchmarks against which the progress of the project can be measured, e.g.:

- targets expressed in terms which are finite and verifiable;
- progress indicators at the output, purpose and goal levels;
- a clearly delineated causal connection between the project's purpose and the sector goal to which the project contributes;
- clearly defined internal linkages between inputs, outputs and project purpose;
- basic assumptions that will affect project performance from input through goal levels.

It may not be possible during the design of the project to define and adequately develop the data base required for the project's subsequent evaluation. If this is the case, the project design must (a) identify the gaps in the data base required for project evaluation, and (b) plan for the collection of necessary data during project implementation. The extent of data collection required will depend upon the nature of the project, e.g., for pilot projects extensive data collection should be anticipated to "test" the project's results. The integration of the evaluation plan into the project design and budget, including budgetting for data collection as necessary, are considered by the Near East Bureau to be prior conditions to the authorization of a project proposal.

2-60

In addition to defining the data base required for project evaluation, the plan must contain an evaluation schedule denoting whether external, internal or both forms of evaluation are planned with a discussion of the purpose for each. This should not be interpreted as a rigid schedule as the exact timing will normally be adjusted during project implementation. Evaluations should, however, be scheduled to yield information needed for critical decisions affecting project implementation.

The evaluation plan should include a discussion of host country capacity to participate in evaluations, their anticipated role and whether or not training to ensure this participation is required. If the host country capacity to participate in evaluation needs to be strengthened, the evaluation plan should discuss plans to increase this capacity either as a component of the project or by establishing linkages to other projects or institutions for this purpose.

For projects justified on an economic basis, the project's budget should include resources required for the evaluation of the project's economic impact.

In accordance with Near East Bureau practice, the full text of the project evaluation plan, as it appears in the project paper, should be provided to the host country either as an annex to the Project Agreement or in a Project Implementation Letter.

Step 3. Developing a Scope of Work for an Evaluation

A. The Scope of Work

The Near East Bureau has accepted the revised Project Evaluation Summary (PES - Part II) framework as the most desirable reporting format for both internal and external evaluations. This decision is based upon Bureau experience that use of the PES helps focus the report's findings and ensures basic requirements for all AID evaluations are addressed. To assure an evaluation's final report will follow this guidance, Near East missions are encouraged to structure evaluation scopes of work in such a way that the PES Part II outline is followed.

In developing the scope of work, the Mission should bear in mind that a successful evaluation is dependent upon the host country, the contractor implementing the project, the Mission and the evaluators clearly understanding why the evaluation is being undertaken, their responsibilities for its success, and the scope of the evaluation. The development of this necessary degree of mutual understanding is dependent upon a clearly defined scope of work that details the responsibilities of everyone involved.

B. AID/W Review of Evaluation Scopes of Work

On a selective basis, scopes of work for evaluations initiated by Near East missions may be reviewed by the AID/W Project Review Committee. One purpose of these reviews is to ensure that any major project, policy or technical issue which AID/W may have will be addressed during the evaluation. The Project Review Committee will, in most cases, review scopes of work for evaluations that are related to expected or required AID/W actions, including increases in life of project funding or substantial deobligations, project extensions or amendments, and follow-on projects. In addition, the Project Review Committee may review scopes of work for evaluations that offer opportunities to obtain information relevant to future Bureau planning, Congressional interests and other missions' interests and needs for information on similar project activities.

As part of its annual evaluation planning, AID/W will attempt to identify those evaluations for which a project committee review is contemplated. Before the initiation of an AID/W review, the project backstop officer will inform the Mission that a PRC review is planned and the purpose of the review. Upon completion of the review, the PRC comments and suggestions will be cabled to the field. In the event the Mission does not concur in the PRC suggestions, the Mission has final authority over the content of the evaluation scope of work.

C. Suggested Outline for Near East Bureau Evaluation Scopes of Work

The following provides a general framework for developing a scope of work for most evaluations. This outline can be adjusted to fit particular requirements at the Mission's discretion.

262

Country Name
TITLE OF PROJECT (OR PROPOSED TITLE OF EVALUATION REPORT)
Scope of Work for Evaluation

I. The Program/Project. Specify project title, number, total cost, and life-of-project dates.

II. Purpose of the Evaluation. This section should detail the reason for the evaluation. To what specific uses will the information be put, e.g., what decision will be reached? The Mission should also discuss how the evaluation relates to the project paper evaluation plan.

III. Background:

Missions are encouraged to write a one-to-two page background statement providing the history to date of the project. This section can later be transferred to the evaluation report by the evaluation team as part of the report.

IV. Statement of Work

The statement of work defines for the evaluators the Mission's requirements and concerns. It is the point from which the evaluation team begins to work. If the evaluation is to be successful, the statement of work must contain enough specificity to focus the evaluators' attention to the issues the Mission believes to be of priority concern. An evaluation that is scheduled to last three or four weeks, with a requirement that a draft report be given to the Mission X days prior to the team's departure, simply does not allow time to be wasted in isolating and defining the critical issues. This same time constraint also limits the number of problems that an evaluation team can be expected to study. Therefore the statement of work must be issue specific and limited in scope. Vaguely worded questions have to be avoided. To ask an evaluation team "to consider the appropriateness and effectiveness of the project's organization and the potential for institutionalization of the changes being promoted. (Is it likely that institutionalization will occur naturally and automatically? or should the project work to integrate itself into ...)" is to give the team an impossible task that will not result in the development of useful insights or meaningful recommendations.

A statement of work for an evaluation should be based upon the Mission's understanding of the current status of the project (as supported by monitoring information), rather than assuming nothing is known. For example, to ask the evaluators "if the XYZ training center has opened on schedule", implies the project officer does not know what is going on in the project. But, to ask "what effects the delayed (early, on time) opening of the XYZ training center will have on the potential of the project to transfer additional technology" directs the focus of the evaluation team to an event that has potentially significant impact on the chances for successful project implementation.

A statement of work should focus on no more than four or five essential questions. Some of the major questions might be expanded upon by subordinate clarifying questions; e.g., "What are the circumstances responsible for this and how might they be changed?". The scope might then list "Additional (secondary) questions to be answered." All questions should be specific and

linked to the PES framework. For example, "purpose level" issues should be so identified. Questions dealing with implementation procedures or systems for the provision of U.S. assistance are "input level" questions. Recommendations for the design of a follow-on project could be handled as "special comments".

An effective statement of work is normally written in the active, rather than the passive voice and should be in a form that can be incorporated into the contracting documentation.

V. Team Composition:

This section should specify the expertise required and their qualifications (academic background, language abilities, overseas experience, etc.).

VI. Methodology:

What general methodology will be used, e.g., interviews, observation, survey, review of documents? How will change be measured? What data exists for the team to review to determine actual project impact to date or projected future impact?

VII. Administrative Arrangements:

The scope of work should provide answers to the following questions if not otherwise covered in the PIO/T:

1. What documents (e.g., project paper, previous evaluations, other donors' reports, sector analyses) should each team member review prior to beginning the team investigation? What briefings by AID/W, Mission, or others are planned for the evaluation team? Has time been allowed and funds budgetted for pre-field U.S. research?
2. Should one or more team members be available in advance of the rest of team to do preparatory work such as document or data analysis, or to continue after the rest of the team to see report through to early finalization?
3. Will contractors be expected to work (and will they be paid for) a six day week or for Sundays?
4. What is the appropriate division of time between capital city interviews and document review, field site visits, analysis and report writing?
5. What administrative/logistical support for the evaluation team will be provided by AID/W, the Mission, the host country organization? Who will provide initial orientation, AID/W, the field or both?
6. Is this evaluation appropriate for small 8(a) minority and women owned firm contracting?

264

VIII. Reporting Requirements

A. Submission Dates

1. Preliminary Draft - number of days prior to evaluation team departure that a preliminary draft should be submitted to the Mission for review. Will the team be required to debrief both the Mission and host country officials? If so, this should be clearly stated in this section.
2. Final Report - date a final report is required by the Mission. This section should also state the numbers of copies which should be submitted both to the Mission and to AID/W. Will the team be required to prepare the Near East Bureau Evaluation Abstract? Should the report be translated into French or Arabic? If so, these requirements should be clearly stated in this section and budgeted for in the PIO/T.

Note: Missions have the option, on a case by case basis, to build into the scope of work a provision for a preliminary technical review of the final draft in AID/W prior to submission to the field for mission review. A technical review would focus primarily on whether or not the scope of work has been satisfied and the technical quality of the supporting narrative. Such a review is required for Bureau sponsored evaluations.

B. Reporting Format

The revised Project Evaluation Summary (PES Part II) is the preferred format for Near East Bureau and Mission evaluation reports. An outline of this format follows.

2/15

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY - PART II
(as revised for use within NE Bureau)

I. SUMMARY

Summarize the current project situation, mentioning progress in relation to design, prospects of achieving the purpose and goal, problems encountered and major recommendations. This section serves as the executive summary of the report.

II. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Summarize project history to date.

III. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

What was the reason for the evaluation, e.g., clarify project design, measure progress, verify program/project hypotheses, improve implementation, assess a pilot phase, prepare budget, etc.

Where appropriate, refer to the Evaluation Plan in the Project Paper and briefly explain any changes therefrom.

Briefly describe the methodology used for this evaluation.

Detailed description of the study design, scope of work, cost, techniques of data collection, analysis and data sources as well as agencies and key individuals (host country, other donor, private sector, AID) contacted should be included in the appendix section of the report.

IV. EXTERNAL FACTORS

Identify and discuss major changes in project setting, including socioeconomic conditions and host government policies and priorities, that have an impact on the project.

V. KEY PROJECT ASSUMPTIONS

Examine continuing validity of assumptions, particularly from output through goal levels.

VI. PROGRESS SINCE LAST EVALUATION

Cite examples of positive changes made since last evaluation. Note any recommendations that are still valid but were not acted upon.

VII. INPUTS

Are there any problems with commodities, technical services, training or other inputs as to quality, quantity, timeliness, etc?

Any changes needed in the type or amount of inputs to produce outputs?

Recommendations as required.

167

VIII. **OUTPUTS** - Measure actual progress against projected output targets in current project design or implementation plan.

Use tabular format if desired.

Comment on significant USAID and host country management experience and delineate lessons learned, if any, regarding resolution of administrative bottlenecks.

If outputs are not on target, discuss causes (e.g., problems with inputs, implementation assumptions, other external factors or unrealistic expectations in original project design).

Are any changes needed in the outputs or time frame in order to achieve purpose?

Recommendations as required.

IX. **PURPOSE**

Quote approved project purpose.

Cite progress toward each End of Project Status (EOPS) condition.

When can achievement be expected?

Is the set of EOPS conditions still considered a good description of what will exist when the purpose is achieved?

Discuss the causes of any shortfalls in terms of the causal linkage between outputs and purpose or external factors.

Recommendations as required.

X. **GOAL/SUBGOAL**

Quote approved goal, and subgoal, where relevant, to which the project contributes.

Describe status by citing evidence available to date from specified indicators, and by mentioning the progress of other contributory projects.

To what extent can progress toward goal/subgoal be attributed to purpose achievement, to other projects, and/or to other causal factors?

If progress is less than satisfactory, explore the reasons, e.g., purpose inadequate for hypothesized impact, new external factors affect purpose-subgoal/goal linkage.

Recommendations as required.

XI. BENEFICIARIES

Identify the direct and indirect beneficiaries of this project in terms of criteria in Sec. 102(d) of the FAA (e.g., a. increase small-farm, labor-intensive agricultural productivity; b. reduce infant mortality; c. control population growth; d. promote greater equality in income; e. reduce rates of unemployment and underemployment).

Summarize data on the nature of benefits and the identity and number of those benefitting, even if some aspects were reported in preceding questions on output, purpose, or subgoal/goal.

For AID/W projects, assess likelihood that the results of the project will be used in developing countries.

XII. UNPLANNED EFFECTS

Has the project had any unexpected results or impact, such as changes in administrative/bureaucratic and social structures, environment, health, technical or economic situation?

Are these effects advantageous or not?

Do they require any change in project design or execution?

XIII. LESSONS LEARNED

What advice can you give a colleague about development strategy, e.g., how to tackle a similar development problem or to manage a similar project in another country?

What can be suggested for follow-on in this country?

Similarly, do you have any suggestions about evaluation methodology?

XIV. SPECIAL COMMENTS OR REMARKS

Include any significant policy or program management implications. Also list titles of attachments and number of pages.

APPENDICES:

1. Copy of most recent logframe with recommended changes if required.
2. Detailed discussion of methodology if required.
3. Evaluation team scope of work.
4. List of agencies and key individuals interviewed.
5. Bibliography of documents consulted.
6. Detailed discussion of special topics if desired.

268

Step 4. Assembling and Orienting the Evaluation Team

A. Team Composition

The composition of an evaluation team will depend upon its purpose. For some evaluations, it is possible that only one evaluator (direct hire or contractor) working with the people involved with the project, including the project officer, will be able to meet the needs of the Mission and the Bureau. However, to achieve the depth and range required of most evaluations, a team of experts is normally required. Therefore this section focuses primarily upon the planning and implementation of evaluations that require the services of a number of people brought together for the sole purpose of conducting a specific evaluation.

As a matter of practice, Near East Missions are encouraged to do more of their evaluation work in-house in collaboration with their host country counterparts. Whether an evaluation is to be conducted solely by host country officials and mission personnel (internal) or will use a combination of mission/host country and non-mission personnel (external) is first determined during project design and reaffirmed in the Mission's annual evaluation plan. Scarce project resources should be reserved for external evaluations addressing critical decisions affecting the success of the project, e.g., decisions which may lead to redirection or redesign, technical issues which require outside technical expertise to resolve, possible follow-on activities, etc. Some of the advantages and disadvantages of internal vs. external evaluation teams are:

Internal Evaluations

Advantages

Team is familiar with the program and staff operations.

Team is familiar with AID's evaluation procedures.

Avoids time-consuming procurement negotiations.

Opportunity to build host country staff evaluation capacity.

Less costly.

Disadvantages

Objectivity and candor may be questioned.

Possibility of organizational role conflict.

Difficulty in releasing staff from daily assignments.

External Evaluations

Advantages

Greater objectivity.

Disadvantages

Team may be perceived as "auditors" and arouse anxiety among project/mission staff.

261

Free of organizational bias.

May be unfamiliar with AID's policies/procedures for project development and evaluation.

Higher profile with host country decision makers.

Requires time for contract negotiations, orientation, and monitoring.

Time available for intensive evaluation.

More apt to demonstrate insufficient knowledge of local political, cultural, and economic environment.

Familiar with recent advances in technology.

More costly.

The qualifications of individual team members required for the evaluation are determined by the broad issues that must be addressed. These issues, as well as the desired technical background of team members, are detailed in the scope of work. If an external evaluation is called for, missions should give special consideration to small 8(a) minority and women owned firms in requesting contractor assistance.

B. Team Orientation

External evaluation teams should be thoroughly briefed and provided basic resource materials as soon as possible after the team is selected. AID/W can provide copies of some of the relevant documents and, if desired, AID/W can arrange orientation prior to the team's departure. The content of the orientation is to be discussed with the Mission to avoid duplication. AID/W and/or Mission orientations should include the following topics. Note, with few exceptions, the Mission is considered to be best qualified to brief the team on Items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7.

1. Project background
2. How project addresses overall sector goals
3. Operational structure of the project
4. Project experience to date
5. Reasons for conducting the evaluation
6. Scope of the evaluation
7. Extent of host country (or other donor) participation in the evaluation

8. NE Bureau's evaluation process and procedures, i.e., introduction to the Project Evaluation Summary
9. Logistical support to be provided in the field including identification of primary mission and host country contacts

Documentation provided to the team should include:

- Project Paper
- Authorization documents and NEAC reporting cables
- Grant Agreement inclusive of all amendments
- Contractual documents
- Copies of all prior evaluations whether internal or external
- Project status reports
- Annual workplans
- Sector Assessments
- Audits
- Free access to all non classified files

In deciding the location of the team's orientation, the mission project officer and evaluation officers should consider how much time, if any, team members should be allowed in the United States to review materials that are relevant to the evaluation but not available in the host country. Time allotted for this purpose must of course be budgetted for in the PIO/T.

If an AID/W orientation is desired the evaluation team could also be provided with copies of evaluations of similar projects to help stimulate different lines of inquiry.

Step 5. Backstopping the Evaluation

Because of the lead times built into AID's procurement process, detailed planning for implementation of scheduled evaluations should begin as early as possible. Such planning should begin when the Mission's annual evaluation plan has been agreed upon. This planning period can be condensed when the evaluation is to be conducted solely by AID and host country officials, however, much of the planning for either an internal or external evaluation is similar if the evaluation is to be successful.

The objective of these preparations is to select the people best qualified to evaluate the project, to ensure logistical and clerical support is available when needed and to provide the evaluation team access to the people and information required to analyse and make recommendations concerning improvement in the project. Planning an evaluation is time consuming. The officer responsible must either make, or be given, time to make these arrangements and be prepared to play an active role in the evaluation.

While conditions within each mission and country vary to such a degree that no single guide can cover all of the problems involved in organizing an evaluation, the following checklist should be helpful. Since some of the steps on the checklist can be carried out simultaneously, they are grouped in chronological rather than rank order.

A. When a Decision to Evaluate Has Been Made

1. Clearly assign the responsibility for conducting the evaluation.
2. Reach agreement with the host government concerning reasons for the evaluation, a tentative date and the role of local officials.
3. Reserve funding for the evaluation (preliminary).

B. Two (2) Months Prior to the Evaluation

1. Develop with host government participation (if possible) a preliminary scope of work defining the focus of the evaluation, the length of time it will take, and the personnel (Mission, AID/W TDY, contract, host country) needed to conduct the evaluation.
2. Identify potential sources able to provide the required expertise (in-house, contract, IQC, small 8(a) minority and women owned firms, or AID/W) defined in the preliminary scope of work.
3. Agree with host country on specific time frame for the evaluation. This time frame must take into account leave schedules and holidays, both for local and US personnel, time of the year, during school year or during vacation period, etc.) and any other variable that may constrain or support the evaluation effort.
4. Draft a PIO/T, if needed, to fund the evaluation.
5. If requested, submit draft PIO/T, including the scope of work, to AID/W for review.

272

C. Issue Final PIO/T

Because of the lead times required to contract for, and organize an evaluation team, the PIO/T must be issued at least one month prior to the anticipated beginning of an evaluation conducted by an IQC or a personal services contract that exceeds \$10,000 and six (6) weeks of an 8(a) firm is the contractors.

D. One Month Prior to Evaluation

1. Begin to organize the information required for the evaluation team into a form most suitable for their use.
2. Identify a source and funds for the secretarial support the evaluation team will need.
3. Identify and secure for the period of the evaluation, the office space and vehicles the team will require.
4. With the host government, develop a preliminary itinerary and schedule of appointments for the team.
5. Make hotel, in-country travel and other reservations as necessary.
6. Obtain host country clearances for team members.

E. Ten Days Prior to the Evaluation Team's ETA

1. Reconfirm all logistical arrangements, appointment schedules, etc., planned for the team.
2. Have available information required for the evaluation, adequate copies should be prepared to ensure team members do not have to wait to start work until another team member has read an important project document.

F. Upon Arrival of the Evaluation Team

The following should be performed by the AID project officer responsible for monitoring the project.

1. Meet with the team to refine its concept of what the Mission and the Host Country wants. This initial meeting is important to ensure the team fully understands the Mission's priorities for the evaluation.
2. Accompany the team to their initial meetings with mission, other donors, and especially host country officials to properly introduce the team and make it clear that the Mission supports the team's efforts.
3. Maintain the degree of contact necessary to ensure the team is working well and receiving the support and cooperation it needs to evaluate the project.

213

Step 6. Reporting the Findings

The final evaluation report consists of the following:

- Project Evaluation Summary (PES) Part I - (facesheet) prepared by the Mission (or NE Project Manager for Bureau managed NE Regional projects).
- Mission/Host Country Comments.
- Project Evaluation Summary (PES) Part II as revised for use within the Near East Bureau - prepared by the evaluation team.
- Near East Bureau Evaluation Abstract - prepared either by the evaluation team or by the Mission (NE Project Manager for Bureau managed NE Regional projects.) If the evaluation team is to prepare the abstract, this requirement must be included in the scope of work.

In accordance with Near East Bureau practice, the evaluation team is required to complete a draft of its findings for discussion with the Mission and host country officials prior to its departure. To the extent possible, errors, or disagreements with the draft findings, should be corrected or resolved at this time. Any additional errors, omissions or mission concerns about conclusions/recommendations in the draft report identified after the team's departure, should be cabled to AID/W as soon as possible to be relayed to the evaluation team for their consideration. Changes or adjustments in the final report, however, will be at the discretion of the evaluation team. If the Mission or the host country continue to hold dissenting views about any part of the evaluation, these views should be included in the Mission/Host Country comments section of the final evaluation package.

A. Project Evaluation Summary (PES) - Part I facesheet

The PES facesheet is prepared by the Mission. It records the action decisions approved by the Mission Director, designates the office responsible and the date the action is to be completed. These decisions are based upon recommendations found in the body of the report. Submission of the PES Part I facesheet signifies mission acceptance of the report.

B. Mission/Host Country Comments

To provide a balanced evaluation, the Mission and the Host Country are encouraged to include comments as an attachment to the PES facesheet. In particular, these comments should include points of disagreement and must clearly identify which of the evaluation team's recommendations the Mission does not plan to implement. The comments should provide justification for the Mission's decision. In addition, the Mission should comment on the quality of the work conducted and constraints encountered by the evaluation team.

274

For external evaluations, the Mission also has the option of preparing a full Project Evaluation Summary (PES) report. If this option is chosen, the Mission must clearly state the Project Evaluation Summary is mission prepared based upon an external evaluation and attach the evaluation report. Situations where this option may be called for include:

- a. evaluation reports that are unfocused and rambling in nature;
- b. evaluations that are sensitive in content or tone;
- c. evaluations that are extremely long, but can be effectively summarized using the PES format.

PROJECT EVALUATION SUMMARY (PES) - PART I

Report Control
Symbol U-447

1. PROJECT TITLE		2. PROJECT NUMBER	3. MISSION/AID/W OFFICE
		4. EVALUATION NUMBER (Enter the number maintained by the reporting unit e.g., Country or AID/W Administrative Code, Fiscal Year, Serial No. beginning with No. 1 each FY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR EVALUATION <input type="checkbox"/> SPECIAL EVALUATION	

5. KEY PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION DATES			6. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING	7. PERIOD COVERED BY EVALUATION
A. First PRO-AG or Equivalent FY _____	B. Final Obligation Expected FY _____	C. Final Input Delivery FY _____	A. Total \$ _____ B. U.S. \$ _____	From (month/yr.) _____ To (month/yr.) _____ Date of Evaluation Review _____

B. ACTION DECISIONS APPROVED BY MISSION OR AID/W OFFICE DIRECTOR

A. List decisions and/or unresolved issues; cite those items needing further study. (NOTE: Mission decisions which anticipate AID/W or regional office action should specify type of document, e.g., airgram, SPAR, PIO, which will present detailed request.)	B. NAME OF OFFICER RESPONSIBLE FOR ACTION	C. DATE ACTION TO BE COMPLETED

<p>9. INVENTORY OF DOCUMENTS TO BE REVISED PER ABOVE DECISIONS</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Project Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Implementation Plan e.g., CPI Network <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Plan <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/T _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Logical Framework <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/C <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Project Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> PIO/P _____ </p>	<p>10. ALTERNATIVE DECISIONS ON FUTURE OF PROJECT</p> <p>A. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue Project Without Change</p> <p>B. <input type="checkbox"/> Change Project Design and/or <input type="checkbox"/> Change Implementation Plan</p> <p>C. <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinue Project</p>
---	---

11. PROJECT OFFICER AND HOST COUNTRY OR OTHER RANKING PARTICIPANTS AS APPROPRIATE (Name and Titles)	12. Mission/AID/W Office Director Approval
	Signature _____
	Typed Name _____
	Date _____

276

C. Project Evaluation Summary Part II (Prepared by Evaluation Team)

The Near East Bureau has accepted the Project Evaluation Summary, (PES), Part II format (as revised) for both internal and external evaluations. Experience has shown that use of this format encourages concise presentation of evaluation findings and conclusions. Part II of the PES is also based upon the logical framework methodology and thus links the evaluation process to the original project design. As needed, expanded discussion of topics can be accomplished with the addition of appendices without detracting from the basic format. Issues identified in the scope of work will normally fall under one or more of Items IV through XIV in the revised PES. If necessary, additional items may be added. The amount of detail that will be covered under each item will depend upon the relevance of that item to the specific purpose of the evaluation and, possibly, the stage of project's implementation.

See Step 3, pages _____ for the revised Project Evaluation Summary outline.

277

D. Near East Bureau Evaluation Abstract

An abstract is a one-page summary of the evaluation report. It should contain key findings and identify lessons learned. Recommendations for corrective action should not be included as these are reported in summary form on the PES facesheet (PART I) which is circulated with the abstract. The abstract provides the reader with a means of identifying evaluations of interest. These readers would include project design officers, AID/W backstop and desk officers, other missions and senior management.

The mission or contractor prepared abstract is handled separately from the full evaluation report. Copies should be sent to the Bureau project backstop officer and to the Bureau's Evaluation Staff (NE/DP/E). The abstract and the PES facesheet are reproduced for full distribution to all Near East Missions and to interested offices within AID/W under Part IV of the Bureau's Quarterly Evaluation Status report. A copy of the abstract is submitted to PPC/E/DIU as part of the full evaluation package to assist that office in rapidly disseminating the results of Near East Bureau evaluation work throughout the Agency.

The following Near East Bureau Evaluation Abstract form is to be used in preparing the abstract. This should be completed as follows:

Project Title(s) and Number(s): Self-explanatory. Note if more than one project is covered by the evaluation, each project title and number should be reflected.

Mission/AID/W Office: Self-explanatory.

Project Description: A brief description of the project purpose and key steps by which project objectives will be achieved.

Authorization Date and U.S. LOP Funding Amount: Self-explanatory.

PES Number: As reflected in Block 4 of the PES.

PES Date: As reflected in Block 12 of the PES.

PES Type: An expanded version of Block 4 of the PES.

Abstract prepared by, date: Self-explanatory.

Abstract cleared by, date: Self explanatory.

Abstract Narrative: This section should include a brief discussion of the following:

1. the reason for doing the evaluation,
2. the status of the project as disclosed in the PES,
3. key findings, and
4. lessons learned.

278

- 31 -
NEAR EAST EVALUATION ABSTRACT

PROJECT TITLE(S) AND NUMBER(S)			MISSION/AID/W OFFICE
PROJECT DESCRIPTION			
AUTHORIZATION DATE AND U.S. LOP FUNDING AMOUNT	PES NUMBER	PES DATE	PES TYPE <input type="checkbox"/> Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Special <input type="checkbox"/> Terminal
ABSTRACT PREPARED BY, DATE	ABSTRACT CLEARED BY, DATE		
<div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 50px;">279</div>			

Step 7. Submission, Logging and Distribution Procedures

A. Submission:

The Mission^{2/} is responsible for the submission of all evaluation documentation. This includes submission of the final evaluation report, mission comments, PES Part I Facesheet and the Near East Bureau abstract. Guidelines for the completion of these documents are covered under Step 6 - "Reporting the Findings". The final evaluation is due in AID/W forty-five (45) days after the Mission receives the final evaluation report. Please note, that if the Mission fails to submit the evaluation documentation within ninety (90) days, the Bureau has the option of calling a Project Review Committee to review the report in draft to bring issues to the attention of senior Bureau management. The Mission, of course, would be advised in advance if this option is to be used.

Two copies of the final evaluation package are submitted directly to the Near East Bureau project backstop officer. He/she sends a copy to the Evaluation Staff (NE/DP/E) immediately to ensure its receipt is recorded for the Bureau's Quarterly Evaluation Status Report. In cases where more than one project backstop officer is involved or where the identity of the project backstop officer is unknown, both sets should be sent to NE/DP/E to determine the appropriate project or action officer. This determination will be coordinated through NE/PD/PDS.

B. Logging:

The Bureau project backstop officer is responsible for assuring evaluation reports are logged into the Bureau's Management Information System maintained by NE/PD/PDS. All official evaluation submissions are to be logged in immediately upon receipt. Information to be provided in a memorandum to NE/PD/PDS for the log include the following:

Project No(s) -- PES, block 2. List single or multiple project numbers as appropriate. For non-project evaluations, indicate NA.

Project Title(s) -- PES, block 1. When more than one project is evaluated, indicate evaluation title (e.g., Health Sector, Jordan Valley Development, Irrigation Subsector), and list individual projects covered. If the report is for a non-project evaluation, provide the descriptive title, e.g., Fixed Amount Reimbursable, Title II Food for Peace.

Evaluation No -- PES, block 4.

Date Received -- NE/PD/PDS will enter date the report is logged.

¹
2/ For Bureau managed regional projects, the concerned project officer is responsible for the completion and submission of all required evaluation documentation necessary to complete the evaluation reporting requirements.

Type Evaluation -- PES, block 4. Indicate whether it is a regular evaluation or a special evaluation. NE/PD/PDS will enter (R) for regular, and (S) for special. Indicate also if the evaluation is a final evaluation (T) or is an impact evaluation (X).

Evaluation End Date -- PES, block 7. Indicate the end of the period covered by the evaluation.

Date and Cable No. of AID/W Response -- Following Bureau review of an evaluation, the project backstop officer will send a copy of the cable response to the Mission directly to NE/PD/PDS.

C. Distribution:

The project backstop officer is responsible for distribution of evaluation reports. Upon receipt, the project backstop officer should distribute copies to all members of the Project Review Committee (PRC) and to senior staff. The transmittal memorandum should advise PRC members whether a Level III or Level II review is contemplated (see Step 8. Reviewing Evaluation Findings and Recommendations) and solicit PRC concurrence (Level III Review) as necessary.

The following basic distribution list may be expanded at the project backstop officer's discretion:

(Send to Addressee by Name)

AA/NE (1)	<u>PRC Membership</u>
Director, NE/DP (1)	NE/DP/PR (1)
Director, NE/PD (1)	NE/DP/PL (2)
Director, NE/TECH (1)	NE/DP/E (5)
Geographic Office Director (1)	Desk (1)
	GC/NE (1)
	PPC/PB (1)
	PPC/PDPR (1)
	Bureau and Non-Bureau PRC members (1 each)

Please note project backstop officers are no longer required to distribute copies to PPC/E or PPC/E/DIU. NE/DP/E will forward copies to these offices immediately upon receipt if it is determined only a Level III (Informal) review is determined. If a Level II (PRC) review is called for, distribution will be made only upon concurrence of the PRC. This distribution includes the following offices:

PPC/E/PES,	Room 601, SA-14
PPC/E,	Room 3659, NS
PPC/E/DIU,	Room 209, SA-18

Step 8. AID/W Review of Evaluation Reports

A. Forms of Review

The review process ensures that evaluation reports are read and acted upon by AID/W. The project backstop officer is responsible for assuring that all evaluations submitted by missions are reviewed either formally or informally in AID/W. In determining the form or level of review, the project backstop officer should consult with members of the Project Review Committee and other Near East Bureau staff, including senior staff, who are concerned with the sector, country, or issues involved. The various forms and levels of review are as follows:

1. Informal Reviews

- a. Team Debriefing: These usually occur prior to the receipt of the final report to allow interested individuals to hear first hand from the evaluation team about their impressions and preliminary findings. In addition to the Project Review Committee and other Bureau staff, the project backstop officer should consider inviting officers from other regional or technical bureaus interested in the project.
- b. Technical Reviews of Draft Reports: Such reviews are called only at the request of the Mission in the case of Mission sponsored evaluations. A technical review is required for Bureau managed evaluations. The purpose of a technical review is to critique the report early enough in its development to assure a better final product.
- c. Level III Review: Evaluations receiving a Level III review will generally be routine evaluations that raise no significant issues, lessons learned, or need for AID/W follow-up action. The project backstop officer in consultation with members of the Project Review Committee decides whether or not an informal Level III review is adequate. This consultation can be verbal or by memorandum. A meeting of the Project Review Committee is not necessary. Any concerns raised are relayed to the Mission by cable.

2. Formal Reviews

- a. Level II Review: A Level II review will be conducted by a meeting of the Project Review Committee (PRC). Where the evaluation submitted is not limited to a single project, but covers a cluster of projects, a sector or a program, or other activity, the responsible project backstop officer(s) should coordinate and assure that all persons concerned are constituted as a Project Review Committee to review the evaluation report. For individual project evaluations, the project backstop officer

256

should take the initiative in proposing a Level II review if he/she determines this is warranted based on an initial assessment of the evaluation. When in doubt, he/she should consult with other PRC members and with members of the Bureau evaluation staff. Conversely, PRC members may ask the project backstop officer to schedule a Level II review if they feel the evaluation warrants this.

Evaluations receiving Level II review include the following:

- (1) Evaluations that may require a Level I (NEAC) review should first be reviewed by the PRC to develop the issues paper.
- (2) Special evaluations, should normally receive Level II review.
- (3) Routine evaluations which raise issues concerning direction or implementation of a project on which Committee action is warranted.
- (4) Routine evaluations which identify need for AID/W follow-up actions, other than those of a minimal nature.
- (5) Routine evaluations producing findings/lessons learned which may be of interest to other Bureau or Agency personnel.

Both the NEAC/Senior Staff and PRC reviews provide an opportunity for including persons not necessarily directly involved with the particular activity(s) evaluated, but who may be interested in the findings and/or evaluation methods used. In scheduling a Level I or II review, the project backstop officer(s) should consider whether it would be useful to invite such persons, e.g., other project officers from within the Bureau; technical or program officers from other regional or technical bureaus, members of other organizations such as World Bank, Peace Corps, Private Voluntary Organizations or contractors.

- b. Level II Review of Draft Reports: Evaluation reports are subject to review ninety (90) days after the receipt of the final evaluation report by the Mission. Ideally a final report with mission comments and all other required documentation (PES facesheet and abstract) should be available in AID/W by the end of this period. In those few instances where this is not the case, AID/W has the option of reviewing the draft report (i.e., the report as submitted by the contractor).

Reviews of draft reports are exceptions and thus participation by non-A.I.D. observers will usually be limited. Missions should be advised in advance when such reviews are contemplated and their comments solicited.

c. Level I Review: Level I review involves consideration of the evaluation at a meeting of the NEAC, or a session with Bureau Senior Staff (AA/NE and/or Office Directors). Evaluations reviewed at this level will generally fall into two categories:

(1) Evaluations associated with a proposed revision of project, e.g., approval of a follow-on project, a project amendment, or a companion project.

(2) Evaluations which raise significant policy-level issues for decision and/or consideration, e.g., issues specific to the program or project, issues concerning development strategy or techniques in the particular country or sector, or of significance in other countries or sectors.

Evaluations that have not been submitted in conjunction with an imminent project review, but which raise significant policy level questions must be specifically proposed for NEAC/Senior Staff level consideration. There are several ways to obtain a Level I review. The responsible project backstop officer(s) may propose that the PRC recommend the project for Level I review. Or, the PRC may propose a Level I review, as a result of their Level II review. Alternatively, any Near East Bureau Office Director may ask that an evaluation be scheduled for Level I review. Approval by the responsible office director(s) is required when the project backstop officer(s) or other individual PRC member wish to schedule an evaluation for NEAC review.

Project backstop officers should schedule Level I reviews for the NEAC with NE/PD/PDS, in the same manner as all other NEAC agenda items are scheduled. Announcement of evaluation reviews by the NEAC will follow the same format and procedures as announcement of NEAC level project reviews.

Whenever an evaluation is being reviewed in conjunction with a project review, the memorandum scheduling the NEAC review should so indicate. The evaluation involved, should be referenced by its number as given in block 4 of the PES facesheet.

234

B. AID/W Review Guidelines

Evaluation reports provide a base of information for subsequent decisions. Therefore, both the AID/W and the Mission reviews of evaluation reports should focus not only on the substance of the report but also on the quality of the evaluation. Missions are asked to comment on the quality of the evaluation in the Mission/Host Country section. Questions which AID/W should consider in reviewing the quality of the evaluation, include the following:

1. Are the issues clearly identified?
2. Does the narrative support the conclusions reached?
3. Are the recommendations realistic? Has the Mission responded to all of the recommendations?
4. How reliable is the data? If the data used was soft, does the evaluation clearly indicate this?
5. Are conclusions based primarily on professional judgement so identified?
6. Did the evaluation team adhere to the scope of work? Was the methodology used appropriate? If the scope of work or methodology was changed during the evaluation is this change clearly explained and appropriate?
7. Are lessons learned clearly presented and useful?
8. Has all of the required documentation (PES facesheet, Mission/Host Country comments, NE Bureau abstract, final evaluation report) been submitted?

Step 9. Providing Feedback on Reviews

In accordance with established practice, AID/W will review all evaluations and report to the Mission the results of the review within forty-five (45) days of the evaluation being received in AID/W. The Bureau project backstop officer is responsible for drafting, and clearing with the appropriate offices, the evaluation reporting cable. Reporting cables are required for all evaluations submitted by the field. When an evaluation report is reviewed in conjunction with a Level I (NEAC) review of a PID/PP or PP amendment, comments on the review of the evaluation may be included as part of the NEAC reporting cable for the PID/PP or PP amendment.

Reporting cables should be consisely written and well-organized. The cable should clearly summarize the important issues, and distinguish other points as secondary. The reporting cable should include the following:

1. In the opening paragraph the project title(s) and number(s), the date and the nature (Level I - NEAC; Level II - PRC; Level III - Informal) of the review.
2. Adequacy of the report. (see Step 8 Part B).
3. The major issues discussed and any recommendations or suggestions which should be relayed to the Mission.
4. Other comments or concerns raised during the review process.

Step 10. Follow-up On Evaluation Recommendations

A 1983 study of the Near East Bureau's evaluation process established that recommendations made as the result of an evaluation are not always implemented. Subsequent evaluations often contain similar, if not identical, recommendations that are also ignored. The reasons for the selective implementation of the evaluation recommendations generally does not show up in the project files. To ensure that the Bureau is making optimal use of its evaluation efforts, the Bureau requires the following procedures be implemented by all Near East missions.

Whenever an evaluation reveals a logframe requires revision, the original logframe, as well as proposed changes must be included as an annex to the PES. Note: Radical change may require prior AID/W concurrence and possible PP amendment in accordance with the Redefinition of Authority guidelines.

Establishment of a system for follow-up on the implementation of critical evaluation recommendations.

When missions do not agree with particular evaluation recommendations, they should attach their views to the PES facesheet accepting the final evaluation report. (See Step 6.B. Mission/Host Country comments).

In the scope of work instruct the evaluation team to address actions taken on previous evaluation recommendations in a separate section. (See Step 3.)

251

CHAPTER IV

IV. The Mission Evaluation Process: Roles and Responsibilities

Missions are responsible for establishing and managing their own evaluation systems. In accordance with Agency guidelines, the Mission Director is responsible for evaluations conducted within the Mission. This responsibility is normally delegated to a staff officer who serves as the manager of the evaluation process. Mission evaluation officers usually have other assignments which have priority over evaluation. In almost all cases, the role of the mission staff evaluation officer is defined by the officer occupying the position. This in turn is influenced by that officer's prior experience and personal attitude toward evaluation.

The lack of trained and experienced mission evaluation officers is a major impediment to establishment of effective mission evaluation process. The first step in overcoming this problem is the clear understanding of the role of the mission evaluation officer. This officer, with support from other members of the Mission, should be assigned the responsibility and authority for the following:

- (1) Development, coordination and implementation of the Mission's evaluation policy and plans;
- (2) Assist project officers in the preparation of project evaluation plans and their subsequent implementation;
- (3) Maintenance of a Mission record of evaluation findings and lessons learned for possible future utilization;
- (4) Preparation of Near East Bureau evaluation abstracts highlighting in particular lessons learned in those cases when this responsibility has not been assigned to the evaluation team;
- (5) Develop, to the extent possible, contacts with host government evaluation offices and personnel to encourage greater cooperation in project evaluations and possibly establish evaluation training programs.

Provided below is a description of a model mission evaluation process that can be adapted as appropriate. This model is fully consistent with long standing Agency guidelines; most Near East missions already conform to most of the elements below.

A. Responsibilities

Agency guidelines identifies the Mission Director as the final authority and primary mission evaluation officer. He/she makes the final decisions.

The project manager is the person primarily responsible for evaluating his/her project and/or managing the evaluation thereof.

158

The mission evaluation officer is the evaluation process manager. Ideally, this person's responsibilities should include all of the seven items listed above. At a minimum he/she in cooperation with project officers, will: establish the mission evaluation plan and schedule; help project personnel analyse the actual as compared to the planned progress in accordance with the project's implementation plan; provide assistance as necessary regarding appropriate evaluation methodology and documentation; and maintain liaison with the Near East Bureau's evaluation staff and potential evaluation contractors. The evaluation officer, therefore, should have a chance to review projects when they are in the design stage to ensure the project design sets the stage for later evaluation. Finally, the evaluation officer should be responsible for arranging and following up on the Mission's internal evaluation reviews.

B. Project Evaluation Review

(1) Organization:

Reviews of evaluations at the mission level should be designed as collaborative efforts to strengthen a project and not judicial inquiries. It has been found that a group similar to the Bureau's Project Review Committee is the most effective means of developing constructive responses to evaluations.

Such a committee might be composed of the following members:

1. Chairman: Mission Director or Deputy Director
2. Program Officer
3. Evaluation Officer
4. Controller
5. Project Manager
6. Contract and Legal Officers if available

These members may be supplemented by other interested parties. Whenever possible, appropriate host country officials should be encouraged to participate.

Prior to an evaluation review, the project officer should meet with the mission evaluation officer to discuss the format for the review as well as the methodology and substance of the evaluation itself. If a special evaluation team is conducting an in-depth evaluation, a summary of the final report could form the basis for the review. Where the evaluation is a routine, periodic review and involves primarily mission personnel and host government counterparts, the Project Evaluation Summary (PES) format will be followed and may serve as the basic document for the group review.

The project officer should distribute the draft PES or copies of the in-depth evaluation to the intended participants. The project officer and the evaluation officer should prepare a final PES facesheet as soon as possible after mission review in order to enhance the prospects for any necessary follow-up on findings and action decisions arrived at during the review and to facilitate early submission to AID/W.

00

(2) Purpose:

If the evaluation review is successful, the participants will come away with answers to the following questions:

- a. What has the project achieved to date?
- b. How does this achievement compare with previous plans?
- c. What is the likelihood of the project achieving its purpose?
- d. Is it likely that the project will have the expected impact on a programming goal?
- e. What unplanned changes have occurred and what are their effects?
- f. What lessons have been learned?

In addition to these evaluative questions, the review has to answer three forward-looking questions:

- a. What alternatives to the current plan merit consideration?
- b. Could the same purpose be achieved more efficiently by other means?
- c. What changes would improve the project?

The evaluation review needs to consider:

- Additional specific issues raised in the course of the analysis of project design, and measurement of progress.
- Important issues raised by AID/W or others.
- Lessons learned through the evaluation process itself.

CHAPTER V

V. Host Country Involvement

Common sense experience and all past Agency/Bureau guidance provide compelling reasons for gaining the highest possible level of host country participation in project evaluations.

We seek an evaluation process that results in:

An opportunity for organized USAID-Host Country cooperative study, thought, discussion and recording of what a given assistance project or program is accomplishing; how it works or doesn't and why. The objective is to make necessary changes in course and objectives or for application in future development efforts.

Unfortunately, participation by host country personnel in the majority of the Bureau's evaluations has been uneven. This problem varies from country to country. For all missions in the region, however, there is the perception that the host country is not attuned to evaluation, that evaluation equates to audit and inspection, and that evaluation as a learning process is an American management tool which will take time to transfer to the local environment. Missions generally have not consistently sought to engage host country personnel or agencies in dialogue and action regarding joint evaluations.

Clearly, more rigorous attention to overcoming these weaknesses is required. The Near East Bureau, now requires that evaluation plans in the Project Paper discuss the degree of host country interest in and capacity for participation in the planned evaluations of the project, including, particularly, host country capacity for collecting and analyzing baseline and other data relevant to evaluation and economic analysis. Where interest and capacity are shown to be weak, missions should include in the project evaluation plan what they propose to do to address these weaknesses whether through the project or by some other approach. For example, where the type of project or magnitude of investment warrants it, training elements to improve host country evaluation capacity should be integrated into the project. Missions are also required to provide the full text of the project evaluation plan to the host country either as an annex to the Project Agreement or in a Project Implementation Letter (PIL).

In addition, missions should consider using local universities, management training institutions and local consultant firms as sources of personnel to carry out evaluations. Such institutions could also provide resources for the development evaluation training workshops for host country staff.

293

CHAPTER VI

VI. Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned

A. Utilization of Evaluation Findings

The Assistant Administrator's Management Objectives for the Near East Bureau state evaluation findings are to be utilized in the design and implementation of the Bureau's program. A system for the end-use check on the extent to which evaluation materials are in fact being utilized was put into place during FY 1982. This involves a requirement that missions request relevant evaluation materials early in the design process from AID/W. The extent to which these materials or other information obtained by the Missions are used is then reflected in the Project Identification Document (PID) in the form of a bibliography. In addition, as part of the NEAC review/reporting process, additional materials may be identified for use in preparation of the Project Paper (PP). The PP also contains a bibliography of reference materials. Project backstop officers in AID/W are responsible for the actual collection and provision of the design and evaluation materials.

B. Lessons Learned

A primary objective of these guidelines is to facilitate establishment of an evaluation process that will produce useful lessons for improved project implementation and design. Lessons learned are a vital part of every evaluation and should receive special attention during both the AID/W and mission review processes. Therefore lessons learned must be given a high profile in evaluation reports. They should describe causal relationship factors that proved critical to project success or failure, including necessary political, policy, and social and bureaucratic preconditions within the host country and AID. It is vital that the evaluation provides a clear understanding of the project implementation process and everything that has a direct or indirect impact on that process.

Lessons can be learned about AID's and the Host Country's administrative/management dynamics with particular attention to regulations, patterns of behavior (e.g., hierarchical), attitudes, budgets (and budgetary process), personnel (their skills and attitudes), infrastructure, power, politics and policies. How have any of these elements affected provisions and utilization of inputs and production of planned outputs? What techniques or approaches proved most effective or had to be changed and why?

295

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography

SECTION I: Definition

- I. 1. AID Evaluation Handbook (Draft), Chapter IB: "Definitions of Evaluation" (August 1980), pp 5-8.
- I. 2. Ibid., Appendix A: "Brief Glossary of Evaluative Terms, pp A1-A5.
- I. 3. Design and Evaluation of AID-Assisted Projects (OPM Training Manual, November, 1980), "Linkage Between Design and Evaluation", pp. 130-132.

SECTION II: Applicability of the Guidelines

- II. 1. Design and Evaluation of AID Assisted Projects, "AID's Evaluation Mandate" pp 127-129

SECTION III: The Near East Bureau Evaluation Process

Step 1. Deciding Whether to Evaluate, When and in What Form

General:

- III. 1. AID Handbook 3, Figure: "The AID Project Cycle" (September 1982), pp 12-16.

Periodic Evaluations:

- III. 2. Design and Evaluation of AID-Assisted Projects, "AID Evaluations", pp 133-136.
- III. 3. AID Handbook 3, Appendix 12B: "General Guidelines for Evaluations Conducted During Implementation", pp 12B1-12B7.
- III. 4. Ibid., Appendix 12C: "Adaptation of Evaluation Procedures for Particular Types of Projects," pp 12C1-12C3.
- III. 5. AID Evaluation Handbook, Chapter III-C "How to do a Routine Evaluation using the Local Framework Method" (August 1980 Draft), pp 12C 1-7
- III. 6. Guidelines for the Evaluation of Capital Projects, Annex B: "Special Capital Project Considerations AID - PPC/DPRE/PE, (January 1975), pp 15-25.

Project Completion Reports/Final Evaluations:

- III. 7. AID Handbook 3, Chapter 14D3: "Final Monitoring Activities and The Project Assistance Completion Report", pp 14-7 - 14-9.

Impact Evaluations:

- III. 8. Design and Evaluation of AID-Assisted Projects, "Impact Evaluations", pp 240-247.

Assessments and Special Studies:

- III. 9. AID Evaluation Handbook (Draft), Chapter IV: "Guidelines for a Special Evaluation", (August 1980), pp 1-4.

Data Sources:

- III. 10 Evaluation Handbook (AID MC 1026.1) Chapter VI "Measurement, Data Collection and Analysis", pp 47-59.
- III. 11 Collection and Analysis of Data, a general discussion synthesizing many sources, including:
- A. Select the subject group to be studied
 - B. Prepare the research proposal
 - C. Develop a data analysis plan
 - D. Design, the data collection instrument
 - E. Collect and analyze the data

Step 2. Preparing an Evaluation Plan During the Design of the Project

- III. 12 Design and Evaluation of AID-Assisted Projects, "Evaluation Planning", pp 137-139.
- III. 13 AID Handbook 3, Appendix 3K, "Elements of An Evaluation Plan" (September 1982), pp 3K1-3K4.
- III. 14 Project Evaluation Guidelines, MO 1026.1, Supplement I, Figure: "The Logical Structure of a Technical Assistance Project", (third edition, August 1974), p 7.
- III. 15 Project Evaluation Guidelines, AID "Project Design Summary - Logical Framework".
- III. 16 AID Evaluation Handbook Chapter II "The Project Design and Evaluation" (Draft August 1980)
- III. 17 Manager's Guide to Data Collection, Chapter One: "The Manager's Role" (November 1979), pp 1-9.
- III. 18 AID Evaluation Handbook (Draft), Chapter III A: "How to Make an Evaluation Plan", pp 1-5.
- III. 19 Evaluation Handbook (MC 1026.1), Supplement II, Appendix C: "Selected Output Indicators", pp 76-78

III. 20 Ibid, Appendix D: "Suggested Social Indicators", pp 79-86.

III. 21 Ibid, Appendix E: "Indicators - Alliance for Progress", pp 87-102.

Step 3. Developing a Scope of Work for An Evaluation

III. 22 AID Evaluation Handbook (Draft), Chapter III-B: "How to Make a Scope of Work for An Evaluation", (August 1980), pp 5-7.

III. 23 Sample SOW: "Interim Project Evaluation, Jordan: Groundwater Resources Investigation Project Number 278-0243.

III. 24 Design and Evaluation of AID Assisted Projects", "Developing a Scope of Work for an Evaluation", p 155

Step 4. Assembling and Orienting the Evaluation Team

III. 25 Evaluation Handbook, (MC 1026.1), Supplement II, Chapter V: "Selection of Evaluations", pp 41-45.

III. 26 Manager's Guide to Data Collection, Chapter Two C: "Selecting a Study Team", pp 18-20.

III. 27 State Telegram 333797: "Early Alert System to Identify Direct Contracting Opportunities for Small 8(a) Minority and Women-Owned Firms" (November 23, 1983).

III. 28 AID Handbook 3, "12G Evaluation Reporting" pp 12-13.

III. 29 Evaluation Handbook (AID MC 1026.1) "Timing and Submission of Report from Consultant" pp 45-46

III. 30 Example of Beneficiary Impact Statement: An Attachment to USAID/Indonesia PES's CICA 1978-80.

SECTION IV: The Mission Evaluation Process: Roles and Responsibilities

IV. 1 The Design and Evaluation of AID Assisted Projects, "The Mission Evaluation Review", pp 214-218.

SECTION V: Host Country Involvement

V. 1 Host Country Participation: Increasing Host Country Participation in AID Project Evaluations.

V. 2 AID Evaluation Handbook 2nd edition MC 1026.1 "Joint Evaluation with Cooperating Countries", pp 61-67.

SECTION VI: Utilization of Prior Experience/Lessons Learned

VI. 1 Examples of "Lessons Learned".

NOTE: Copies of the material contained in this bibliography are available upon request from the Near East Bureau's evaluation staff (NE/DP/E). Each mission evaluation officer has been provided a full set of these references for Mission use.

UNCLASSIFIED

AID/AFR/PD/CCWAP:RANDERSON:MSL
 04/20/83 EXT 29066
 AFR/PD:NCOHEN

AID/PPC/PDPR:ELIJEWski{INFO}
 AID/AFR/CCWA:BBEYER{INFO}

AID/AFR/DP:GCAUVIN{INFO}
 AID/GC/AFR:DRBERTSON{INFO}

ROUTINE

AIDAF

AIDAC

E.O. 12065: N/A

NC
 RA

TAGS:

SUBJECT: AFRICA BUREAU PID DESIGN AND REVIEW PROCESS

1. AS PART OF AN AGENCY-WIDE EFFORT TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF OUR WORK AND THE PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR STAFF AFR/PD IS PARTICIPATING IN A PILOT PROJECT SUPPORTED BY A CONSULTANCY WITH W. EDWARDS DEMING, AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED MANAGEMENT EXPERT. THE PILOT PROJECT WILL EXAMINE THE BUREAU'S CURRENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES THAT RELATE TO THE PID TO SEE IF WE CAN AGREE ON THE BASIC QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS REQUIRED OF A PID TO ALLOW FOR CONSISTENCY IN THE DESIGN AND REVIEW PROCESS. WE HAVE HAD SEVERAL MONTHS EXPERIENCE WITH THE NEW HANDBOOK 3 PID GUIDELINES AND AFR/PD NOTICE 82-13 ON PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PROJECTS. WHAT WE WANT TO DO IS LOOK AT OUR EXPERIENCE WITH PIDS UNDER THOSE GUIDELINES, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE INCREASED DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY TO APPROVE PROJECTS BY THE FIELD POSTS, TO SEE IF THE BUREAU AND THE FIELD HAVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS THE MINIMUM CONTENT THAT SHOULD

BE INCLUDED IN A PID. FOR EXAMPLE, HANDBOOK 3 SAYS A PID SHOULD BE NO MORE THAN 15 SINGLE-SPACED PAGES LONG, BUT RECENT EXPERIENCE SHOWS THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE. THE PIDS WE HAVE REVIEWED RANGE FROM 30 TO 100 PAGES AND INCLUDE VASTLY DIFFERENT LEVELS OF ANALYSES. WE ARE NOT SURE IF THIS IS CAUSED BY INADEQUACY OR UNREALISTIC HANDBOOK 3 GUIDELINES, MISSION INTERPRETATION OF HANDBOOK 3 REQUIREMENTS, OF COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM THE AID/W REVIEW PROCESS, OR SOME OTHER REASON(S). WHAT WE HOPE TO DO IS GET ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE INFORMED JUDGMENTS ON PID REQUIREMENTS THAT GIVES MISSIONS CONFIDENCE THAT WHAT THEY SUBMIT IN A PID IS ALL THAT AID/W NEEDS AND THAT YOUR MISSION PID SUBMISSIONS WILL BE REVIEWED IN A CONSISTENT MANNER.

2. THE FIRST STEP IN THE PILOT PROJECT IS AN ASSESSMENT OF AID/W AND FIELD PERCEPTIONS OF THE PID PROCESS. WHAT IS THE RIGHT, WRONG, USEFUL, USELESS IN THE WAY WE ARE DOING PIDS? WHAT ALTERNATIVES DO WE HAVE TO CHANGE OUR APPROACH TO PIDS? CAN WE IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE PID PROCESS IN A WAY THAT REDUCES WORK LOAD REQUIREMENTS? WE WANT THE MISSIONS' THOUGHTS ON THE PROCESS, SO THAT WE CAN INCORPORATE MISSION COMMENTS WITH THOSE OF AID/W TO OBTAIN ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE NEEDED CHANGES IN THE PROCESS. WE WISH TO DEVELOP A QUESTIONNAIRE THAT IS DIRECTED ENOUGH TO GIVE US AN INFORMATION BASE THAT CAN BE ANALYZED AND OPEN ENDED ENOUGH TO ALLOW FOR CREATIVE INPUT. LISTED BELOW ARE SOME QUESTIONS THAT MIGHT BE INCLUDED. WOULD YOU PLEASE ADDRESS THESE QUESTIONS AND CONSIDER WHAT ELSE WE NEED TO ASK? WHAT DON'T WE NEED TO ASK AND WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON OUR APPROACH?

- A. WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF HANDBOOK 3 AND THE NEW DELEGATIONS:

- - {1} WHAT IS THE CONCEPTUAL ROLE OF THE PID IN THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

- - {2} WHAT IS THE MINIMUM CONTENT REQUIRED IN THE PID TO ALLOW THE MISSION AND AID/W TO MAKE INFORMED JUDGMENTS ABOUT ANY PROPOSED PROJECTS?

- - {3} IS THE NEW HANDBOOK 3 GUIDANCE SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR TO INFORM MISSIONS OF AID/W REQUIREMENTS? HAS IT REDUCED OR INCREASED PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH PID

PREPARATION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL? WHAT PROBLEMS STILL EXIST? WHAT CAN BE DONE TO FURTHER REDUCE PERCEIVED PROBLEMS?

- B. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE PROJECT COMMITTEE IN THE REVIEW? SHOULD THE COMMITTEE BE MADE UP OF FEWER OR MORE MEMBERS? SHOULD THERE BE SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE FOR REVIEW OF PIDS? WHAT IS/SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF S/T IN THE PROCESS?

- C. SHOULD WE DEVELOP A CHECKLIST OF SPECIFIC AREAS TO BE INCLUDED FOR REVIEW IN THE PID? WHAT SHOULD BE IN SUCH A CHECKLIST? POLICY ISSUES? ADHERENCE TO CDSS? SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS? WHAT DEPTH OF ANALYSIS SHOULD BE REQUIRED FOR EACH AREA?

- D. HOW DO OTHER AGENCY BUREAU WORKLOAD PRIORITIES IMPACT ON THE REVIEW PROCESS? IS THERE ANY WAY TO SCHEDULE PID REVIEWS TO AVOID CONFLICTING DEMANDS POSED BY CDSS REVIEWS, CONGRESSIONAL PRESENTATION PREPARATION, ETC.?

- E. IS THERE SUFFICIENT INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS BETWEEN AID/W AND MISSIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PIDS? WOULD MORE TDY ASSISTANCE BY PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE REVIEW PROCESS FACILITATE THE REVIEW PROCESS? SHOULD THE FIELD BE REPRESENTED AT EVERY REVIEW?

- F. CAN MISSIONS PROGRAM THEIR WORK TO AVOID SUBMITTING PIDS IN THE SAME FISCAL YEAR AS THE PROJECT IS TO BE AUTHORIZED? WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF COUNTRY/FUNCTIONAL LEVELS OF PID SUBMISSIONS?

- G. WHAT IS REQUIRED OF A MISSION WITHOUT AN APPROVED STRATEGY OR A CHANGING STRATEGY?

{THIS QUESTION IS TO BE ASKED OF AID/W STAFF}:

- H. WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE AID/W REVIEW PROCESS, BOTH AT THE ISSUES REVIEW AND AT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR PROJECT REVIEW (ECPR)? SHOULD THE ROLE OF EACH OFFICE BE RESTRICTED BY SPECIALIZATION OF FUNCTION? SHOULD EACH OFFICE DEVELOP A SINGLE POSITION PAPER FOR THE REVIEW?

3. WE WILL USE YOUR RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS AND YOUR FURTHER THOUGHTS TO DEVELOP A QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE USED IN DIRECT INTERVIEWS WITH BOTH FIELD AND AID/W STAFF WHO PARTICIPATE IN AND ARE AFFECTED BY THE PID PROCESS. WE WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING YOUR COMMENTS BY MAY 6. THIS PILOT PROJECT HAS THE CLOSE ATTENTION OF SENIOR AGENCY MANAGEMENT AND PRESENTS THE BUREAU WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO BREAK NEW GROUND THAT CAN HAVE AGENCY WIDE APPLICATION. YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VITAL TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR EFFORT. 44

304

TO: Norman Cohen, AFR/PD
A. R. Love, A/AA/AFR

THRU: Howard Helman, AFR/PD/CCWAP

FROM: Russell Anderson, AFR/PD/CCWAP

DATE:

SUBJECT: Deming Pilot Project

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update of the project and to outline proposed actions.

In late April we sent a cable to all Africa field posts notifying them of the pilot project to "examine the Bureau's current policies, procedures and practices that relate to the PID to see if we can agree on the basic quality characteristics required of a PID to allow for consistency in the design and review process." The cable asked a series of questions on Handbook 3 guidelines, the AID/W review process and other areas to get a preliminary response that would focus our review and elicit questions that the Mission's might want to include in the exercise. The quantity of responses, while not overwhelming (7 Missions cabled responses, AFR/RA and USAID/Yaounde responded in

305

interview sessions), ^{it indicate} did ~~confirm~~ that the Missions feel that they can't submit a PID that conforms to the Handbook 3 guidelines and have it approved. Rather, they believe what AID/W wants is the substance for project approval because AID/W is using the PID level decision as the de facto authorization of a project. To satisfy AID/W's unstated desire for sufficient (and everchanging) information on which to base the de facto authorization, the Missions try to anticipate every possible question that might be raised and to answer those questions in the PID. The net result is a breakdown of the PID process because of uncertainty of what should be in a PID to allow AID/W to make a *de facto author.* decision.

Within that broad problem are several areas that could be examined to see if we can't get the PID process back into the Handbook 3 context so that the Mission and AID/W can agree on what the real rules are on PID design and ^{review} ~~approval~~. The first area should be the PID itself.

What is the PID and what level of substantive information is required for each section of the PID? Most Mission responses to our questions provided some definition of what they thought should be in a PID, and, as could be expected, they were not uniform in what they should be included, and no Mission dealt with the level of substantive information for any particular section. Even if we could agree on which sections should be in the PID--a relatively easy task--we would probably run into some difficulty agreeing on the substantive content required of each section.

306

Another specific area that all agree should be studied is the AID/W review process itself, as it is inextricably linked to the question of substantive PID content. The lack of consistency in the review process has a cumulative contributory impact on Mission perceptions of AID/W information requirements. Consistency in the review process, including preparation for and orchestration of the process, could provide Missions the assurance that the PID they plan to submit will be reviewed by AID/W using commonly agreed upon standards. Management of the review process should be studied to determine what should or should not be sorted out at the PID stage, who should do the sorting and how can the process be modified to improve the quality of reviews. Simply deciding what should be reviewed can go a long way to improving the quality by forcing a more focussed look at the PID.

Those two areas--what should be in a PID and how should it be reviewed--seem to be the ones seen by the Missions as causing most of the misunderstandings about the PID process. Within each area there are any number of subareas to be examined. Attached is a draft outline of a scope of work that tries to identify those subareas where we need to get more information. It should be kept in mind that all we have thus far are field perceptions and AID/W's may be different, e.g., Missions don't really think through what they want a project to be or that they are inundating AID/W with verbage in order to mask the fact that they haven't really sought out the concepts, problems and issues which are most critical. In any event, we need to decide now on the scope of the pilot project and its ramifications on our office

workload, involvement by others in the Bureau and ~~lastly~~, the continuation of the services of Bob Caccia, the consultant to the project.

Between now and the beginning of September it is estimated that 60 to 75 percent of my time will be required for the project. The estimate is based on Caccia's prior experience in these types of projects. That will definitely impact on the office as I am de facto deputy in the office, plus I have responsibility for Zaire, Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Central Africa Republic, the joint S&T/AFR Education Initiative and occasional crises that hit us all at one time or another. Alternatives to be considered include: additional staff to pick up the country portfolios, have someone else take up the Deming project, severely cut back in the proposed time to be spent on the Deming project or back out entirely. Which ever route is taken there will be costs to the Bureau. You should note that I have had several discussions with Ed Donoghue, who would like to participate in the project. He would be valuable to the exercise, but he too would have to commit a substantial portion of his time, ~~to the project~~. You may want to consider others and formalize a committee to do the project.

In addition to staff time the project will also require some funds for consultant services and, possibly, travel. Mr. Caccia is currently working with AFR and NE under a purchase order issued by Tom Rollis' office. That purchase order has pretty much run its course and the Bureau will be requested to provide funds to cover approximately 50

308

days for Mr. Caccia's services, plus travel funds (should field work be approved as part of the scope). This could total 15 to 20 thousand dollars. Bureau travel funds ^{might}~~would~~ be required for the Bureau participants. (In a brief session with Mr. Rollis he intimated that we could get additional funds if the Bureau needed them.)

I have attached a matrix of responses to our cable and a draft scope of work. We need to discuss both and make some decision on commitment to and content of the project.

PILOT PROJECT PLAN

I. Introduction

A. Purpose. This is a pilot project to examine the Bureau's current policies, procedures and practices that relate to the PID to establish the basic quality characteristics required in a PID to allow for consistency in the design and review process.

B. Status. Two seminars on the philosophy, techniques and application of Quality Control/Productivity Improvement Principles have been given by Dr. Deming. Subsequent to the seminars Mr. Robert Caccia, an associate to Dr. Deming, began working with the Bureau staff to develop the parameters and the techniques to be used in the project. In April we cabled the field (State 112171) posing a series of questions about the PID process.

Using their responses to our cable we have focussed the project to a review of what the substantive requirements of a PID should be and to a critical analysis of the AID/W PID review process. What is proposed is a data gathering exercise to isolate the problems within those two areas, a data analysis exercise to isolate the factors causing problems and a management review of the findings.

310

II. Work Plan.

A. Focus on Perceived Problem Areas. At the risk of appearing to define the problems in too simplistic terms, it is evident from our initial questions to the field that the Handbook 3 PID requirements are not uniformly applied in either the design of PID's or their review. Within those two areas, PID requirements and PID review, are a myriad of subareas that need to be reviewed, ~~to isolate the problems and causal factors.~~ What is proposed for the next phase of the activity is to gather data to determine ^{a common underlying} what AID/W and field posts see should be in the PID and how those PID's should be reviewed. ~~Attachment A is a summary of the field responses to our initial questions about Handbook 3 and about the AID/W review process. What is needed now is a focus within those two broad areas. That focus will come from the use of a questionnaire aimed at each specific subarea.~~

B. Data Gathering (June 1 - July 30). The primary purpose of data gathering is to isolate the problems and causal factors in the interpretation of Handbook 3 and in the review process. We can broadly state the problems at this point, but without further analysis it is impossible to state precisely what is causing those problems or to make any recommendations on how to correct them. We want to

3/1

develop a set of questions about the substantive content of each PID section and about the review process. We think the data gathering portion should also be used to insure the participation of as many staff as we can. One of the problems thus far in the exercise is that it has been a single person project, and to make the exercise a success we need to involve the desk officers, technicians, program analysts and Bureau management. One of the tenets of the Deming approach is broad participation of staff and managers in the identification of and solutions to process problems. We will use a questionnaire and individual group interviews to reach 40 to 50 people in AID/W, all field posts (including REDSO's), and a few people outside the Bureau. We may want to visit 4-6 missions to insure a greater degree of participation. A questionnaire will be developed along the following lines:

1. The PID

What substance is required for: (Questions will be developed for each area)

(a) Program Factors

(b) Relationship to AID Strategy Statements

3/2

(c) Project Description

(1) Perceived Problems

(2) Goal and Purpose

(3) Project Outline

(d) Social Considerations

(e) Economic Considerations

(f) Past Experience

(g) Host Country Agencies

(h) AID Support Requirements

(i) Budget

(j) Design Strategy

(k) Environmental Considerations

(l) Policy Issues

3/3

This follows the Handbook 3 PID ^{outline} ~~requirements~~ and would look at what the Handbook says, what AID/W interprets it to say and what the field interprets it to say. We hope to isolate the sections on which we all agree, identify the problems in the sections where we don't agree, and to establish a basis for agreement on what the substance of the latter sections should be. We would not be looking to a revamp of the Handbook, but would focus on what we, as a Bureau, can do within the context of the Handbook. Questions would be developed for each substantive area, such as a-1.(b), strategy, where Missions feel that CDSS and ABS reviews should preclude the need for extensive PID language to justify the project; or, what level of economic analysis is required at the PID level.

2. The AID/W Review Process. PID development by the field seems to respond as much to the review process as it does to the Handbook requirements. The Handbook is the track to follow in PID development, but it is the review process that adds the substantive baggage that PIDs must carry. Although the review process has been tightened in the past several years, it still appears that the system still sends the field little guidance that is

314

uniform from PID to PID. In an effort to anticipate ^{unstated} the requirements of the ~~over-shifting~~ review process, Missions are developing PID's that try to answer every possible question that might be raised to special interest group(s) who might review the PID. Missions also feel that the increased delegations have had a substantial negative impact in PID reviews. It is common currency that the PID is much more important to Bureau Management because it is the last change for AID/W to review the project before major sums of money are committed. We need to look at the review process to find out how it can better serve the field and AID/W, especially in light of the increased delegation. Listed below are the kinds of questions to be asked-

1. What should the review process look for? Is it confined to Handbook 3 or is it something more?
2. What is the impact of DOA 140 (rev) on ECPR decisions? Is it realistic to depend entirely on Handbook 3 requirements?
3. What is the role of the Project Committee? Who should be on it? What should be the role of individual members?

315

4. How do we properly weigh the special interests, e.g., economists, WID, etc., in the review?
5. Is PID notice 82-13 sufficient as a guide to PID reviewers? Should it be more specific in assignment of responsibilities to Committee Members? Is it a proper vehicle to provide rules on the interpretation of Handbook 3 requirements?
6. Are the Issues Meetings properly forming issues to be considered at the ECPR level? Can we structure the Issues and ECPR sessions to signal the field the important areas to pay particular attention to in the PID.
7. How can we improve the pre-PID AID/W-field communications to facilitate the review process?
8. Should the USAID have a representative at each PID review?

These questions are only illustrative, and we hope that, through the participation of others, we can develop questions that will get at the factors that adversely affect the review process.

- C. Data Analysis. Analysis of the responses to questionnaires and interviews should point out the factors in the process that can be modified or corrected by management. This is another important step in requiring fairly broad participation, as this

is where we will decide what can or cannot be corrected. The analysis will be performed by a group comprised of staff from various disciplines. One function of the group will be to identify the management level responsible for decisions that will have to be made to address the causal factors. It is not expected that recommendations would come from the group. That is the function of the next step--the Quality Circle.

Quality Circle. ✓ The function of the Quality Circle is to identify the acceptable and unacceptable quality characteristics of the PID design and review process. Management participation at this stage is critical as they have the responsibility to decide what is acceptable. This is especially critical to this Bureau, with field delegations as great as they are.

Identification of unacceptable quality characteristics should result in decisions by management ^{modifying or removing} the factors causing those negative characteristics. After the data is analyzed management will decide who should participate in the Quality Circle. After the quality characteristics and their acceptable levels have been determined by the Quality Circle, necessary system changes will be identified and implemented.

Data Gathering

Work Days

a. Questionnaire Development

Anderson	2
Desk rep.	2
DP rep.	2
Tech rep.	2
Management	1/2
Consultant	4

b. Administer Questionnaire/Interviews

No Travel Travel

Anderson	10	25
Desk rep.	5	
DP rep.	5	
Tech rep.	5	
Management	1	
Consultant	10	25

Data Analysis

Anderson	5
Desk rep.	5
DP rep.	5
Tech rep.	5
Management	1
Consultant	1

318

AFRICA BUREAU TASK FORCE REPORT ON
THE PROJECT IDENTIFICATION DOCUMENT (PID)

JANUARY, 1984

INTRODUCTION

I. In response to two concerns -- first, dissatisfaction with the length and excessive detail included (required?) in PIDs, and second, a lengthy, drawn out PID review and approval process -- the Africa Bureau established a Task Force to examine the way PIDs are prepared, reviewed and approved. Members of the PID Task Force* set for themselves the following three objectives: first, examine the PID guidelines contained in Handbook 3 for adequacy; second, provide field posts with guidance on how to interpret those guidelines in preparing PIDs; and, third, provide guidance to those who participate in AID/W PID reviews on what we expect of PIDs.

The PID Task Force began its work with a section by section review of the Agency's PID guidance (Handbook 3, Chapter 2). In addition, we reviewed a number of other documents related to PID preparation and review and incorporated several suggestions. This was followed by interviews with selected AID/W staff, from both within and outside the Bureau, to discuss each sub-section and to help us reach a consensus about the level of detail and amount of information PIDs should contain. The Task Force also studied the Africa Bureau's review and approval process to determine what the review process should be looking at in terms of PID content and how that process could be simplified and speeded up.

Members of the Task Force presented their preliminary conclusions to the attendees at the two annual scheduling workshops (Abidjan and Nairobi) in late September. Feedback was incorporated into this report. In carrying out this assignment we were reminded anew that introducing change is almost certain to encounter some degree of resistance. The changes proposed here involve not only passive, intellectual acceptance of ideas, but active adoption of a more focused writing style by preparers of PIDs as well as exercise of greater restraint by reviewers of PIDs. What may make change easier is our perception of a widespread desire to improve the PID process.

* Task Force members include Mr. Larry Hausman (AFR/PD), Mr. Russell Anderson (AFR/PD), Mr. Peter Bloom, (REDSO/ESA), Mr. Larry Sifers (AFR/DP), Mr. Bernard Chapnick (AFR/EA), Ms. Gloria Steele (AFR/TR).

We are under no illusion, however, that a series of seemingly sensible recommendations will by themselves result in a better process. Without the long-term commitment of senior managers in Washington and in the field to improve the process these recommendations will have little sustained impact. Equally relevant, although our managers have primary responsibility for making sure the proposed changes are adopted, each of us who participates in the process shares that responsibility.

PID TASK FORCE REPORT

II. Principal Findings and Recommendations

A. Need for an Interim Program Document. The Task Force concluded that the Bureau lacks a satisfactory procedure whereby AID/W decision makers can examine the relative soundness and priority of all new project proposals and substantive amendments recommended by a Mission for the coming fiscal year, and against which any specific PID proposal can be weighed.

According to Handbook 3, the burden of translating broad programming decisions into specific project interventions falls squarely on the PID. Of the existing programming documents, CDSS's no longer focus on individual project proposals and instead examine broader subjects. While ABS's and CP's are developed too far in advance of most PIDS or are too general to be useful decision points about specific proposals, little useful feedback to the field regarding specific project proposals flows from the AID/W reviews of these documents. The result is that PIDs now have more of the programming tale to tell. Bureau decision makers sometimes have difficulty, therefore, in assessing the various components of a country program until all PIDs are submitted.

Recommendation: That the Bureau approve the introduction of a "strategy and program presentation" document to be submitted, on a trial basis, by each field post in June 1984. The document would consist of two sections, first, a short strategy discussion (2-3 pages) of the field post's near-term program objectives and how any proposed new activities would support or complement those objectives; and second, short descriptions (2-3 pages) of each new start or substantive amendment the post proposes to initiate in the coming fiscal year.

This document would provide an overview of the proposed program and offer sufficient information so that preliminary decisions could be made about adding, substituting or eliminating specific activities. For greatest effectiveness, the process of reviewing and providing feedback on the document must be rapid and decentralized. A first tier review would examine individual country programs. A second tier review (with AA and DAA participation) would examine geographic regions, focusing on problem areas and broader Bureau and Agency concerns. Once approved, Missions would have a green light to develop an agreed upon portfolio as well as have feedback on AID/W concerns, policy hurdles, etc. Such feedback would serve to reduce sharply the wastage of field time on "non-starters" or "non-starter elements" as well as strengthen subsequent project proposals.

3. Role of the PID. The Task Force reaffirms the important role PIDs play in the project development and review process. The role has become more critical in view of the Bureau's extensive redelegation of project approval authority to the field. Since many PPs are not seen by AID/W until after authorization by the field, we believe the Bureau should retain its single opportunity for the substantive review of many project proposals. Any diminution of the role of the PID would be detrimental to the Africa Bureau's programs.

Recommendation: That the Africa Bureau continue to utilize PIDs for the purposes described in Handbook 3, Chapter 2. Surprisingly, however, we did not find examples of messages to the field complaining of excessive PID length nor examples of PIDs returned to the drafting Mission for major editing and resubmission. Thus, although there's been concern about PID length in AID/W, no guidance has been sent to the field indicating PIDs may be rejected because of of length. With hindsight, we believe this was a mistake.

Ironically, perhaps, we believe Washington PID reviews have either caused or substantially contributed to the problem by making informational demands that are unrealistic and uncalled for at the PID stage.

C. Common Problems with the PID. The Task Force encountered widespread concern that PIDs have become bloated and unwieldy documents that go far beyond their intended purpose. Excessive length has been the rule rather than the exception, and examples of 50 page PID documents are numerous.

The problem can be traced to several related factors -- Missions that encountered problems with detailed technical issues during previous PID reviews are responding with more detail in subsequent PIDs; Mission and AID/W staff are working with sometimes contradictory guidance on desired versus required levels of detail in PIDs; and, the chairpersons for Issues and ECPR meetings have been reluctant to cut-off discussions of issues that are inappropriate at the PID stage. In addition, we believe there is another significant factor. The provisions of DOA 140 (revised) that delegated authority to many Missions to approve PPs also reduced significantly the role of many AID/W professionals in the project review process. Unable to contribute to or influence the design of projects beyond the PID stage, these individuals have requested more information and greater detail in PIDs. Together, these factors have so encrusted the PID that it has become an issue for senior management concern. How to break the cycle? The Task Force believes that working to remove barnacles as well as going back to the Handbook 3 concept of the PID is the best way to face and overcome the problem.

323

Recommendations:

1. That AA/Africa formally reaffirm the validity of HB 3, Chapter 2 and take steps to publicize the appropriate sections of the guidance. Stricter adherence to the PID guidance rather than any changes in the PID concept would best serve the Bureau;
2. That the Bureau advise all field posts of the 20-page limitation on PIDs (with limited exceptions) and then ensure that the limitations are enforced by returning PIDs for revision if they exceed the page length guidance; and,
3. That chairpersons of Issues and ECPR Meetings exercise greater initiative in dismissing issues not germane to PIDs, both during meetings and in subsequent clearance of cables.

N.B. The Task Force is concerned that much of the potential good achieved by the other proposed reforms could be undone at this latter juncture unless good leadership and clear guidance as to what are and what are not appropriate questions are shown at the PID review meetings.

D. Guidance on PID Content. The guidance contained in Handbook 3, Chapter 2, on the content of PIDs is generally sound and requires no substantive changes. What would be useful both to those preparing as well as to those reviewing PIDs would be general agreement interpretation of each section, so that both AID/W and the field posts have a common understanding of the level of information and the approximate content of each section of the PID.

Recommendation: That the Africa Bureau circulate to field and AID/W staff the suggested guidance contained in Section IV of this report.

E. The Review Process. The Task Force found the Bureau's PID review and approval process to be unnecessarily long and cumbersome. The following observations are related to the process:

More time is allotted to the review of documents than is necessary;

The process for bringing issues to the attention of senior management is unwieldy, involves too many people and takes too much time;

324

Participation by field representatives at the Issues and ECPR Meetings for "difficult" PIDs should be encouraged as the best way to improve the quality of discussion and to resolve issues; shortening the review process would make field participation more feasible;

The manner in which both Issues and ECPR Meetings are run could be simply and usefully improved;

Although the ECPR is the Executive Committee for Project Review, attendance generally belies this; although those who do attend are generally well qualified, they are not the Bureau's senior staff. We see a possible link between this and the lengthy delays encountered in clearing ECPR cables.

The process for recording the decisions of the ECPR needs corrective surgery. Shortening the time frame and adding a step would help accomplish this clearance.

Recommendations

1. Reduce the time provided for reviewing PIDs to one work week between document distribution and Issues Meeting, and an additional three days to the ECPR. With a reduction in the length of PIDs this should be adequate to identify all issues.
2. AA/AFR should strongly encourage field posts to send representatives to present and defend PIDs that are likely to raise significant issues or encounter an unfriendly audience or that propose a departure from normal procedures/Agency policies/development priorities articulated in the CDSS.
3. Encourage Issues Committees to recommend returning poorly prepared or seriously inadequate PIDs to the drafting entity, subject to the concurrence of the Director, AFR/PD and the appropriate DAA. This decision would be conveyed by cable and would not require the convening of an ECPR.
4. Discontinue the exchange of cables with Missions on draft issues following the Issues Meeting, except under unusual circumstances. Although cable exchanges do resolve a small number of issues prior to ECPRs, these limited advantages are far outweighed by the substantial time they add to the review process.

38

5. Restructure and improve the quality of Issues Papers. As the principal vehicle for bringing substantive policy or procedural issues to the attention of senior Bureau managers, Issues Papers should distinguish between a) issues which require AID/W guidance or resolution, b) requests for clarification or additional information and c) points for discussion. Issues Papers are intended to serve as agendas for ECPR discussions.
6. Eliminate clearances required for Issues Papers; the Issues Paper for the ECPR should be prepared by the Project Committee Chairperson and cleared by the Director, AFR/PD, within one working day after the Issues Meeting. The chairperson of the Issues Meeting should be responsible for ensuring that the principal points raised at the meeting are fairly represented. Only those issues omitted or inadequately addressed can be subsequently raised at the ECPR. As long as ECPRs remain loosely structured, spending as much time as we have in clearing the Issues Paper is wasteful.
7. Expand the list of ECPR Chairpersons to include the Director and Deputy Director of AFR/PD. Given the volume of project documentation reviewed at critical points in the year, this would facilitate the review process and alleviate backlogs of documents.
8. Introduce the use of a checklist by the chairperson of ECPR and Issues Meetings to ensure that all legal, procedural and Agency policy matters applicable to PIDs are dealt with at the meetings.
9. Require all chairpersons at ECPR and Issues Meetings to summarize decisions made at the meetings.
10. Encourage all chairpersons to take short-term executive training courses on meeting management (we are discussing management training options with ASIA/PD; they have identified similar training requirements).
11. That AA/AFR strongly encourage higher level participation at Executive Committee for Project Review meetings, which at present are executive level in name only. We believe this would make the reviews of PIDs more meaningful. At a minimum, if Office Directors cannot attend, their representatives should have authority to represent the office for purposes of concurring in ECPR decisions.

326

12. Restructure the current procedures for recording ECPR decisions.

First, one paragraph decision cables advising Missions of ECPR approval or disapproval of the PID and summarizing the principal points at issue should be sent out within one day after the meeting on the basis of oral clearances obtained from office representatives present at the meeting.

Second, guidance cables expanding on the points summarized in the decision cable should be sent within an additional week.

Third, limit the required guidance cable clearances to AFR/PD, AFR/DP, the Geographic Desk and PPC; obtain additional clearances only as appropriate.

AFR/PD:LHausman:2/28/84:0535H

327

~~to co-chair the individual country sessions, with representation from DP, TR, RA and PPC, as appropriate. A second level of review would involve the AA and DAAs plus senior Bureau officers in geographic region overviews. The reviews would give Bureau management the opportunity to consider the entire proposed portfolio and make an early determination on inclusion or exclusion of specific activities. Prompt advice to the field would provide feedback on potential AID/W concerns, policy pitfalls, etc. This would serve to reduce sharply the wastage of mission time on "non-starters" as well as enable missions to strengthen subsequent project proposals.~~

III. PID Guidance - Content

This section of the report will include: the PID subsection instructions as presented in Handbook 3, Chapter 2; discussions of the subsections; and, interpretive guidance on how to cover the subject matter. Recommendations are made as appropriate. ~~Some of the PID sections are included in~~

~~the report. Others will be identified and discussed in~~
~~the report.~~

Program Factors

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Program Factors

a. Conformity with Recipient Country Program/Strategy -- The policies and programs of the recipient country (RC) are basic starting points in all AID bilateral programs. While the underlying discussion of RC development programs is contained in AID's country strategy documents, the PID should outline the specific RC program or objectives which the project would assist. The outline should identify these RC development plans and priorities, together with actions being taken or proposed by the RC in support of its strategy or the proposed AID effort, and should identify actions which the Mission (or Originating Office) believes are required for the project to succeed.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

b. Relationship to AID Strategy Statement - In building the bridge from program strategy to project specifics, the PID should explain how the project responds to the Mission CDSS or Bureau CPSS. It should discuss the [REDACTED] priority of the proposed project in the context of the RC and AID strategies ^{as well as} [REDACTED] the ways in which the project relates to other AID-funded activities. As appropriate, the PID should describe

what other donors or organizations are doing, or planning to do, that complements the AID proposal. Be brief. Do not repeat the CDSS (or CPSS). All that is needed is enough information on RC and AID strategies so that the framework into which the project will fit is clearly seen. ^{In instances where}

~~of particularly attractive development opportunity presents itself, one that is not in line with the Mission's current strategy statement,~~

~~_____~~

~~_____~~ Missions need not wait until the CDSS is revised to submit a PID. ^{However, a more complete} discussion of how the project aligns with AID and RC objectives ^{would} be needed.

B. Discussion: Task Force members were in agreement that the PID carries too much baggage. ^{It must often propose and defend changes in}

~~_____~~

^{clear to} program rationale, ^{the} The absence of any other bridging document

~~_____~~ ^{However,} If the intermediate 'strategy and program presentation' step is adopted, this would permit an examination of the proposed program portfolio and allow for early decisions and feedback to the field on specific activities as well as general program content and direction.

^{In that regard, the Task Force was concerned} ~~_____~~ that this not be interpreted as a move back to the old PID/PRP/PP project development process. ^{At a time when consideration is being given to}

^{Assuming the role of the PID, it would be easy to dismiss this idea of an intermediate step a move backwards. However, we believe this would be worthy for one major reason -- that the idea of a "strategy and program presentation" document has merit regardless of how the PID document is treated.}

reaffirmation of the PID's original length, format and content plus the abbreviated submission proposed in the 'strategy and program presentation' document (2-4 pages per project) were adequate indicators that we weren't backsliding.

C. Section Interpretation: The fact that this section leads off with "conformity with Recipient Country Program/Strategy" is indicative of the concern AID has for integrating our bilateral activities with host country priorities. However, even if using quotes from a five-year plan to confirm the importance of an AID proposal may be necessary, it is assuredly not sufficient, given that most five-year plans (as well as many CDSSs) attach great importance to all sectoral bases. More concrete examples (budget allocations, for example) should be provided.

Also, the PID should synthesize the analysis that went into the mission's selection of a specific intervention from among the host of possibilities. Why this project?

~~_____~~
~~_____~~
~~_____~~

Project Description

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Project Description

a. Perceived Problem - This section should clearly identify what problem the proposed project intends to address. The problem is usually stated in terms of an undesirable situation which the project will improve or in terms of key constraints to development which may be lessened or removed by the project.

b. Project Goal and Purpose - The PID should contain a reasonably full discussion of goals(s) and purpose(s) of the project, and how the project serves these ends. The goal is usually defined in broader terms which reach beyond the capability of one project. The purpose is narrower and is expected to be achievable during the planned life of the project as a result of project outputs. The PID should have, as an attachment, a preliminary Logical Framework analysis (logframe). At the PID stage, the Goal and Purpose of the proposed project should be clearly stated and complete. Of lesser precision at the PID stage are the project Outputs and Inputs, which will be fully developed at the Project Paper stage.

232

c. Expected Achievements and Accomplishments - This section of the PID should describe, in general terms, what the project is expected to do. Qualification of the project's anticipated results is not expected at the PID stage, but the section should indicate in general terms what the project will produce, how end results will fit into the project's purpose, and what actions are envisioned to measure and evaluate the results against the stated objectives.

d. Outline of the Project and How it Will Work - The PID stage is too early in the project's development for the PID to fully explain what component parts it will have or to fully demonstrate its feasibility. However, an outline of the project and its major parts should be presented. A brief statement of how the project is expected to be carried out, i.e., a preliminary sketch of implementation, should be included.

B. Discussion: This section and the extent to which information required vs. desired evoked a vigorous debate among Task Force member and those interviewed. We saw this as a conflict between the thrust of DOA 140 and the interest of those reviewing the documents in obtaining more specific, detailed description in the PID. AID/W reviewers too often expect this section to 'prove' project feasibility, and frequently go well beyond the broad feasibility issue to

questions and suggestions involving project design that are more appropriate for post-PID action. The Handbook is explicit in stating that the PID stage is too early "to fully demonstrate... feasibility." Feasibility is an authorization question and this section should not have to carry that burden.

C. Recommendation: That those chairing project issues meetings and ECPRs exert more authority to keep the focus of reviews from widening to include questions of feasibility that are more appropriate for PP design.

D. Section Interpretation: The principal objective of this section is to convey to readers the reasonableness of what is proposed. As vicarious participants in the design process, reviewers in Washington want to be able to understand how the specific project intervention came to be crafted, what its component features are and how those component pieces are likely to interact. The HB3 guidance for this section is clear and to the point.

Sub-section (a) - Be specific about the nature of the problem and its relative seriousness. ^{To:} Often this section describes a project being backed into the problem (money chasing projects).

Sub-section (b) - Although the instructions give equal weight to goal and purpose, Task

Force members were in agreement that the purpose level statement is generally the more important element and that it should flow directly from the Perceived Problem. Also, in writing ~~the~~ this section, it is considered poor form merely to reiterate the Log Frame in narrative format in the body of the paper. If the writer has nothing additional to add, simply refer readers to the Log Frame annex.

Sub-section (c) - HB3 Guidance is explicit and clear.

Sub-section (d) - HB3 guidance is clear and straightforward. Additional information is highly desirable on the implementation scenario, including a discussion of implementation steps that are critical and those which will receive special attention during PP design. Mission response to Agency implementation concerns ^{and} to be addressed here. How well this section is written and received is reflected in the confidence readers have in the project's feasibility. We are looking for assurance

335

that the implementation steps seem reasonable and complete.

Social Soundness Considerations

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Social Considerations - Consideration of social factors, including the definition and examination of project participants and intended beneficiaries, is expected to begin in the earliest stages of development so that relevant knowledge about beneficiary populations can be applied on an integrated basis to the emerging project design, and so that future implementation and feasibility problems can be minimized. PID issues may or may not require specialized analytic skills, depending on the scope of the project and the extent to which project elements have been developed at the time the PID is submitted. (See Appendix 2C for further detail.) Considerable discretion may be used in determining the level of effort appropriate to a particular PID, but the following areas of concern should be briefly addressed:

(1) Socio-Cultural Context: Briefly describe the socio-cultural context of the project area, giving particular attention to social, economic and political factors that demonstrate a need for the project, or which will affect project activities.

(ii) Beneficiaries: Briefly identify the location, size and relevant socio-economic characteristics of the group(s) the project will benefit (both directly and indirectly) as well as group(s) that may be adversely affected. Special efforts should be taken to specify how women will be affected. For indirect beneficiaries, explain how benefits are expected to reach them, and identify recipient country or Borrower/ Grantee policies and practices that will facilitate or impede this process.

(iii) Participation: Variations in access to productive resources, employment, basic services and information influence the capacity and willingness of men and women to take part in projects. The PID should indicate briefly how the proposed project will promote participation of beneficiaries during project design, implementation and evaluation.* Also indicate what social, economic and political factors are expected to facilitate or constrain participation with regard to project activities and objectives, including those that are gender related.

(iv) Socio-Cultural Feasibility: Given what is known about planned project activities and the socio-economic characteristics of planned participants, briefly identify feasibility issues to be addressed during project development.

(v) Impact: AID's primary objective is to help people in developing countries meet their basic human needs through equitable, sustainable growth. PID's should show how projects will contribute to this objective, giving particular attention to the differential impact of the proposed project on various local groups or socio-economic strata. Special attention should be given to the differential impact of the project on men and women. Indicate whether activities initiated by a project can be sustained by recipient country or Borrower/Grantee organizations and participants after external assistance is completed, and whether project activities can be spread and/or replicated.

B. Discussion: This section ^{has} the most detailed instructions and it w^{ritten} at a time when social soundness analysis was in esp. al favor. Our discussions did not disclose any special problem with interpretation or presentation. We did note that social soundness analysis at the PID stage was probably far more critical than at the PP stage, since identification of issues in the PID could alert design teams to potential PP problems or greatly alter project approach.

C. Section Interpretation: Identification rather than resolution of social soundness issues is what's important here. AID/W would like assurance that the mission is aware of

social issues and will address same or take other appropriate action during the next design phase. Obviously, the more specific you are about beneficiaries at this stage the better.

Economic Considerations

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Economic Considerations - It is important for project designers to focus on economic considerations of a project at the earliest possible stage. Economic analysis done in the final stages of project development, i.e., just before the Project Paper is completed, will be too late to have much influence on design or ^{or} a decision to approve, modify or disapprove the project.

Consideration of economic aspects at the PID stage should, if possible, include the following:

- determine appropriateness of investigating the intended amount of scarce resources in the problem area or activity identified;
- examine the merits of the proposed approach in comparison to alternative approaches for use of these resources;
- consider possibilities for achieving internal efficiencies by use of different designs, implementation methodologies, etc.

In most projects it will not be possible or appropriate to perform an economic analysis for inclusion in the PID. The PID should, however, describe the major categories of costs and benefits and, to the extent practicable, discuss the general economic merits of the concept proposed. If major information deficiencies exist regarding potential costs or benefits, such deficiencies should be identified and steps to overcome them during intensive review discussed. The PID should also specify the type of economic analysis that is intended to be performed in the course of project development. A description of the types of economic analysis that might be appropriate is included in Appendix 3E. The type of analysis chosen will have implications for design resources and the project development schedule. For example, if a cost-effectiveness or least cost analysis is chosen, analysis of at least two alternative designs should be undertaken for comparison purposes. Also, a cost-benefit analysis may require the collection or generation of certain data, e.g., the quantification or valuation of benefits, and/or the installation of an information system to produce such data during the design and implementation stages.

B. Discussion: This section is probably the least understood of the various PID requirements, and potentially, one of the most beneficial to project designers. The Bureau has made several unsuccessful attempts at settling the question of

quantity and quality of analysis desired at the PID stage and must pursue the question with PPC to prepare specific practical guidance to field posts. Until such time as that guidance is prepared we will rely on the following interpretation of the Handbook language.

C. Section Interpretaton: This section of the PID should (1) provide assurances that the proposed project has merit strictly from an economic perspective and (2) lay the groundwork for an analytic approach to be used by those designing the project to prove (in the PP) that the project is economically sound and that the project design chosen maximizes the economic benefits. Providing assurance of economic merit does not require an intense, numbers oriented analysis in the PID but, rather, should focus on the "appropriateness of investing the intended amount of scarce resources" and on the "merits of the proposed approach in comparison to alternate approaches."

Laying the groundwork for the analytic approach to be used during project design requires a description of the major categories of costs and benefits and an indication of the type of analytic tool to be used (cost-benefit, least cost, cost-effectiveness, etc.). You should be able to focus on the types and amounts of data needed, what will be done to obtain the data and how the needed data will fulfill the analytic needs.

Relevant Experience

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Relevant Experience with Similar Projects - In developing a PID, the originating office should consider relevant experience with similar projects, focusing particularly on projects and project evaluations that have taken place in the same country. Available information on comparable projects, on the project area, and on the socio-economic characteristics of project participants, especially intended beneficiaries, should be assessed. The PID will summarize these assessments, focusing on reasons for successes and failures, and show how the proposed project will deal with problems identified in earlier projects. Where possible, the PID should identify gaps in the available information so that these can be filled in the subsequent course of project development.

B. Discussion: This section is not viewed as a particularly troublesome area and has not been a critical element in PID decisions. The Handbook guidance is clear and to the point.

C. Section Interpretation: The focus of this section should be on "projects and project evaluations that have taken place in the same country". The section should not merely provide a listing of projects in the portfolio, but rather should provide a summary assessment of the reasons for successes or failures for projects in that country when those reasons will have a

342

direct impact on the proposed project. If the mission has had no direct experience you must look to the experience of other donors with similar projects. Problems that are common to all projects in your particular country should be discussed. You need not provide answers to problems you expect to encounter, but at least demonstrate an awareness of them and outline your preliminary thoughts on how the project expects to deal with them.

Borrower/Grantee or Recipient Country Agency

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Borrower/Grantee or Recipient Country Agency - The PID should identify which recipient country Agency (or Borrower/Grantee organization) is expected to participate in the design of the project and in project implementation. Early consideration can give AID and the Borrower/Grantee (B/G) time to identify institutional, personnel or funding issues which may need to be addressed in order to strengthen the B/G Agency's capability to carry out anticipated responsibilities, and should identify any technical assistance and training needed to implement the project. It should also consider what demands are likely to be made on the B/G or its Agency for contractor support. The assessments affect costs, staffing, organizational needs and the time span in which a project can be implemented. The PID should also indicate the extent to

343

which entities which would carry out the project (B/G agencies, PVOs, etc.) agree that it will satisfy a real need and the degree to which they will be motivated to participate as its implementors.

B. Discussion: The Task Force found that most PID's respond only to the first sentence of the PID instructions and ignore all that follows thereafter. This seems to reflect a lack of participation by host countries in the initial selection of project activities. We feel that a more appropriate title for the section should be "Institutional Assessment" to give the reader an immediate grasp of what the PID section should provide.

C. Section Interpretation: The Handbook instructions are clear. This section of the PID should provide an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization ~~to~~ ^{which} to ^{or} through which AID proposes to channel resources. What are the characteristics of the organization (budget, staff, workload, etc.) that directly impact on the proposed project, and what will the proposed project do to insure that institutional weaknesses will not impair the project? How does the proposed project fit into the priorities of the organization and what motivation exists to insure active participation? How can we be sure that the project will be "institutionalized" and will not disappear once AID funding is completed?

344

AID Support Requirement Capability

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

AID Support Requirements Capability - Mission and AID/W project responsibilities should be outlined and long-term staff implications for implementing and monitoring the project discussed. If critically needed Mission or other AID staff are not realistically going to be available, it may be impossible to proceed with the project or it may have to be revised to omit the most staff-intensive phases. The ability of the Mission to provide project support services to the contractors should also be assessed, and any issues should be identified in the PID.

B. Discussion: This section is discussed in pro forma fashion in almost all PIDs. Generally that's adequate, assuming Missions have indeed considered the workload implications on their staffs. Occasionally, however, the desire to undertake a new activity overshadows problems of the Mission's own absorptive capacity. Judging from very high portfolio-per-employee ratios in some Missions, there appears to be a distinct lack of sensitivity regarding the impact of "just one more project" on already busy project managers. Infrequent opportunities to visit project sites and limited time spent with host country counterparts are only too symptomatic of the work environment at many posts. Notwithstanding that close

345

monitoring may be critical to the success of a project, AID/W rarely turns down proposals because such monitoring is not assured. Giving AID/W the benefit of the doubt, this may be largely because of the mechanical treatment of this subject in most PIDs.

C. Section Interpretation: The guidance itself is quite straightforward. What's needed is greater candor in discussing the Mission's backstopping capabilities. To cite one example, establishing a SPAR for a person who would manage the proposed activity is hardly an adequate measure, particularly at a hardship post where 3/3 French is required.

D. Recommendation: That this section ⁱⁿ all PIDs explicitly identify the proposed project manager and his/her current portfolio management responsibilities.

Estimated Costs and Methods of Funding

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Estimated Costs and Methods of Funding - In most PIDs, it will not be possible to accurately determine costs and/or methods of financing. The Mission (or originating Bureau) should, nonetheless, give its best estimate of the project's financial needs and mechanisms. Good judgment of the proper order of magnitude is more important at this stage than precise estimates of detailed cost components. The PID should indicate what AID will probably finance, and discuss the merits of loan

or grant funding. A simple pro-forma budget should outline the major project elements, and their estimated cost, and show possible AID, B/G and other participants' contributions. Appropriate allowances for inflation should be made, particularly since the approved project may not begin for some time. Do not identify in this section the financial resources which AID or others will have to contribute to develop the project to authorization. This design cost is to be identified as part of the design strategy (see below).

B. Discussion: This section has generally not been a problem, except in projects with large capital construction components where costs were estimated using optimum (unrealistic) implementation schedules. This is especially troublesome where PID estimates and actual project expenditures are 18 to 36 months apart, with ~~the~~ resulting "cost-overruns" and PACD extensions.

C. Section Interpretation: The Handbook instructions ask for a best estimate of financial needs ^{as well as} ~~the~~ the proposed financing mechanism. ^{An} ~~order~~ order of magnitude is more important than precise estimates of components, ^{costs} although our reviews do look at ~~orders~~ orders of magnitude and proportion to one another get a feel for how the project is to be structured.

For projects with large capital components indicate when the estimates were made. Include the source of the estimate

and any assumptions regarding the estimate. It is suggested that construction have up to a 35% contingency factor at the PID level, depending on cost history in country, source of estimates and assumptions.

Design Strategy

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Design Strategy - This section should discuss the responsibilities of the Mission, AID/W, Recipient Country officials, (if different) the Borrower/Grantee and other donors and participants for developing the project to the Project Paper (PP) stage, and additionally assess the ability of each to meet these responsibilities. The PID should outline how the more detailed analyses, and other documentary parts of the PP will be undertaken, and should identify the type and source of professional skills required. The PID should also estimate the time and cost required to complete the design work. The AID staff committee responsible for developing the project should be identified. Finally, a recommendation for approval to proceed to the PP stage should be made. If the originating office wishes approval authority for the PP, although the funding proposed exceeds its delegated limit, the request should be included in this section of the PID. Notwithstanding authority of the Originating Office to approve the PP, if the office desires that AID/W review and approve the PP, a

statement should be made and the reasons outlined.

B. Discussions: The instructions are clear except for minor duplication, i.e. estimates of time and cost and composition of PP design committee are already requested on the PID Facesheet (item #13). A number of PIDs do not go beyond a recitation of who will participate in PP design, leaving readers uncertain about what steps will take place between PID and PP. More helpful would be a narrated workplan, complete with interim steps to be taken ~~before and during the design process~~ for final design. In select instances, when a difficult final design task is anticipated, a ^{scope of work} ~~scope of work~~ would be a useful attachment to the PID.

C. Section Interpretation: Missions should provide a scenario indicating what actions will occur once the PID is approved. Interim steps may include surveys, site visits, data collection, etc. Extent of host country involvement should be discussed. Identifying potential design difficulties or problem areas is encouraged and provides readers with an understanding of the milieu in which the design will take place.

The section requires a listing of responsibilities expected of the Mission, AID/W and the host country (and an assessment thereof), an outline of how the more detailed analyses will be done, the type and source of skills needed, and the estimated time and cost to complete design.

two [REDACTED] provisions of the section require: first, a recommendation for approval to proceed to the PP (which should be ignored) and, second, that venue for authorization be discussed. Recommended authorization venue should be included because of the various delegations in effect.

Recommended Environmental Threshold Decision

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

Recommended Environmental Threshold Decision - Most proposed projects will require an Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), to identify reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts and to recommend any further necessary environmental evaluation. The Agency's Environmental Procedures (see AID Regulation 16 in Appendix 2D to this Handbook) indicate when an IEE is required. The IEE is accompanied by a Threshold Decision signed by the officer signing the PID. This is reviewed with the PID and defines whether further Environmental Analysis (EA) or Environmental Impact Analysis (EIS) - (See Appendix 2D for details) will be required in connection with project preparation. The IEE addresses the reasonably foreseeable impact of an action on the physical and human environment. If further environmental analysis seems warranted, the IEE should identify reasonable alternatives to the proposed action which should be evaluated in detail in an EA or EIS. The body of the PID may summarize

the recommended Threshold Decision, and attache the IEE as an annex.

When a PID is approved, it could be determine that: (a) no further environmental examination is needed because the project is not likely to have a significant effect on the physical and human environment; (b) the project needs to be further developed before such a determination can be made, and, as an intermediate action, environmental expertise shall be included in the project design team; (c) environmental impact(s) is not significant enough to require an EA or EIS but still needs to be addressed in project design; or (d) the project definitely will require either an EA or EIS as a basis for final project design decisions. Regulation 16 defines the criteria for selecting either an EA or EIS. If decision (b) above is reached, a time schedule should be established to ensure an early decision on whether an EA or an EIS is needed.

B. Discussion: No problems surfaced in the discussion of this section, indicating good compliance with Reg. 16 requirements.

C. No Section Interpretation.

AID Policy Issues

A. Handbook 3 Instructions

AID Policy Issues - Project related policy or strategy issues on which the originating office wishes discussion, decision or guidance can be summarized in this section or in

351

earlier parts of the PID. Also, the potential need for waivers of AID procedures or requirements should be discussed in this section, if sufficient details are known at this stage of project development. If AID/W approval is given on a requested waiver at the PID stage (e.g., approval by the Administrator), the project may be later authorized by the appropriate official ^{and} determined by project factors other than the waiver. (See Chapter 5, Project Authorization, for details.)

B. Discussion: The Task Force found that "Issues" have ranged from legitimate to disingenuous, with a high percentage raised as straw men. Performance in this section has been generally ^{mixed} and missions need to give more thought to "project related policy or strategy issues", ^{In instances where} no issues exist, don't manufacture non-issues. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

IV. PID Guidance - Length

An area that causes considerable concern in AID/W is the length of PIDs. On average, PIDs are too long! Guidance on limiting PIDs to 15 pages is being largely ignored. This situation culminated in a [REDACTED] PID that was 220 pages long ^{that} [REDACTED] was to be reviewed in conjunction with a similarly lengthy evaluation). Instead of returning the document for drastic editing and accompanying it with a sharp note of protest, the Bureau proceeded with its review of the PID. ~~Shame on us.~~

352

The Task Force believes strongly that a carefully thoughtout and tightly written 15-20 page PID (the emphasis is on quality) is sufficient to provide the most important information required at the PID stage in 90 percent of the cases! There is nothing magical about the page limitation except, to paraphrase Parkinson's Law, that the contents would expand to fill the paper. Other organizations prepare PID-like documentation concisely; there is no reason why we can't follow suit.

Annexes or attachments beyond a preliminary log frame, IEE and waiver request(s) are generally not encouraged. Inclusion of an annex (or two) that elaborates on an unusual design factor may be appropriate in some instances. In any event, the conclusions of all annexes should already be summarized in the body of the PID.*

Consideration was given to limit arbitrarily PID length to 20 pages by circulating only that portion of the document. However, the Task Force argues that Missions be permitted to exercise voluntary restraint in adhering to the suggested page limits before the Bureau considers any more arbitrary, restrictive action.

*Project development officers/design team leaders might consider requiring separate synopses (2-3 pages of the most relevant findings and conclusions) from all technical contributors to the document. This requirement would avoid the situation whereby 50-page plus draft reports are delivered to the project development officer/team leader at the last minute, leaving that person to extract the key findings and conclusions.

September 23, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR AFR/PD/SAP, Larry Haussman
 FROM: Robert W. Caccia, Consultant *RWC*
 SUBJECT: PID Improvement Effort - Deming Approach

As you know, in late February, the Africa and Near East Bureaus agreed to undertake improvement of quality and productivity projects in conjunction with Dr. W. Edwards Deming's visit and seminar. It was understood, at that time, that the "Deming Approach" would guide the projects. Contained within the approach are 14 points for management, several of which the projects were to include.

The Africa Bureau project appeared to lend itself to several of the points which are listed below:

- Point 1. The creation of constancy of purpose for improvement (of the PID process and the Project Approval System). This, of course, requires the development of an improvement attitude and knowledge regarding system problems, limitations, and quality/productivity expectations and realities.
- Point 2. Adopt the new philosophy. This is the recognition that commonly accepted problems, delays, poor quality levels, and low productivity (that is, low real productivity) would no longer be acceptable.
- Point 3. Cease Dependence on Mass Inspection. We related this point to the AID/Washington review process. There is evidence that the various reviews are resulting in changes in both the purpose and content of PIDs leading to changes in the system and perhaps unneeded effort at the mission and AID/W levels. In other words, the inspection reviews were not directed toward the PID as defined in the manual but as defined by the reviews. If the missions and AID/W could agree on the purpose, content and other quality characteristics of the PID, decisions could be made faster and processing time would be reduced while increasing quality. This would result, therefore, in increased real productivity.

Point 4. Constantly and Forever Improve the System. This point relates to the system of which the PID process is a part. There is need to establish not only an improvement attitude, but to facilitate improvements. Beyond the present project this point should apply bureau-wide. The achievement of this point requires top management's active participation not just in passing on recommendations but also in developing such recommendations for improvement. It also requires knowledge of how well the system is working in real "hard-nosed" terms related to quality and productivity.

Points 6 and 7. These points deal with training and supervision. First, the need to define what is acceptable work and what is not is paramount. Any recommendations for improved training of individuals working in the system or supervising the system must rest on the acceptability of what the system can produce.

Everyone doing their best within a system with built-in problems, limitations, and significant ad hoc characteristics will produce outputs (PIDs, PP's etc.) at a given quality and productivity level. Training will not solve the problems nor will good supervision of a poor system. The system must provide for acceptable outputs. Once, of course, what is acceptable and what is not acceptable is defined (in this case for the PID), then training can proceed within the context of the "new system." The "new system" may merely incorporate some process changes which make possible an improvement in quality and productivity.

Point 9. Break down barriers between staff areas. Here we believed that by involving as many individuals (and units) as possible at both the Mission and AID/W levels, consensus could be reached regarding both the areas needing improvement and the development and implementation techniques for improvement. This development of consensus would result in at least a significant lowering of barriers. The initial efforts to this end included a questionnaire cable sent to the missions.

Point 14. Create a structure in top management which will push everyday on the points. While this point is a top management responsibility, a successful project in your Bureau would certainly illustrate the inability of the approach within AID and at least present to management some "food for thought."

The efforts of the Africa Bureau to date have encompassed to some degree most of the points mentioned. It appears that with some

353

limited additional efforts your project can be very successful in accomplishing all of the original goals including:

1. The guidance of the Deming Approach.
2. Improvement of Quality and Productivity.
3. The establishment of an "improvement attitude."
4. The generation of serious "food for thought" for top AID management.

There are a few other subjects which require further consideration. For this reason, I would appreciate a meeting with you upon your return from Africa. These subjects relate to the design and establishment of a system to measure the impact of changes, my report to both AID management and to Dr. Deming, the transferability of the Africa Bureau's experience with the PID process to other Bureaus and the assurance that AID will receive the maximum recognition for the quality and productivity improvement projects.

cc: DAA/AFR, Ray Love
AFR/PD, Norman Cohen

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
 AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

JAN 23 1981

HEADQUARTERS MANAGEMENT NOTICE NO. 84-32

TO: AFR Bureau Staff and Missions
 FROM: AA/AFR, Frank Donatelli (FJD)
 SUBJECT: Africa Bureau Procedures for Review and
 Approval of Projects

REFS: (A) Headquarters Management Notice No. 83-06, dated
 November 2, 1982 (same subject).

(B) Headquarters Management Notice No. 79-02, dated
 November 21, 1978, PID Procedures

(C) Headquarters Management Notice No. 80-24, dated
 March 28, 1980, Africa Bureau Procedures for Review
 and Approval of Projects

(D) Headquarters Management Notices Nos. 81-27 and
 81-27(a), dated April 16, 1981, and May 29, 1981,
 respectively, Establishment of Project Committees

(E) Headquarters Management Notice No. 81-28, dated
 April 16, 1981, The Executive Committee for Project
 Review (ECPR)

I. General

A. This instruction cancels and supersedes Notices
 Number 83-06, 79-02, 80-24, 81-27, 81-27(a) and 81-28
 and sets forth current procedures for project review
 and approval.

B. These procedures apply to all loan and grant financed
 projects and non-projects, including Operational Program
 Grants (OPGs). These procedures are designed to ensure
 that proposals receive prompt and thorough consideration in
 AID/W, that all issues are raised and resolved in an
 orderly manner and without delay, and that the Missions
 are promptly and fully informed of the status of their
 proposals.

Full discussions of Agency regulations on Project
 Assistance and Non-Project Assistance (covering PIDs,
 PPs, PAIPs and PAADs) are contained in Handbook 3 and 4.
 Procedures under this notice shall apply only to the
 Africa Bureau. (Note: Use of the term PID herein shall
 also include PAIP; and the use of PP herein shall also
 include PAAD.)

357

III. The Project Issues Meeting

A. Purpose. All PIDs, PID-like documents, OPG proposals, PPs and substantive PP amendments for AID/W authorization shall be initially reviewed at a Project Issues Meeting. The purpose of the Project Issues Meeting is to determine whether a PID or PP conforms to Agency requirements, including legislative, Handbook, policy and strategy considerations. Based on the findings of the Issues Meeting, the Project Committee shall make a recommendation to the ECPR to:

1. approve, with appropriate guidance;
2. conditionally approve, with explicit requirements for full approval;
3. return inadequate documents to the originating office/Mission;*
4. disapprove; or
5. in the case of PIDs, approve project design while reserving authorization of the PP for AID/W.

B. Review Criteria. Parameters for the review of PIDs are contained in Handbook 3, Chapter 2.E.7 and for PPs in Chapter 3.E.5 (attached). Handbook 4, Chapter 2 covers PAIPs and PAADs. The Chairperson of the Issues Meeting is responsible for following the general guidance therein and for insuring that any issues resulting from the review are appropriate for consideration by the ECPR. Those of you who participate in project reviews are strongly urged to reread the attached Agency Guidance on the review of PIDs/PPs and PAIPs/PAADs. Also, the January 1984 PID Task Force Report will specifically help interpret PID guidance (copies to be circulated). The guidance clarifies the level of detail required in project documents, particularly PIDs. Inappropriate questions now raised at Issues Meetings and ECPRs would be avoided by better familiarity with the guidance.

* An Issues Meeting recommendation to return a poorly prepared or inadequate project document must be concurred in by the appropriate DAA or his/her designee. In that instance, an ECPR will not be held and a cable explaining the deficiencies will accompany the returned document.

IV. The Executive Committee for Project Review (ECPR)

A. The ECPR is the senior executive body of the Africa Bureau whose role is to review and approve, disapprove or provide guidance on all PIDs and PID-like documents, and all PPs and substantive PP amendments to be authorized by AID/W. The ECPR may also consider other matters of concern to the Bureau.

The ECPR consists of the AA/AFR or the DAA/AFR or the appropriate regional DAA/AFR, and the Directors or Deputy Directors of AFR/PD, AFR/DP, AFR/TR, the relevant Geographic Offices and GC/AFR. Although the AA/AFR may elect to chair any ECPR meeting, the ECPR is usually chaired by the Regional DAA for projects in their respective geographic areas, or by the DAA for projects originating in AFR/RA. In the absence of any DAA the Director or Deputy Director of AFR/PD shall chair the ECPR. Attendees may also include representatives from outside the Africa Bureau, as appropriate. All attendees shall be prepared to present their comments in writing or orally, either at or before the ECPR.

B. Decisions of the ECPR shall be recorded by AFR/PD and be cabled to the field and authorized by the person who chaired the meeting. One paragraph decision cables (indicating approval or disapproval) shall be sent to the field within one working day after the ECPR. Oral clearances will be obtained from the office representatives present at the meeting. Follow-up guidance cables shall be sent to the field within one week after the ECPR. Required clearances on guidance cables will be limited to AFR/PD, AFR/DP and the Geographic Desk; other clearances will be obtained as appropriate.

V. Review and Approval Procedures - The Process

A. AFR/PD shall serve as the Secretariat to the ECPR and shall be responsible for scheduling ECPRs, providing all documentation relevant to the ECPR deliberations and recording decisions made by the ECPR. The unit within AFR/PD responsible for scheduling the Issues and ECPR Meetings is the Implementation and Program Support Division (IPS).

B. An ECPR may be scheduled at any time. Notice of the meeting shall be by memorandum (Attachment B) which will be circulated concurrently with a Notice of Issues Meeting and the project document to be reviewed. Reviewers should receive Notice of an Issues Meeting five working days prior to the meeting. The ECPR will normally follow the Issues Meeting within three working days.

359

ECPR
ISSUES PAPER

Country:

Project Name & Number:

LOP Funding:

Obligation this FY:

Authorization Venue:

CN Expiration Date:

Issues:

Points for Discussion:

Project Committee Recommendation:

Project Committee Members:

AFR/PD _____

AFR/DP _____

AFR/TR _____

Geographic Desk _____

GC/AFR _____

Others _____

7. PID Reviews.

a. The PID Review is chaired by the Bureau Assistant Administrator, or his/her designee. Abbreviated PIDs and PID amendments will be subject to the normal PID review and approval process.

b. The PID review is not intended to include detailed analysis of the project. It will vary depending upon the nature of the project, but in general will focus on:

- 1) merits of financing the proposed activity in the light of the overall AID country strategy (CSS) and alternative activities which AID might otherwise support;
- 2) consistency of the proposed activity with applicable statutory and policy criteria;
- 3) potential impact of the proposed activity with respect to: basic human needs, equity, environment, women in development energy utilization, etc.;
- 4) priority attached to the problem by the Recipient Country government and/or Borrower/Grantee;
- 5) possible conflicts between the priority assigned to the project by AID and the views of the Recipient Country and/or Borrower/Grantee;
- 6) whether the proposed solution is logical, reasonable and the best choice among alternatives;
- 7) identification of deficiencies, if any, in the preliminary project concept and methodology;
- 8) lessons learned from previous experience with similar projects;
- 9) capacity of the Borrower/Grantee to implement the proposed project (i.e., personnel, institutional, financial resources);
- 10) whether the Field Mission has the capability to monitor project implementation. If not, what arrangements must be made to assure that the capability will be in place at the time of implementation?

3E45/C1

5. PP Processing and Reviews

b. PP Review Procedures

-- Project Paper review procedures, whether defined at field mission or Bureau levels, should incorporate the following features:

- .. an Issues Paper should be prepared to guide the review and be a record of salient design features, risks or other issues which need attention during the review (the scope of the review should be tailored to the character of the project.)
- .. recommendations to approve or disapprove and/or guidance resulting from the review should be formalized and promptly communicated to the submitting office.
- .. parallel processing actions, e.g., Congressional Notification, budget adjustments, waiver requests and approvals, should be handled promptly by the cognizant submitting and/or AID/W backstopping office.

362

PROJECTED NEW STARTS - FY 84

DOC #513J

263

DIVISION: AFR/PD/EAP - John Heard

DATE: June 28, 1984

ATTACHMENT Q

COUNTRY PROJECT NO. NAME	LOP (\$000)	OYB (\$000)	FIELD OR AFR/W APPROVAL	PID DUE DATE	PID APPROVAL DATE	PP DUE DATE	AUTHOR- IZATION DATE	SCHEDULED DATES OF OBLIGATION
<u>COMOROS</u>								
602-0001	(3,500)	780	Field	<u>1/84</u>	<u>2/02/84</u>	<u>4//84</u>	<u>5/22/84</u>	<u>5/28/84</u>
<u>DJIBOUTI</u>								
603-0020 Housing Urban Devt.	(5,500)	1,500*	Wash	<u>10/24/83</u>	<u>11/4/84</u>	5/30/84	7/15/84	7/30/84
OYB may be reduced. Authorization may be delayed. PP delayed pending resolution of issues with co-financier (IDA)								
603-0017 Human Resources Dev. OPG (New Project)	(4,000)	500	AID/W	<u>4/6/84</u>	<u>5/11/84</u>	<u>6/6/84</u>	6/30/84	7/30/84
PID increases LOP request to \$ 4 million. Obligation will be delayed until 7/30 due time necessary to process OPG by Contracts. ECPR recommended treating as new project. ECPR decision cable has been cleared by all but GC/AFR. Action Memo and Authorization have been prepared in draft and are circulating for clearance.								
603-0003 Fisheries I Amend.	(200)	200	AID/W	(Bridge financing)			6/84	7/84
603-0015 Fisheries II	(2998)	1,000	Wash.	<u>FY 83</u>	<u>FY 83</u>	<u>11/15/83</u>	<u>1/03/84</u>	<u>5/7/84</u>
<u>KENYA</u>								
615-0221 Ag. Mgt.	(3,000)	No OYB	field	<u>1/20/84</u>	<u>2/24/84</u>	7/16/84		Shelf
615-0229 Ag. Technology	(35,000)	-	Wash.	6/30/84	7/31/84	8/84		Shelf
615-0213 Program Grant	(125,000)	40,000	Wash.	No PID	-	5/25/84	7/15/84	7/30/84

593

DIVISION: AFR/PD/EAP - John Heard

DATE: June 28, 1984

Page 2

DOC # 0513J

COUNTRY PROJECT NO. NAME	LOP (\$000)	OYB (\$000)	FIELD OR AFR/W APPROVAL	PID DUE DATE	PID APPROVAL DATE	PP DUE DATE	AUTHOR- IZATION DATE	SCHEDULED DATES OF OBLIGATION
615-0184 Health Planning	(2,450)	No OYB	Field	6/84				
Mission plans to request AA/AFR's approval to amend Project. Source of funds: Deobligated Kitui Health funds.								
615-0180 Drylands Cropping	(4,000)	No OYB	Field	6/84				
Mission plans to request AA/AFR's approval to increase LOP by \$99,000. Source of funds: Deobligated ARDN funds.								
615-0225 Housing Guarantee Tech.	<u>(1,112)</u>	500	Wash.	<u>(FY 83)</u>	<u>(FY 83)</u>	<u>(FY 83)</u>	<u>12/20/83</u>	6/30/84
Note: Project is still being negotiated and must be approved by Parliament.								
615-0230 Ag Sector Program Loan	(15,000)	15,000	Field	<u>6/5/84</u>	7/6/84	7/30/84	8/15/84	8/31/84
<u>MAURITIUS</u>								
642-0005 Commodity Import Program III	(2,000)	2,000	Field	<u>2/10/84</u>	<u>3/13/84</u>	4/30/84	<u>6/7/84</u>	6/30/84
<u>SEYCHELLES</u>								
662-0005 - Commodity Import Program	(2,000)	2,000	Field	<u>4/2/84</u>	<u>4/20/84</u>		<u>6/6/84</u>	6/30/84
<u>SOMALIA</u>								
649-0131 Family Health Services	(10,000)	1,600	Field	<u>1/17/84</u>	<u>2/07/84</u>	6/01/84	6/30/84	7/15/84
649-0109 Livestock Marketing	10,200	2,000	Field	<u>1/17/84</u>	<u>2/15/84</u>	6/15/84	6/30/84	7/15/84
649-0119 EHR PROJECT	(18,500)	—0—	Field	<u>1/17/84</u>	<u>2/23/84</u>	10/31/84	11/30/84	12/15/84
Note: This is shelf project for FY 84. Scheduled for obligation first qtr FY 85.								

526

DIVISION: AFR/PD/EAP -- John Heard

DATE: June 28, 1984

Page 3

DOC # 05133

COUNTRY PROJECT NO. NAME	LOP (\$000)	OYB (\$000)	FIELD OR. AFR/W APPROVAL	PID DUE DATE	PID APPROVAL DATE	PP DUE DATE	AUTHORIZATION DATE	SCHEDULED DATES OF OBLIGATION
649-0133 Kismayo Port	(35,000)	35,000	Wash	<u>FY 83</u>	<u>FY83</u>	6/30/84	7/15/84	8/15/84
Note: OYB changed from 17,500 to 35,000 by transferring 17,500 from CIP III.								
649-0104 Groundwater Development Amendment	(19,000)	5,800	Wash.	<u>12/23/84</u>	<u>2/13/84</u>	<u>6/15/84</u>	7/01/84	7/30/84
Note: \$5.8M PP Supplement in AID/W review process.								
649-0125 Commodity Import Program III	(17,500)	0	?	7/84				
Note: Entire funding for project has been transferred to Kismayo Port.								
Refugee Settlement	(15,700)	7,000	Wash.	5/29/84	<u>6/18/84</u>	8/84	9/84	9/84
<u>SUDAN</u> \$7M level approved for FY 84 obligation. Obligation expected late 1984.								
550-0069* W. Sudan Agri. Mktg. Road	(60,000)	15,600	Wash.	<u>1/6/84</u>	<u>1/17/84</u>	7/2/84	7/26/84	8/84
650-0054* Kordofan Rainfed Ag.	(18,100)	15,600	Field	5/28/84	6/12/84	7/84	8/84	8/84

*Only one of these two projects (650-0069 and 650-0054) will be obligated in FY 84; the other will be an FY 85 obligation

9/9/84

DIVISION: AFR/PD/EAP - John Heard

DATE: June 28, 1984

Page 4

DOC # 0513J

COUNTRY PROJECT NO. NAME	LOP (\$000)	OYB (\$000)	FIELD OR AFR/W APPROVAL	PID DUE DATE	PID APPROVAL DATE	PP DUE DATE	AUTHOR- IZATION DATE	SCHEDULED DATES OF OBLIGATION
Program Grant (K607)	(18,000)	18,000	Wash.	No PID	No PID	<u>1/11/84</u>	<u>2/17/84</u>	<u>2/19/84</u>
CIP (K606) (Petroleum Initiative)	(40,000)	40,000	Wash.	No PID	No PID	<u>4/09/84</u>	<u>5/11/84</u>	5/30/84
Commodity Import (K606)	(62,000)	62,000	Wash.	No PID	No PID	<u>4/09/84</u>	<u>6/84</u>	6/29/84
<u>UGANDA</u> 617-0104 Rehab of Productive Enterprise PE	(33,500)	6,000	Wash.	N/A	(FY 83)	<u>6/11/84</u>	7/15/84	7/30/84
617-0107 Oral Rehydration	(3,500)	1,200	Field	<u>4/18/84</u>	<u>4/30/84</u>	<u>6/19/84</u>	6/30/84	6/30/84

1/5/84

Country Project Title Number PID or 2P	PIDs and PPs									PIDs		& PPs		PPs		15 Comments
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		
	LOP \$000	OYB \$000	Date Doc Rec'd.	Date Dist.	Date Issues Mtg.	Date ECPR Sched.	Date ECPR Held	Date Decision Cable Sent	Date Guidance Cable Sent	Date Date CN Sent	Date Date Auth.	Date Date Oblig.	Total Calendar Days 4-8	Total Calendar Days 4-11		

SUDAN

Kordf. Rain-fed Ag. 650-0054 W. Weinstein 632-8286
18,100 15,600 5/28/84 5/31/84 6/8/84 6/12/84 6/12/84 6/19/84 6/20/84 6/15/84 20

River Transport Agricultural Marketing PID 650-0060 W. Weinstein 632-8286
10,200 2,300 12/30/83 1/5/84 1/13/84 1/18/84 1/15/84 1/27/84 2/6/84 32

Western Agricultural Marketing Road PP 650-0069 W. Weinstein 632-8286
60,000 15,600 6/2/84 5/5/84 6/12/84 (all are estimated dates)

Ret Initiative PAAD (650-K-606) W. Weinstein 632-8286
40,000 40,000 4/9/84 4/11/84 4/18/84 4/25/84 4/25/84 5/11/84 5/11/84 5/11/84 6/9/84 31 31

Program Grant PAAD 650-K-607 W. Weinstein 632-8286
18,000 18,000 1/9/84 1/18/84 No Mtg. 1/20/84 1/20/84 2/17/84 2/17/84 1/17/84 2/17/84 2/19/84 31 31

CIP 650-K 605a PAAD 62,000 62,000 4/9/84 4/12/84 4/20/84 4/26/84 4/26/84 5/24/84 5/24/84 6/26/84 7/17/84

*Only one of these two projects will be obligated in FY 84. The other will be obligated in FY 85.

W. Weinstein 632-8286

SOMALIA

Compr. Groundwater Amdt. 649-0104 19,000 5,800 J Heard 632-8286
12/22/83 1/17/84 1/25/84 1/18/84 2/13/84 2/16/84 2/25/84 30

PID-Like Cable Comment: Issues and ECPR delayed to allow participation of D/Dir.

PP Supplement 6/14/84 6/15/84 6/22/84 6/29/84 6/15/84

PID AND PP REVIEW PROCESS

(Actual Dates)

AFR/PD/EAP
June 28, 1984

As of 9/84

Country Project Title Number PID or PP	PIDs and PPs									PPs			PIDs		& PPs		PPs	15 Comments
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	
	LOP \$000	OYB \$000	Date Doc Rec'd.	Date Dist.	Date Issues Mtg.	Date ECPR Sched.	Date ECPR Held	Date Decision Cable Sent	Date Guidance Cable Sent	Date CN Sent	Date Auth.	Date Oblig.	Total Calendar Days 4-8	Total Calendar Days 4-11				
Livestock Marketing and Health 649-0109 Comment: Issues and ECPR delayed to allow participation of D/Dir, USAID.	10,200	2,000	1/17/84	1/23/84	2/10/84	1/18/84	2/15/84	2/24/84	3/10/84				32					
			S. Shah 632-8286															
Family Health Services 649-0131 Comment: Issues and ECPR delayed to allow participation of D/Dir. USAID. Also PID had to be rewritten.	4,500	1,600	1/17/84	1/23/84	2/3/84	1/18/84	2/7/84	2/9/84	3/2/84				17					
			S. Shah 632-8286															
Education/ Human Resources 649-0119 Comment: Issues and ECPR delayed to allow participation of D/Dir. USAID. Also PID had to be rewritten.	18,500	-0-	1/17/84	1/22/84	2/6/84	1/18/84	2/9/84	2/24/84	3/8/84				33					
Refugee Settlement	15,700	7,000	5/29/84	5/31/84	6/7/84	6/15/84	6/15/84	6/15/84	6/18/84	6/27/84								
			T. Lofgren 632-8286															
<u>KENYA</u> Ag. Mgt. 615-0221	3,000	No OYB	1/20/84	2/10/84	2/17/84	2/22/84	2/24/84	2/25/84	3/2/84				15				Shelf	
Program Grant 615-0213	125,000	40,000	5/17/84	5/30/84	6/6/84	6/11/84	6/11/84	6/12/84	6/12/84	6/12/84			13				Authorization withheld until FY 83 audit question unsolved.	
Ag Dev. Loan 615-0230	15,000	15,000	6/5/84	6/20/84	6/27/84	7/2/84												
			E. Kerst 632-8286															
<u>DJIBOUTI</u> Housing-Urban Development PID	5,500	1,500	10/24/83	(No Issues Mtg)			11/4/83	11/10/83					16					
			Comment: OYB may be reduced to 1,300. Project is currently on hold pending resolution of joint vs. parallel financing question with IDA.															

