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EVALUATING
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:
A SYSTEM FOR PLANNERS, PROJECT
STAFF, AND EVALUATORS

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PREFACE

This document presents a system to be used in designing, implementing, and reporting evaluations of cooperative development projects. It was designed for use by project planners, project staff, and individuals with responsibility for monitoring and assessing the impacts of projects. Sections of the system description are specifically directed to these various audiences. The goal of the system, however, is that the various groups work together in generating reliable and useful evaluative information.

The system begins with an introduction to the proposed role of cooperatives in international development, and goes on to describe features of cooperatives and cooperative development projects. A general model for analyzing cooperative projects is then presented, along with a discussion of dimensions on which projects differ. The purposes of process and impact evaluations are then discussed, as are general approaches to choosing evaluation questions.

Separate chapters are devoted to the roles of project planners, project staff, individuals with special interests in the project (Mission personnel, cooperative organization personnel, etc.), and individuals performing impact evaluations. Although these chapters are focused on specific groups, their contents should be helpful to all of those involved in cooperative development projects.

The system description includes an extensive list of study questions, indicators, and data sources from which a limited set of questions can be selected for any project. A list of references concerning evaluation of cooperative projects is also provided. Finally, an example of an evaluation system developed using the general system is provided in the Appendix.

This system for evaluating cooperative projects resulted from the efforts of a very large number of people. Its development was initiated by John Shaffer, who at the time was the coordinator for cooperative organizations in AID's Office of Private and Voluntary Cooperation. Shaffer contracted with Development Associates

to serve as a secretariat to a Task Force on the Evaluation of Cooperatives, which was composed of individuals from the six U.S. cooperative organizations receiving institutional support from AID, plus individuals from AID's regional and central bureaus. Members of the Task Force plus many other individuals provided information and/or comments on various drafts of this handbook. In addition, the system was applied to three different types of cooperative projects in Honduras, and the staff and others related to these projects provided many useful insights. It is impossible to name all of the individuals who aided in the development of the handbook, but the authors wish to thank all of them for their contributions.

I. INTRODUCTION

The development and funding of cooperatives has been a part of U.S. foreign policy since the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Two thrusts of this policy have been to provide for the participation of rural and urban poor in their countries' development and to utilize sector expertise from the United States developed through U.S. experience with cooperatives.

AID supports the development and strengthening of cooperatives through institutional support grants to six U.S.-based cooperative development organizations* and through grants and contracts for specific overseas projects. The six cooperative development organizations are responsible for many, but not all, AID-supported overseas cooperative projects. Despite a considerable investment of resources by AID and cooperative organizations in overseas activities, however, there has been relatively little systematic evaluation of the results of this investment. Generally, cooperative activities have not been recognized as a separate sectoral unit, and for that reason evaluations of cooperative activities have usually been project-specific rather than generic to cooperatives. A system is needed, therefore, which can produce an on-going set of evaluations of overseas cooperative activities. The results of such a system would benefit a wide audience, including Congress, AID policy-makers and cooperative organizations.

Cooperative Principles and Local Factors Affecting Cooperative Organizations

A variety of definitions of what constitutes a cooperative have been advanced. For the purpose of developing a system for evaluating cooperative projects, a cooperative may be described as an organization which operates according to cooperative principles. Six basic principles were approved at the 1966 Congress of the International Co-operative Alliance (6), and are suggested as appropriate for the present purpose. These cooperative principles are:

*Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI), the Cooperative League of the United States of America (CLUSA), the Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF), the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), the Volunteer Development Corps (VDC), and the World Council of Credit Unions (WCCU).

1. Membership of a cooperative society should be voluntary and available without artificial restriction or any social, political or religious discrimination, to all persons who can make use of its services and are willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.
2. Cooperative societies are democratic organizations. Their affairs should be administered by persons elected or appointed in a manner agreed to by the members and accountable to them. Members of primary societies should enjoy equal rights of voting (one member, one vote) and participation in decisions affecting their societies. In other than primary societies, the administration should be conducted on a democratic basis in a suitable form.
3. Share capital should only receive a strictly limited rate of interest, if any.
4. Surplus or savings, if any, arising out of the operations of a society belong to the members of that society and should be distributed in such manner as would avoid one member gaining at the expense of others. This may be done by decision of the members as follows:
 - (a) By provision for development of the business of the cooperative;
 - (b) By provision for common services; or
 - (c) By distribution among the members in proportion to their transactions with the society.
5. All cooperative societies should make provision for the education of their members, officers, and employees and of the general public, in the principles and techniques of cooperation, both economic and democratic.
6. All cooperative organizations, in order to best serve the interests of their members and their communities, should actively cooperate in every practical way with other cooperatives at local, national and international levels.

Not included above, but recognized by many cooperatives as important, is a premise of business purpose. That is, a cooperative should operate at least on a break-even cash basis.

The essence of a cooperative is that it operates according to cooperative principles. Thus, attention should be directed toward the nature of the organization, not its name. Organizations called associations, guilds, societies, etc. would be considered cooperatives if they follow cooperative principles. Other organizations called cooperatives may not be considered relevant if they fail to follow cooperative principles.

Two factors which have a particularly important influence on the operation of cooperatives are the role of government and the cultural context of the host country. The role of government vis-a-vis cooperatives can range along a continuum from non-involvement through support and sponsorship to substantial direction and control. An organization operating under total government control would not be considered a cooperative because it would not be member-operated.

Thus, consideration needs to be given to the type and extent of government involvement relative to the extent to which cooperative principles are being followed. Decisions about whether organizations should be considered cooperatives need to be made on a case by case basis.

The cultural setting of the host country also influences the nature of cooperative organizations and the activities in which they engage. Clan membership, for example, may influence membership patterns in voluntary organizations. Traditional decision-making and resource allocation patterns may also affect, or be affected by, the introduction of new cooperative institutions. Indeed, in some instances, the introduction of cooperative structures may be inappropriate. In most instances, however, while cooperatives need to take the local culture into account in providing services to beneficiaries, a successful accommodation can be effected.

Definition of a Cooperative Development Project

Before an evaluation system for cooperative development projects can be developed, there needs to be some agreement concerning what constitutes a cooperative development project. A cooperative development project may be defined as a set of activities undertaken by, to, or through a cooperative, a government cooperative department or other organization working for cooperative development. The activities may be intended to: (a) create new cooperative organizations; (b) strengthen existing cooperative organizations; or (c) develop cooperative policy. The goals of cooperative projects are to provide economic and social benefits to cooperative members, and sometimes also to provide certain benefits to individuals in the areas of cooperatives but who are not cooperative members.

As defined within the evaluation context, a cooperative development project may be more or less than what AID identifies as a project or grant. For example, AID may use the term "project" to refer to a substantial rural development effort in one country involving many sectors, including cooperatives. Only the cooperative part of this larger undertaking would constitute a cooperative development project as defined above. The cooperative component of the larger effort could thus be evaluated as a distinct unit.

II. A LOGICAL STRUCTURE FOR ANALYZING COOPERATIVE PROJECTS

There is a wide diversity in the nature of AID cooperative projects being performed overseas, yet for evaluation purposes, it is important that some common structure for analyzing projects be applied. A starting point for such a structure lies in the Logical Framework approach in which projects are defined according to their inputs, outputs, purposes, and goals.

Additional detail concerning the structure of projects is provided when the components of inputs, outputs, purposes, and goals are described. Exhibit 1 provides a detailed model of a logical structure for overseas cooperative projects. Like all models, the exhibit masks somewhat the complexity of the actual nature of projects, and thus not all links between inputs and beneficiary impacts are shown.* What is shown, however, is a logical progression in which the development or strengthening of cooperative institutions is seen as a key step toward the eventual goal of improving the lives of beneficiaries.

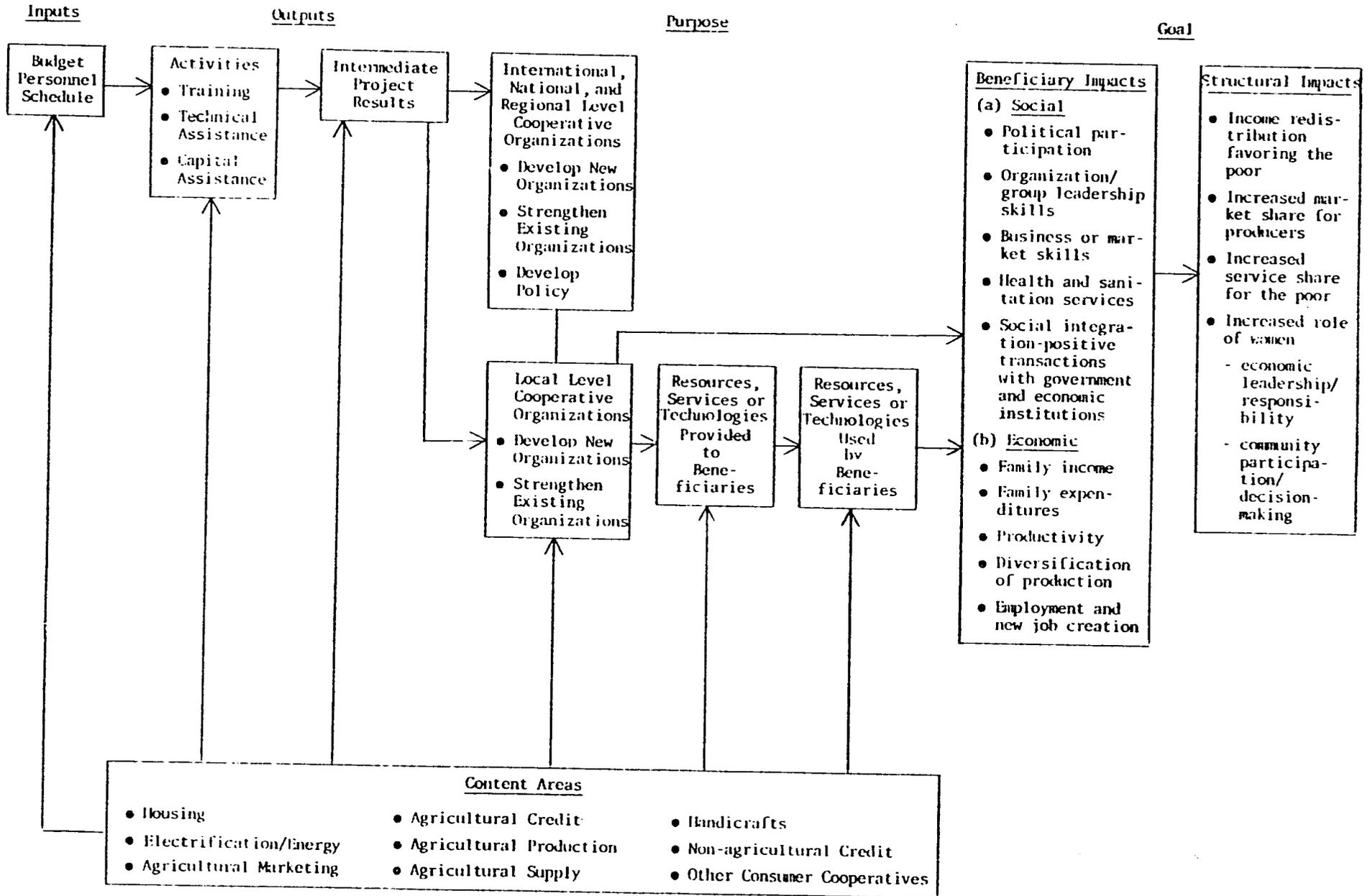
According to the model, project inputs lead to activities and intermediate results. These, which will vary by the size and scope of the project, lead to developing or strengthening cooperative organizations or support systems (laws, policies, practices) at the national or local levels. National level support structures (public or private) presumably lead to strong local cooperatives that provide resources, services and technologies to cooperative members and other beneficiaries. If these inputs are utilized properly by beneficiaries, they in turn lead to beneficiary impacts which may contribute to structural change. The content area(s) in which assistance is provided, of course influences each of these levels of analysis.

It should be noted that the model is generic, and is meant to summarize projects with widely varying purposes and scopes of effort. For this reason, the model may be somewhat more complex than what is needed to describe a particular project. It

*An analysis of 102 AID-supported projects intended to build and/or strengthen cooperatives, conducted by Allen and Hageboeck (1), suggests a more complex yet compatible descriptive system of the chain of events leading to impacts on beneficiaries.

EXHIBIT 1

MODEL OF OVERSEAS COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



is important, however, that all cooperative projects be compared against the elements of the model in order to assure that important links in the causal chain of project outcomes are not overlooked.

A close examination of the model shows that it assumes that all cooperative projects share certain common characteristics, but that in other characteristics, projects are assumed to differ. According to the model, all projects are assumed to have similar input variables (budget, personnel, schedule, etc.), and are also assumed to have somewhat similar goals (beneficiary economic and social impacts, social structural impacts, etc.). On the other hand, there are three key variables on which projects are expected to differ. These variables are:

1. Method of intervention: a project may involve the provision of training, technical assistance, capital assistance, or some combination of the three;
2. Institutional objective: a project may be designed to develop new cooperative organizations, strengthen existing cooperative organizations, develop cooperative policy at the regional or national level, or some combination of these; and
3. Content area: a project may involve assistance in one or more of the following content areas - electrification/energy, housing, agricultural marketing, agricultural supply, agricultural production, agricultural credit, non-agricultural credit, handicrafts/small industry, or other cooperative area.

In applying the model to a specific project, therefore, the method(s) of interventions, objective(s), and content area(s) must be identified clearly so that the model can be tailored appropriately to the project.

III. THE EVALUATION OF COOPERATIVE PROJECTS

The Foreign Assistance Act indicates that evaluations of projects are of prime concern to Congress, and mandates that there be "assessments and evaluations of the projects and programs." However, despite a considerable investment of resources, few systematic evaluations of cooperative development projects have been undertaken. Among improvements to this situation in recent years have been useful conceptual pieces by Dufler (3), Dublin (2) and Tandler (8), and reasonably solid evaluations by Hatch & Flores (5), Goddard et. al (4) and Tandler (9). Nevertheless, evaluations of cooperative development projects still tend to be planned, designed and implemented on an ad hoc basis, with little attention given to adequate advanced planning, common frames of reference, or the systematic accumulation of information over time.

Definitions of Process and Impact Evaluation

There are no universally accepted terms which are used to describe differences among various types of evaluations. One commonly used distinction, however, is between process evaluation and impact evaluation. The term process evaluation is typically used to describe activities which assess the state of development of a project. These activities are usually performed in order that adjustments can be made to improve the operation of that project. The term impact evaluation, on the other hand, is typically used to describe efforts to assess the long-term effects of a project as a basis for future planning and decision-making.

A comprehensive evaluation system includes both process and impact evaluation components. Each of these types of evaluation is examined below, within the context of the model of cooperative projects presented in the previous chapter.

Process Evaluation

The objective of process evaluation is to provide timely information concerning how successfully a project is being implemented. In terms of the model of cooperative projects, process evaluation thus focuses on the inputs, outputs and purposes of the project, although certain information about purposes may not be

available during the life of the project. For a technical assistance project concerning cooperative agricultural marketing, for example, process evaluation information would be collected on such variables as:

- the project budget, schedule, and personnel requirements;
- the amount of technical assistance provided and to whom;
- the degree to which the technical assistance was understood and used appropriately;
- the extent to which technical assistance influenced operations of the assisted cooperative organizations;
- the extent to which the assisted cooperative organizations provided additional resources or services to beneficiaries; and
- the extent to which beneficiaries used the additional resources or services in a productive way.

There are two basic methods by which process evaluation information is collected. The primary method is through well-designed recordkeeping systems of the project and of the affected cooperative organizations. Because process evaluation information can be extremely helpful in the management of the project and to their sponsoring organizations, the design of simple yet descriptive recordkeeping systems can be a key factor in the success of the project. Well-designed recordkeeping systems allow reporting on the project to be prompt and relatively simple to perform, and also provide the relevant information so that decision-makers can make necessary mid-project adjustments.

Forms can be developed, for example, to assess the extent to which training recipients understood the training program, and also to assess how recipients use the training to influence the operations of their cooperative organizations. The results from such forms can be summarized as part of a regular reporting format submitted to those monitoring the project.

The second way in which process evaluation information is collected is through periodic data collection by project staff or project monitors (Mission staff, home office staff of U.S. cooperative organizations, etc.). Periodic data collection may be in such forms as yearly monitoring visits, midstream evaluations, or semi-annual surveys of project beneficiaries. The content of such forms of data

collection frequently involves judgments or personal opinions which are not likely to be collected as part of regular recordkeeping. Beneficiaries within cooperative organizations, for example, may be periodically sampled and asked their judgments about operations and procedures of their cooperatives. Such data would provide useful information about the degree to which the project was meeting its purposes.

Process evaluation information should be collected concerning every cooperative development project. The scope of data collection, however, should of course depend upon the need for information by project managers and project monitors, and also upon the need for information by those designing similar projects in the future. Process evaluation information, if clearly and accurately reported, can be of enormous help to individuals planning or implementing similar projects. Such information can allow project planners and project staff to duplicate successful approaches and avoid previously discovered pitfalls.

Impact Evaluation

The objective of impact evaluation is to examine the personal, social, and economic effects of projects on intended beneficiaries. Impact evaluations thus concentrate on the goal level of the model of cooperative projects previously presented. Impact evaluations, however, must also make use of process evaluation data, particularly at the purpose level, in order to provide a context for evaluation findings.

There are a number of issues which complicate the task of performing impact evaluations. One difficulty with impact evaluation is that many of the economic and social effects of projects on beneficiaries occur near the end of projects or after projects are completed. The measurement of project impacts, therefore, is rather difficult to integrate into the regular project data collection system.

Another difficulty in performing impact evaluations is that in order clearly to attribute economic and social benefits to the project, baseline data on economic and social characteristics of beneficiaries need to be available. Depending on

the impact evaluation design*, data may also need to be collected from one or more comparison groups both during the baseline period and during the period of impact data collection. Without baseline and comparison group data, it is very difficult to know if the economic and social conditions of beneficiaries have changed, and if they have changed, if the changes were greater than those for individuals not affected by the project. It is possible to conduct impact evaluations in the absence of baseline and comparison group information (certain of the AID Project Impact Evaluations are examples), but the conclusions of such evaluations must be more tentatively offered than if baseline and comparison group information is available.

The collection of baseline impact evaluation data should occur as close to the project start-up date as possible. The timing of post-project measurements, however, may occur any time from the end of the project to several years after project completion. The timing of impact data collection must, therefore, depend on when impacts are most likely to be observed, and also on when impact data are needed by decision-makers.

The identification of an appropriate comparison group or groups is also a difficult issue. Among the possible comparison groups for members of cooperatives assisted by a project are:

- members of cooperatives which are not assisted by the project;
- individuals in the areas of assisted cooperatives who are not members of the cooperatives; or
- individuals who are assisted by non-cooperative projects.

Depending on the nature of the study questions, any or all of these comparison groups may be appropriate. Further complicating the task of selecting comparison groups is the fact that at the beginning of projects to build new cooperative organizations, it may be impossible to identify who the future beneficiaries of the project may be. The evaluation plan may thus need to propose that baseline data be collected from groups both likely and unlikely to become cooperative members.

*See Smith (7) p. 140-153 for a good presentation of various types of evaluation designs in the AID context.

Despite these problems, efforts need to be made to assure that impact evaluation information is collected. Baseline data on relevant impact variables should be collected for all projects, and all project planning papers should include a statement on what post-project data are to be collected. The extent of impact evaluation data which are to be collected should depend upon the size of the project, the probability that the project will serve as a model for other future projects, and the degree to which the project planners believe that the causal links between inputs, outputs, purposes, and goals are already clearly established. Planning for impact evaluation should be part of the project design, and the impact evaluation plan should continue to be reviewed throughout the life of the project.

The Development of Evaluation Study Questions

When planning an evaluation system, it is important that each of the elements of a cooperative project is examined. In this way, each of the links in the causal chain leading to project goals can be evaluated, and attribution of reasons for the success or failure of a project can be made.

A first step in the evaluation design process is the selection of appropriate study questions. Study questions serve not only to guide the areas of inquiry, but they also often suggest specific evaluation design approaches. The development and refinement of study questions is of continuing importance throughout the life of the project. Study questions should not only be examined in the planning and impact evaluation phases of a project, but also on a periodic basis by those implementing the project.

The model of cooperative projects presented in Chapter II serves as a starting point in the selection of questions. Study questions, indicators, and data sources relating to each of the components of the model are presented in Chapter VIII of this report. The selection of questions is by no means a simple process, however. The selection of questions and indicators should involve the following steps:

Step 1. The evaluator should examine the project to determine the fit between the project design and the model of cooperative projects presented in Chapter II. If possible, the evaluator should attempt to match elements of the

proposed project with the elements of the model. If the project design is widely at variance with the model, the evaluator should identify whatever common elements exist between the proposed project and the model, and note elements which do not match with the model.

Step 2. The evaluator should characterize the project in terms of method(s) of intervention, institutional objective(s), and content area(s). After these characterizations have been made, the evaluator should locate those subgroups of questions in Chapter VIII which relate to the project's particular method(s), objective(s), and content area(s). It should be noted that all of Sections 1 (inputs), 5 (beneficiary purposes), and 6 (goals) are at least theoretically relevant to all projects, but that selection of groups of questions based on their relevance to the project must be made in Sections 2 (intervention strategies), 3 (content area), and 4 (institutional purposes).

Step 3. The evaluator should examine the questions in relevant sections and should identify all questions which reasonably relate to the project. Questions should not be evaluated based on their importance to the project at this step; all relevant questions should be identified.

Step 4. The evaluator should examine the project design to see if there are important elements of the design that are not addressed by the existing evaluation questions. If such gaps exist, the evaluator should draft additional questions and indicators to address these important elements. The new evaluation questions and indicators should then be integrated into the categories of the model, if possible.

Step 5. The evaluator should critically examine all resulting questions in terms of their importance to understanding the project. Questions that are relatively unimportant should be eliminated from the list, and questions which are particularly key should be identified.

Step 6. The evaluator should closely examine the indicators provided for each of the selected questions. These indicators are designed to suggest response alternatives to the study questions, and to aid in the development of evaluation instruments. The evaluator should refine the list of indicators by adding or deleting from those provided. The final list of questions and indicators should reflect an honest expectation of what relevant data can be collected for process and impact evaluations on the particular project.

By using this process, the foundation for an evaluation system can be developed. The evaluation designer can then proceed to develop evaluation methodologies and data collection instruments to answer evaluation questions. An example of an evaluation system developed through this process is included in the Appendix.

It should be noted that all questions presented in Chapter VIII of the report are phrased in the past tense. This was done for the sake of uniformity. It is highly likely, however, that certain elements of projects or cooperative organizations may be ongoing at the time of evaluations. Questions may thus need to be rephrased in order to avoid confusion.

It should also be noted that most of the study questions provided are descriptive in nature rather than inferential (i.e., How actively did members participate in the cooperative? versus Did the members play an appropriate role in the cooperative?). Most of the study questions could have been phrased in either descriptive or inferential fashion. Those performing evaluations should thus pay attention to both the descriptive and inferential aspects of study questions, so that the evaluation meets each of these important needs.

IV. ISSUES FOR INDIVIDUALS DESIGNING PROJECTS

Introduction - General Issues in Evaluation Planning

Too often in the past, evaluation of cooperative development projects has come as an afterthought. In those cases, evaluation efforts have been thwarted by the lack of relevant information and the costs of obtaining such information after the fact. It is essential, therefore, that evaluation-related data be gathered while projects are in progress and that planning for data gathering begin during project design.

In designing an evaluation system for a cooperative project, there are five general factors which should be considered: (1) the types of information which are required by decision-makers, (2) the minimum information needs for the project, (3) the key indicators for project variables, (4) specific approaches to data collection and analysis; and (5) the time and resources required for data collection.

(1) Types of required information. An evaluation system needs to collect information concerning all four levels of a project (inputs, outputs, purposes and goals). However, a careful analysis of decision-maker needs at all levels should be performed to determine the types of information which should be collected. Evaluation questions should reflect the needs of decision-makers of the local cooperative organizations, project managers, the AID Mission, host government, cooperative organization headquarters, and AID/Washington.

It is important to recognize that the information needs of various individuals may vary significantly. While the interests of project staff, local cooperative organizations, and cooperative organization headquarters may focus on the successful implementation of project outputs, the interest of AID/Washington or the host government may be more focused on institutional purposes or project goals. Those planning the evaluation design should, therefore, attempt to assess and then balance the interests of these various groups.

(2) Establishment of minimum information needs. In evaluation, as elsewhere in the project design process, often "the perfect is the enemy of the good." Too

often, sights are set much too high with respect to the amount and types of information which can be gathered during a project lifetime. As a result, the information system begins to dominate at the expense of the project purpose, or the system breaks down and fails to provide even minimum requirements.

What is needed, therefore, is a careful selection of what information is actually necessary, specification of the degrees of precision which are required for various types of data, and an honest estimate of the frequency with which data need to be collected. The goal is to create a system which is both efficient and reasonable in terms of time and resource requirements, while still being responsive to actual data needs. Each project will differ with respect to this issue, with the specifics being determined by the size, nature, and importance of the project.

(3) Development of key indicators. For each evaluation question asked, key indicators relating to the question need to be selected. These indicators need to be performance-linked and quantifiable, if at all possible. Evaluation questions which are not related to specific indicators often lose their analytic usefulness.

Indicators for all questions are included in Chapter VIII, but these indicators may need to be sharpened or adjusted based on project characteristics. Indicators also need to be developed for new questions which are developed by the evaluation planner. The selection of indicators is far from an exact discipline. Creativity is essential, as is agreement among relevant parties as to which indicators are most important.

(4) Collection and analysis of evaluation information. Data collection and analysis should be simple and practical in design, employing the technology most appropriate and affordable in what may be a rural, decentralized situation. Data analysis on-site, for example, may need to be limited to those tasks which can be performed with a hand-held calculator.

Not all information needed for evaluation may require original data collection. Therefore, it is important to assess the nature and quality of information which is already available from the host country government, the national cooperative

organization, the local cooperative, or others. National, regional, or cooperative organization personal surveys or market analyses, for example, may be very useful in project design or evaluation.

Some original data collection will clearly be needed to answer evaluation questions. Standardized forms will need to be developed to collect monitoring and process information. Special forms may also be needed to collect information on a non-recurrent basis, such as baseline information on potential goal-level impacts. All forms should be as simple-to-read and easy-to-use as possible. Plans should be made to train those who will be completing the forms in their proper use. Form users should know: (a) what information is requested; (b) where the information should come from; (c) when the information is needed; and (d) how to handle and edit the information.

(5) Time and resources required for data collection. The project plan needs to take into account the time and resources which will be required to implement the proposed evaluation system. In particular, adequate plans need to be made for the collection of baseline impact evaluation data.

Project staff will in almost all cases need to collect baseline impact data at the beginning of the project. All project papers contain at least some baseline data, but the nature and quality of that data frequently limits its usefulness for comparison purposes. Some of the information which is contained in project papers is already dated by the time projects begin, but the most frequent problem is that information in the project paper does not always relate directly to the beneficiary groups or interventions that are planned for the project.

The project plan should therefore allow for adequate staff time (as much as two to three weeks) and resources (transportation costs, etc.) to collect the necessary baseline information. The time and resources required for the collection and reporting of process evaluation results also need to be included in the project paper.

Information to be Provided in the Project Paper

As part of project design, each project paper for a cooperative development project should include a section describing a plan for an evaluation system. The evaluation system should include two levels of data collection. At one level, the system should be designed to collect data relating to goal level impacts. The system should include a detailed statement of how baseline impact evaluation data should be collected, and it also should include a statement of whether end-of-project or post-project impact evaluations should be performed. At a second level, the system should incorporate procedures for collecting information about inputs, outputs, and achievement of purposes throughout the life of the project.

The evaluation plan presented in the project paper should provide the answers to the following questions:

- (1) What evaluation questions are to be asked and what indicators have been identified to measure the inputs, outputs, purposes and goals of cooperative activities? Why have the questions and indicators been selected?
- (2) What is the nature and usefulness, including strengths and shortcomings, of data currently being produced by the host country, national cooperative unit, U.S. cooperative organization, or other entities? To what extent and in what way can existing data collection efforts (host country or other) be integrated into the evaluation system?
- (3) What methods will be used to collect the needed data? Why were they selected?
- (4) What kind of staff, annual budget, and time schedule, will be necessary to undertake the data collection, the data analysis, and reporting to the end-users of the information?
- (5) How will the data be analyzed (e.g., hand calculators, computers) and where? What procedures will be used to ensure that the data are analyzed in a timely fashion to meet project management and evaluation needs?
- (6) What factors have been taken into consideration to ensure that the data collection system is as simple and efficient as possible to provide needed, but not unnecessary, information?

Integral to the development of a sound evaluation plan are clear and concise statements of the proposed project's inputs, outputs, purposes, and goals. There

are a number of source documents which are available to assist in the development of a well-designed Logical Framework. In particular, the manual "Design and Evaluation of AID-Assisted Projects" by Smith (7, p. 92-94) provides useful information for integrating design and evaluation elements.

V. ISSUES FOR PROJECT STAFF

The usefulness of evaluation is frequently much more obvious to individuals outside of a project than to those who are implementing the project. Project staff often feel that working on a project on a day-to-day basis provides them with all of the information which they need, and thus that formal data collection for evaluation is unnecessary.

It is extremely important, however, that project staff recognize the importance of evaluation, and integrate evaluation procedures into their day-to-day functions. Evaluation is important for those implementing a project because it:

- provides timely and objective feedback concerning the success of various project activities;
- allows adjustments in project activities based on their level of success;
- validates for outsiders the conclusions of staff concerning project success;
- increases the chances that project successes can be duplicated and project failures avoided in other settings; and
- causes project staff occasionally to view the project from an outsider's perspective.

Project staff should thus be very well acquainted with the proposed project evaluation system, and should work with the project officer in making adjustments to the system as the circumstances of the project change.

Adjustments to the Evaluation System

One of the earliest tasks of any project should be an examination of the evaluation system proposed in the project paper. The project director and other relevant project staff should assess the evaluation plan in terms of its:

- potential to generate useful evaluation data;
- appropriateness to the size and nature of the project;
- cost feasibility; and
- time demands on project staff.

Project staff should pay particular attention to study questions, evaluation design and data collection modes, if they are included in the project paper.

Project staff will frequently be confronted with an evaluation plan that is either insufficiently detailed or which makes what are perceived to be inadequate plans for evaluation. In such cases, the project director should discuss the evaluation plan as soon as possible with the project officer. In some cases, it may be necessary to draft an entirely new evaluation system. Adjustments may also need to be made in the project plan so that greater resources or greater person-effort are devoted to project evaluation than were originally planned.

Even more serious, it is sometimes the case that the nature of a project and its work plan change during project implementation, but that the project design and contract documents are not amended to reflect those changes. During the heat of project implementation, the importance of amending such documents as Logical Frameworks and evaluation systems is often overlooked. What occasionally has happened, therefore, is that projects have been evaluated and criticized because they failed to address the original project plans. These examples point to the importance of updating project design documents, and in particular, the project evaluation system. A redesigned project clearly should include a redesigned evaluation system.

It is important that project staff are comfortable with and have confidence in the evaluation plan, because they will be the ones who are implementing many of the evaluation data collection systems. If changes in the evaluation plan are needed, they should be made as early as possible in the project so that opportunities for early data collection are not lost.

Collecting Baseline Impact Evaluation Information

Included in the project paper should be certain information relating to baseline impact measures. The project paper should also include a plan for the collection of baseline information. Such a plan should identify the types of information needed, present a baseline impact design, and describe the methodologies for data collection. It will frequently be the case, however, that some or all of these elements will be missing from the project paper. If any of these elements are

missing, project staff should work with the project officer in revising the project evaluation plan.

The collection of baseline impact measures is important for two major reasons. First, almost all impact evaluation designs require information about characteristics of recipients prior to the introduction of the project. Mid-project, end-of-project, or post-project impact evaluations are extremely difficult to interpret if there is no baseline information on those characteristics of recipients. Baseline data collection may also serve an important function in providing concrete evidence concerning the needs of beneficiaries in those areas in which assistance is to be provided.

A second major purpose of baseline data collection is to acquaint project staff with the beneficiary population. Knowledge gained during the period of baseline data collection can be used in designing interventions which will most effectively meet beneficiary needs. Contact and interaction with the farmers in local cooperatives, for example, may suggest content areas or training approaches which are appropriate for cooperative staff or officers.

Project staff frequently question the value of collecting baseline impact measures because they believe that the process is too costly, time-consuming, and technically complicated to design. Project staff also sometimes believe that informal observations can work as well as formal data collection systems in helping project staff to understand the beneficiary population.

If performed correctly, however, baseline data collection can be an efficient yet highly useful tool for project staff. To be efficiently performed, (i.e., to minimize time and cost) baseline data collection needs to:

- use existing information to the maximal degree possible;
- generate data using simple methods such as redesigning application forms or piggy-backing on existing surveys;
- target data collection to limited samples of beneficiaries; and
- seek information on a limited number of impact variables which are specifically included in project goals.

Project staff do not need to have a great deal of technical sophistication in order to collect baseline data. Project staff may wish to consult, however, with the evaluation specialist of their U.S. sponsoring organization or with the evaluation officer in the USAID Mission prior to baseline data collection. In most cases, common sense will suggest which variables are key to the project, and which comparison groups, if any, are appropriate for data collection. The size of the project and the resources available for evaluation should always be kept in mind in designing baseline data collection.

The collection of formal baseline data is important because it provides objective information about potential beneficiaries. Subjective judgments, though sometimes accurate, are not always so, and such judgments usually also carry little weight with those outside the project. Even if it seems unlikely that a follow-up impact evaluation study will be performed, baseline information should be collected because it is important for its own sake.

Collecting Process Evaluation Information

Process evaluation of a project relies on two primary data bases, project records and monitoring visits. Monitoring visits are conducted by those outside of the project, and thus are described in the next chapter. The major source of process evaluation data, however, comes from recordkeeping systems which are designed and implemented by project staff.

Project recordkeeping has two major purposes. Project records are used internally by staff to assess their efforts and to guide future project activities. Project records are also the source of information for project reports which are sent to those outside of the project. The nature and content of project reports are also described in the next chapter.

In order to design recordkeeping systems, it is important that project staff carefully review the study questions, and determine which questions can be answered through the collection of project records. The project evaluation plan may suggest which questions should be answered with project records, but this aspect of the plan should be carefully reviewed by project staff to assure that the plan is feasible.

Project staff should then determine what types of records are required. Many of the records will be internal to the project (budget forms, etc.) but forms to be used by cooperative organizations (application forms, etc.) and forms to be completed by recipients of assistance (evaluation of training, etc.) are also likely to be needed. If existing cooperative documents are to be used, a precheck of the reliability of such documents should be made. Although the specifics of the recordkeeping system will vary based on the relevant study questions, it probably should include such elements as:

- budget sheets, on which actual expenses are compared against planned expenses;
- personnel records, on which project staff time is recorded;
- records of the amount of assistance (number of trainees, technical assistance hours, etc.) provided to recipients;
- recipient rating sheets, on which the usefulness or effectiveness of assistance provided is rated by recipients;
- membership records of cooperatives which have been assisted;
- financial records of cooperatives which have been assisted; and
- records of beneficiary use of cooperative services.

This list of project records is meant to be illustrative, and thus the list for a particular project is likely to contain more or different elements.

Records to retrieve such information should be as simple and easy-to-use as possible. Project recordkeeping should be integrated into regular project activities. In this way, data which are extremely important to project management and project evaluation can be collected with little or no disruption to project activities.

To summarize, project recordkeeping should be designed to improve the operation of the project, and also to describe the project to outsiders. Both of these purposes need to be kept in mind during the design and implementation of the recordkeeping system.

VI. ISSUES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH MONITORING RESPONSIBILITY FOR COOPERATIVE PROJECTS

There are two groups who share the major responsibility for monitoring most cooperative projects: the USAID Mission personnel with project and evaluation responsibility, and the support and evaluation staff of sponsoring organizations in the U.S. In the case of host country contracts, officials of the host country government also have major monitoring responsibilities. These groups must work together to assess the progress of projects toward their stated objectives, and to identify the reasons why projects are reaching or are failing to reach their objectives.

There are three primary ways in which project monitors gain information about projects:

- through informal contacts with project staff made either in person, by telephone, by cable, or by mail;
- through regular reporting systems; or
- through formal monitoring and evaluation visits.

Each of these information mechanisms provides important data concerning the status of projects. Informal contacts, however, are used most frequently to deal with day-to-day problems and logistical details. This chapter will focus, therefore, on the importance of reporting systems and monitoring visits to the overall evaluation design.

The Development of an Effective Reporting System

An effective reporting system for a project serves the following purposes:

- It provides those with project monitoring responsibilities information about the progress of the project towards its stated objectives;
- It suggests what additional resources or interventions may be needed in order for the project to meet its objectives;
- It encourages project staff to develop and use efficient project recordkeeping systems; and

- it provides project monitors with information with which to describe and defend the project to others.

The form and contents of reporting systems should of course depend upon the needs of project monitors. If possible, the various project monitors should agree upon one format to be used, because such agreement will save considerable project staff time by reducing the reporting burden. (The U.S. sponsoring organization should take the lead in developing reporting forms which are acceptable to all monitors). Although considerable variability in reporting systems is acceptable, there should be certain basic guidelines:

1. There should be some form of formal report to the primary monitors (U.S. sponsor, USAID Mission, host government) at least monthly. This may be in the form of a simple letter report. The minimum elements should be: a monthly financial summary, a statement of major project activities in the month, a statement of progress toward output objectives, an examination of difficulties encountered plus possible or implemented solutions, and a brief description of plans for the coming month.
2. A more detailed report should be required semi-annually. This report should address all input and output study questions, and those purpose study questions which can be answered from regular project records. Answers to the study questions should be made in either preliminary or finished forms, and references should be made to previous detailed reports in order to avoid duplication.
3. In general, monitoring reports should be viewed as internal documents, with distribution only to project staff and project monitors. Project staff and monitors should recognize, however, that project reports serve as key source of information for individuals performing impact evaluations. A library of all project reports should, thus, be made and kept readily accessible for those performing impact evaluations.

Monitoring and Evaluation Visits

Individuals with monitoring responsibility for cooperative projects should make periodic project visits in order to collect process evaluation information.

Visits by project monitors are important because they:

- add an outsider's perspective to the judgments and approaches of the project staff;
- provide a more "objective" evaluation of the status of the project;
- allow project beneficiaries and others to make critical comments about the project which they would be unlikely to make to project staff; and

- provide project monitors with a personal "feel" of the project which they need in order to understand how the project is working.

Projects should be visited by all groups with major monitoring responsibilities (U.S. sponsoring organization, USAID Mission, and sometimes host country government). Such visits should be conducted at least yearly, and if at all possible, the various monitors should visit the project at the same time.

Depending on the nature of the project and the complexity of the evaluation design, the visit should be made either by the individual best acquainted with the day-to-day operations of the project, or by the individual with the most sophistication in the use of evaluation methodologies. If there is more than one visitor, a mix of these attributes among the visitors would be the optimal approach.

The length of the visit should depend upon the size and complexity of the project and the perceived success of the project as illustrated in project reports. Visits to projects which appear to be successful probably do not need to be as long as visits to projects which are experiencing difficulties. Visits should probably last from four to ten days.

The content of the visit should depend upon the nature of the study questions, but in general it should include:

- interviews with the project manager and senior staff;
- interviews with relevant national, regional, and local cooperative leaders, committee members, and managers;
- interviews with host country government officials;
- interviews with related professionals such as cooperatives extension agents, housing contractors, financial analysts, etc.; and
- discussions or informal contacts with project beneficiaries (cooperative members or others).

The monitoring visit should result in a report which is distributed to the project, the U.S. sponsoring organization, the USAID Mission, the host country government, and the relevant national and regional cooperative organizations. The report should include a very brief project overview, a description of activities

performed during the visit, answers to the process evaluation questions which were addressed during the visit, personal observations and impressions, and conclusions and recommendations. A copy of the monitoring visit report should be kept in the library of project reports, so that they are readily available to individuals performing subsequent monitoring visits or conducting impact evaluations.

VII. ISSUES FOR INDIVIDUALS PERFORMING IMPACT EVALUATIONS

Impact evaluations are, by their nature, specific to the information needs of particular individuals. They are undertaken when decision-makers believe that the economic or social effects of a program or individual project on the intended beneficiaries need to be examined. For this reason, it is difficult to specify universal guidelines for conducting impact evaluations. There are certain common issues, however, which confront all individuals who are performing impact evaluations.

Selection of Projects to Evaluate

Although at least some baseline impact evaluation data should be collected for all cooperative development projects, not all projects need to have post-project evaluations. The expected impacts of some projects are too small for post-project evaluations to be appropriate, and for others, the nature of the project or circumstances in the life of the project make it unlikely that measurable goal-level impacts will be observed. For example, a small project to improve the management of a national cooperative service organization, even if successful, would be unlikely to have demonstrable impact on the social or economic status of poor farmers. Similarly, a major training program in agricultural production techniques, if it failed to produce changes in farming techniques among trainees, would be an unsuitable target for impact evaluation.

A project to receive post-project impact evaluation, therefore, should be selected for the following reasons:

- It is a reasonable assumption that the project because of its size and design should have measurable impacts on beneficiaries;
- There are no events in the life of the project (natural disasters, political insurrections, etc.) which preclude the possibility of project impacts;
- There are no process evaluation data which conclusively show that the project has failed; and
- Information concerning impact will clearly assist decision-makers.

Impact evaluations are often performed as a way of guiding future resource allocations. In such cases, it may be important to select projects for evaluation based on such factors as the size of project budgets, the extent to which projects are perceived to include innovative features, and the number of projects by sector and by region. In all cases, however, the primary focus in selecting projects should be the information needs of decision-makers.

Timing of Impact Evaluations

There is no commonly accepted time when impact evaluations should occur. Depending on the types of impacts expected, the most appropriate time for measurement may be near the end of the project, one to two years after the project is completed, or even later than that. The distinction between end-of-project evaluations (which are completed for all projects and which may or may not include impact measures) and post-project impact evaluations needs to be clearly made. A general rule of thumb is that impact evaluations should not occur until at least three to five years after the start of a project. It is possible, however, that some impact measures may be usefully collected during the life of the project. For example, the special series of impact evaluations undertaken by AID from 1979 onward in some cases targeted projects which had not yet been terminated. The results of those impact evaluations were frequently quite useful despite being, in some senses, premature.

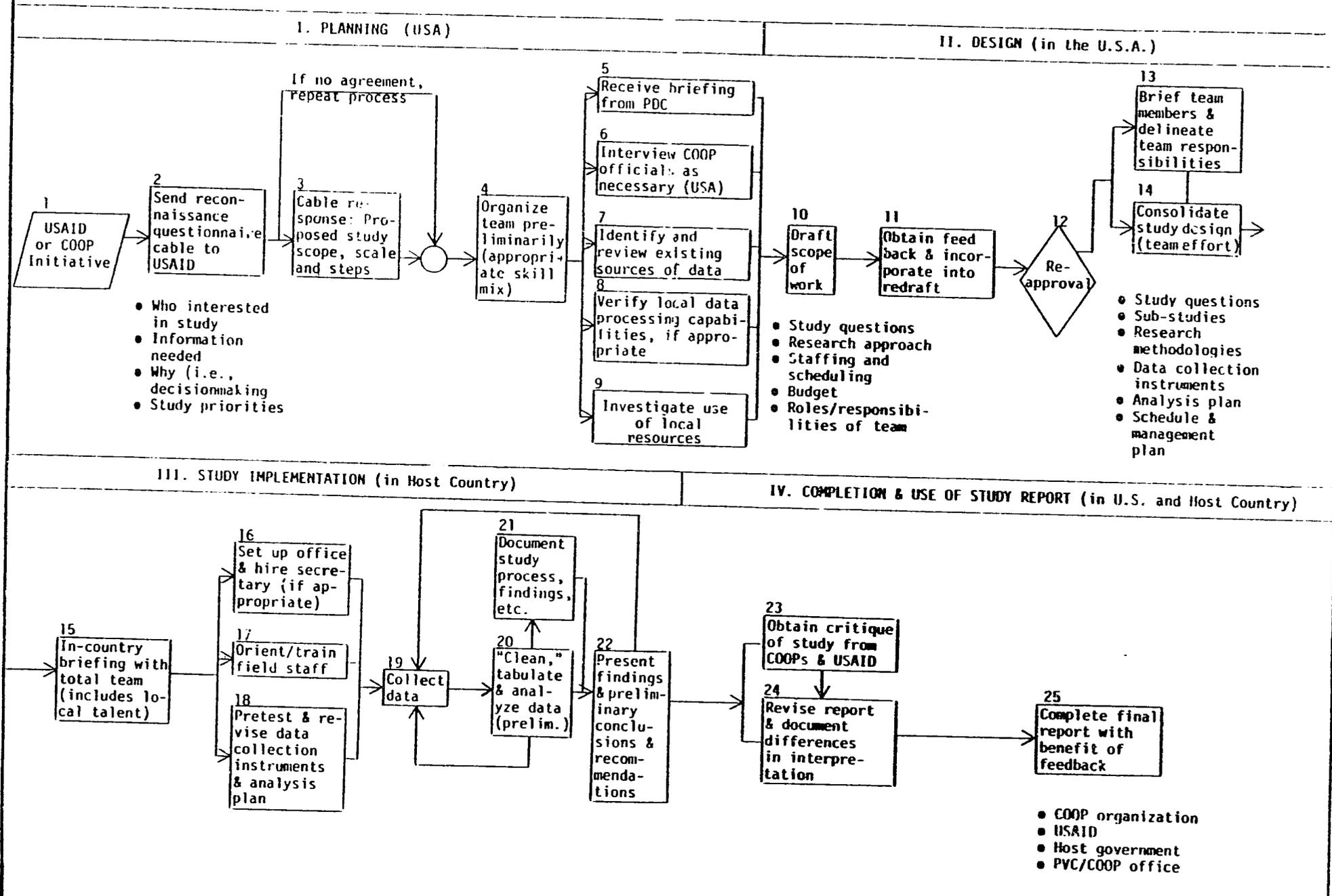
The key to the timing of evaluations is that they provide valid and timely information for those to whom the evaluations are being directed. Evaluations should therefore be timed so that they provide maximally valid information (i.e., occur when impacts are most likely to be observed), and also provide information at times when it is useful for decision-makers.

Recommended Process

A recommended process for conducting impact evaluations of overseas cooperative projects is outlined in Exhibit 2. The process is parallel with that used for the Title II Food for Peace impact evaluations, and thus should be readily implementable. Neither the process, nor the overall evaluation system proposed, is intended to prescribe the specific means of going about particular impact

EXHIBIT 2

PROCESS FOR CONDUCTING IMPACT EVALUATIONS OF COOP PROJECTS



studies, nor to dictate research design or data collection instruments. Rather, they presume that the informational needs of participating entities (AID, U.S. sponsoring organizations, etc.) can be met if the recommended processes are followed and topics addressed. Because the diagram of the process is explicit, comments will be limited to explaining why specific steps are included in Exhibit 2.

● Initial Planning and Design in the United States (Steps 1-14)

Steps 1/3

An impact evaluation may be initiated by a USAID Mission, by a U.S. sponsoring organization, or by other groups within AID. In the case of an AID/Washington or U.S. sponsoring organization initiation, a cable should be sent to the Mission to ask about its ideas for an impact evaluation.

Steps 4/6.

The unit initiating the evaluation should prepare an outline of the study design, based on information from AID/Washington, the sponsoring organization involved, and the Mission. Should the Mission take issue with the design, an exchange of cables may be necessary to reach a preliminary understanding of the nature and purpose of the evaluation. Based on information from all participating entities, the unit initiating the evaluation should be able to determine the appropriate length and timing of an evaluation, prepare the specific design, and develop a workplan for the site visit, including the size of a team and the mix of skills necessary to do the job.

Step 9.

In the process of organizing the study team, maximum use should be made of locally available skills and resources (including members from participating organizations to the extent practical and appropriate). Well-selected local staff are usually well informed and can provide for the possibility of continuity in followup activities supported by USAID, the host government, or the sponsoring organization. The need to arrange for local staff as well as other assistance such as secretarial, transportation, housing, etc. should be transmitted by the evaluation team to the Mission prior to arrival in the host country.

Step 13.

Briefings should be given to study team members to assist them in study design. The team should be exposed to the political, economic, cultural and institutional dynamics of the project setting. This will improve the realism and feasibility of the study design and plan, and provide the team members with a "quick" and credible start once they do arrive on site. Also, during the study design period, individual responsibilities of team members should be clearly delineated.

- Study Implementation (Steps 15-22)

- Step 18.

- The tentative design and study instruments should be reviewed with the Mission and organizational staff before the final versions are prepared. This provides for accommodation to local conditions, special terms and other unforeseen and needed modifications. Once the review is accomplished and before full-scale data collection begins, the study team should pretest and revise data collection instruments and test and revise the analysis plan for each sub-study. This serves to prevent errors in the study design. Participation by Mission and organizational staff in this step can improve skills that can be used in future self-evaluation activities.

- Steps 19/22.

- As data are collected and analyzed, the preliminary findings and the study process should be documented. Findings and preliminary conclusions and recommendations should be given to the decision-makers of the different participating organizations. This enables decision-makers to request additional information or clarification while there is still an opportunity for the team to respond (i.e., before the drafting of the report).

- Completion and Use of Impact Evaluation (Steps 23-25)

- Upon completion of a draft report, sponsoring organizations, including the cooperatives and USAID, should be invited to prepare a formal critique of the study methods and process used as well as the study results. These critiques should be incorporated into the final study report, and thus decisionmakers will be exposed to different perspectives on the same issue.

Composition of An Impact Evaluation Team

Experience with impact evaluations suggests that an impact evaluation team should have:

- An experienced team leader. The leadership position is crucial to the authenticity of an evaluation. The individual may be a generalist, who has had responsibility in the field of development administration or development finance with considerable experience in conducting evaluations. The team leader might also fill one of the other required positions described below.
- An economist. Every impact evaluation requires someone skilled in economic analysis. If it is an agricultural or rural development project to be assessed, he or she may be an agricultural economist.
- A social/cultural analyst. Because impact goes beyond classic economics into the quality of life of the intended beneficiaries, an individual trained in the social sciences can be a particularly valuable team member.

- A cooperative specialist. A cooperative specialist, with expertise in the particular content area to be evaluated, is needed.

Experience has shown that it often is useful to contract for one or two local specialists for early fact-gathering and beneficiary interviews where that is necessary. While the team generally should be able to speak the local language, these local specialists can also help with translation duties should they be necessary once the expatriate team has arrived.

For AID initiated evaluations, in addition to AID or third party experts, members of the U.S. cooperative organization responsible for the project should be on the evaluation team abroad. Their presence both can facilitate the work of the team and provide other team members with experience in AID's evaluation techniques.

For small projects, teams may be smaller, with each member representing a combination of skills. If the team leader is an economist, for example, then he or she can undertake the economic review. Thus a team composed of two or three people, if it contains a range and balance of skills, can do just as satisfactory a job as a larger group. The size of the team must be determined by the nature of the proposed evaluation design and the time frame allocated for data collection.

Reporting the Results

Reporting the results of an evaluation raises its own set of problems. An evaluation that is uniformly favorable generally will cause few difficulties; those concerned will want the results published widely. Evaluations that turn up serious problems or that contain important criticisms of performance require more sensitive handling.

Generally it is best to report evaluation results as soon after the review itself as possible. Information delayed is information denied to decision makers who may need to react quickly to a given situation. In many cases a Mission Director or local cooperative project director will want the evaluation team to compose a draft report before leaving the country. This is a legitimate desire and should be honored where possible. It also means that the evaluation team is able to secure additional facts if needed right on location. However, writing reports

on-site adds considerably to cost, and the degree to which such costs are justifiable should be closely examined.

The evaluation should be written, usually in the form of a report. The format which has evolved during AID's impact studies is quite adaptable to cooperative project impact evaluations. The components of that format are:

- An executive summary;
- An introduction which describes the evaluation effort, team, scope of work, etc.;
- A section describing the methodology of the evaluation;
- The project setting: the country, its governmental and social structure, a description of the appropriate sector, etc.;
- A detailed description of the project;
- Some discussion of implementation and other "process" issues;
- Description of findings concerning project impact;
- Analysis of findings concerning impact; and
- Lessons learned and policy implications.

A more detailed description of what should be included in the report is included in AID's Evaluation Handbook.

It is also important that the report contain a map showing the geographical location of the project. Photos, if available, can also be helpful in demonstrating points on project impact. Evaluation reports also frequently contain appendices which reflect specific concerns; for example, an economic analysis of the project or results of a survey undertaken as part of the evaluation. Care should be taken that only the most essential information is contained in appendices; they should not become a "catchall" for documents. The appendices should contain all data collection instruments used, unless they are standardized and can easily be obtained elsewhere.

Finally, evaluation reports should be written under the assumption that they will be seen by a wide audience, including representatives of the Congress, the Government Accounting Office, the Administrator of AID, the officials of the

cooperative organizations, and officials, perhaps even up to the president, of the country in which the project is being carried on. There also is the ever-present possibility that the report will find its way into the press, either in the United States or in the host country. Prospects of a wide readership should not discourage honest appraisal, but reinforce the need for solid evidence to back up conclusions. This also means that professional jargon, local terms and acronyms should only be used with appropriate explanation. In actuality not all evaluation reports will be widely circulated. In some cases, review may be "internal" and results may be given limited distribution.

When at all possible within the resources of the evaluation, the report should also be prepared in the language of the host country. This is always important for good relationships, but it is vital when follow-up actions are recommended. Literal translations are seldom satisfactory; parallel versions in the two languages are preferable.

VIII. STUDY QUESTIONS AND INDICATORS

Presented below are sets of study questions, indicators, and data sources to be used in performing evaluations of cooperative development projects. Study questions are provided under six major topics (Inputs, Intervention Strategies, Content Areas, Institutional Purposes, Beneficiary Purposes, and Goals). Each question is followed by one or more variables which may serve as indicators in response to the question, and by suggested data sources for that question.

The procedures to be used in selecting study questions and indicators for a specific project are presented in detail in Chapter III (pp. 12-14). Those procedures are summarized in Exhibit 3 below.

EXHIBIT 3

PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING STUDY QUESTIONS AND INDICATORS

1. Compare project with the general model of overseas projects to find similarities and differences. (Exhibit 1; p. 6)
2. Characterize the project in terms of method(s) of intervention, institutional objective(s), and content area(s), and find appropriate subgroups of questions. (See p. 7)
3. Select relevant questions relating to the project from this chapter. (pp. 39-75)
4. Draft additional questions and indicators, if necessary.
5. Critically examine the list of questions and make final selection based on importance to the study.
6. Select and refine the indicators for each of the selected questions.

Questions should be selected which fit the project being evaluated and the purpose of the evaluation; no evaluation will need to use all of the questions listed. Indicators and data sources appropriate to the selected questions should be chosen because of their logical connection to project activities or goals and their feasibility; not all indicators or data sources for each question need to be used. The feasibility of using specific indicators varies greatly by country and project; an indicator may be extremely difficult to apply in some contexts but quite feasible in others.

Following selection of study questions and indicators, the data sources associated with the questions should be examined to determine the types of data collection instruments which will be required. Outlines and specific items for data collection instruments should then be developed, and methodologies for data collection should be designed. Analysis and reporting then follow once data collection is completed.

1. Study Questions Relating to Inputs

A. Preliminary Planning

1. Was the project plan sufficiently complete to guide implementation of the project?

Indicators:

- personnel requirements
- management structure
- budget specifications
- project activities
- evaluation activities

Data Source: project plan

2. How detailed was the needs assessment?

Indicators:

- specificity to the target group
- relationship to expected project purposes and goals

Data Source: needs assessment for project

3. Were the reporting requirements to those outside the project (USAID Mission, host country, cooperative development organization) clearly defined?

Indicators:

- reporting plan
- report formats

Data Source: project contract, project reports

4. Were there any unanticipated events or conditions which had a major influence on project implementation or results?

Indicators:

- political unrest
- economic crisis
- acts of nature

Data Sources: project staff surveys, newspapers, magazines, periodicals

5. Were the assumed and necessary pre-conditions for project success actually present in the project?

Indicators:

- complementary programs or services (credit, roads, etc.)
- assumptions as stated in the Logical Framework

Data Sources: project staff, local government officials, project documents

B. Resources

1. Was the number of project personnel adequate and were they well-qualified?

Indicators:

- number of person-months of staff time, planned vs. actual
- completion of planned project activities
- staff qualifications

Data Sources: project plan, project files

2. Were project funds, equipment, and supplies provided at the level and schedule planned, and were they adequate?

Indicators:

- rate of expenditures, planned vs. actual
- equipment and supplies received, planned vs. actual

Data Sources: project plan, project files

3. Was the organizational and technical support adequate from the Mission, the host country government, U.S. cooperative organizations, and host country cooperative organizations?

Indicators:

- access to key staff
- quality of staff advice
- willingness to defend project interests
- willingness to commit resources
- consistency of support

Data Sources: project staff, surveys, project files

2. Study Questions Relating to Intervention Strategies
and Their Direct Results (Outputs)

A. Training

1. How were the needs for training assessed?

Indicators:

- studies of records and documents
- survey of potential trainees

Data Sources: project files, needs assessment for training

2. How was the training program organized?

Indicators:

- schedule of training periods
- manners of instruction (lectures, exercises, field work)
- source of training materials

Data Sources: training schedules, training plan, training materials

3. What were the qualifications of trainers?

Indicators:

- education
- experience with topic area
- training experience
- language facility

Data Sources: trainer resumes, training for trainers

4. Who received the training?

Indicators:

- number of trainees, planned vs. actual
- manner in which trainees were selected
- appropriateness of those receiving training

Data Sources: project plan, project files

5. To what extent did training reflect participant needs?

Indicators:

- appropriateness of content areas
- level of training sophistication
- practical vs. theoretical orientation

Data Sources: training materials, trainee applications

6. To what extent were information and/or skills learned?

Indicators:

- knowledge or skills tests
- evaluations by trainees
- evidence of retention

Data Sources: trainee test scores, trainee evaluations

7. Did the trainees utilize what they learned?

Indicators:

- judgments by trainees
- new positions or promotions within cooperatives or organizations related to cooperatives

Data Source: trainee surveys

8. Were there multiplier effects from the training?

Indicators:

- number of individuals trained by trainees
- new training courses developed
- new or improved training organizations
- dissemination of manuals or other materials
- institutionalization of training programs

Data Sources: training records, training materials, trainee surveys

B. Technical Assistance

1. How were needs for technical assistance assessed?

Indicators:

- organizational requests
- review of records and documents
- survey of potential recipients

Data Sources: needs assessment for technical assistance, technical assistance requests

2. How were providers of technical assistance identified, and how were providers matched with recipients?

Indicators:

- assessment of existing resources
- directory of providers (skills, language facility, etc.)
- selection criteria for providers

Data Sources: directory of providers, provider resumes, technical assistance requests

3. How many persons and/or organizations received the assistance?

Indicators:

- numbers served, planned vs. actual
- appropriateness of assistance recipients

Data Sources: technical assistance logs, technical assistance recipient applications

4. Was the technical assistance appropriate to recipient needs?

Indicators:

- appropriateness of content areas or technology
- level of sophistication
- timeliness of assistance
- amount of assistance provided at one time
- number of recipients receiving assistance (individuals, small groups)

Data Sources: technical assistance requests, technical assistance logs

5. What changes in operations have resulted from the assistance?

Indicators:

- new or revised operating procedures
- new or revised accounting or recordkeeping systems
- new or revised services provided to members

Data Sources: surveys of recipients, recipient files

C. Capital Assistance

1. What analyses were performed to identify needs for capital assistance?

Indicators:

- survey of cooperative organizations and members
- examination of existing capital sources
- market analyses of interest and repayment rates

Data Sources: needs assessment for capital assistance, market analysis

2. In what ways was capital assistance intended to improve cooperative operations and/or facilitate services to members?

Indicators:

- plan for supplies or equipment for the cooperative
- plan for credit fund for members
- plan for long-term capital investment

Data Source: project plan

3. How was the allocation of funds made to meet various needs?

Indicators:

- planning document for capital use
- decision-making method to allocate capital

Data Source: capital use plan

4. Was the capital assistance provided when needed?

Indicators:

- schedule of assistance, planned vs. actual
- relation of schedule to needs of cooperative

Data Sources: capital use plan, capital use requests, capital use logs

5. Was the capital used for the intended purposes?

Indicators:

- capital use by cooperative, planned vs. actual
- capital use by cooperative members, planned vs. actual

Data Sources: capital use requests, cooperative files, cooperative member surveys

6. In what ways did the capital affect the operations of the cooperative?

Indicators:

- new or revised operating procedures
- new or revised goods or services provided to members

Data Sources: cooperative surveys, cooperative files

3. Content Specific Study Questions

A. Electrification/Energy

1. Were alternative energy sources considered for the intended recipients?

Indicators:

- availability of alternative sources
- advantages/disadvantages of alternative sources
- long-term cost of alternatives

Data Source: resource assessment

2. Were appropriate and sufficient resources available for the development of the system, and were those resources effectively mobilized?

Indicators:

- capital investment
- technical personnel
- labor
- supplies and materials

Data Sources: resource assessment, project files

3. Did the electrification/energy system provide reliable services at reasonable rates?

Indicators:

- reliability of energy as provided
- cost per unit to consumers
- satisfactory maintenance of facilities
- services available when needed
- provision for expansion of facilities if needed

Data Sources: energy use records, energy cost records, energy maintenance logs, facilities observation checklist

4. To what extent and in what ways was electricity/other energy consumed?

Indicators:

- consumption by user type
- appropriateness of the division of consumption
- cost feasibility for different income groups

Data Sources: energy use records, energy cost records, user surveys

5. What new capacities which depended on electricity/energy were developed by consumers?

Indicators:

- new commercial enterprises
- improved commercial practices
- productive home uses

Data Sources: user surveys, business surveys, ministry of commerce records

6. How effective was(were) the cooperative(s) in encouraging the productive use of electricity/energy?

Indicators:

- consumer training
- consumer credit assistance programs
- marketing and business development research

Data Sources: training/assistance records, marketing research reports

B. Housing

1. How was the demand for housing determined or the market analysis done?

Indicators:

- needs assessments
- market surveys
- onsite inspections

Data Source: market analysis

2. What were the roles of various individuals or groups in planning the project?

Indicators:

- funding sources
- design sources
- management/supervision
- sources of political support

Data Source: project plan

3. How were the basic construction features (size, extent of facilities, etc.) determined?

Indicators:

- resident preferences
- overall site planning

Data Sources: site plan, potential resident survey

4. How well were factors like cost, durability, accessibility, appropriateness to conditions, and ease of workmanship taken into account in selecting building materials?

Indicators:

- resource and cost assessments of materials
- surveys of materials used in local areas or areas with similar conditions

Data Source: resource assessment

5. What roles did other cooperatives play in the project?

Indicators:

- materials and supplies
- credit
- advice and council

Data Sources: project files, other cooperative files

6. What inputs did residents have in the housing?

Indicators:

- self-help construction with technical assistance
- provision of amenities (yards, gardens, paint, etc.)

Data Sources: project files, resident surveys, housing observation checklist

7. What was the role of the cooperative in the housing?

Indicators:

- sale and resale
- maintenance
- collection of payments
- supervision of modifications to housing

Data Sources: project files, accounting records, maintenance logs, building modification logs

8. How were eligible beneficiaries and payment rates determined?

Indicators:

- income eligibility criteria
- common or variable rates of payment based on income

Data Sources: resident selection documents, project files

9. What were the fiscal characteristics of the project?

Indicators:

- delinquency and default rates on payments
- rate of return to lender
- equity holdings of residents

Data Sources: accounting records, resident surveys

10. What community facilities or services resulted from the project?

Indicators:

- provision/expansion of water, sewers, or lights
- commercial enterprises
- schools and other public facilities
- social or religious activities

Data Sources: project records, local government records, church records, community center logs

C. Agricultural Marketing

1. To what extent was there a demand to reduce costs through cooperative marketing?

Indicators:

- previous cooperative efforts
- meetings, protests, petitions
- assistance requests through cooperative extension

Data Sources: needs assessment, meeting logs, assistance requests

2. How and what resources were mobilized to create a marketing system?

Indicators:

- contacts with existing marketing organizations
- contacts with market outlets
- contacts with other cooperatives

Data Sources: project records, other cooperative records, business market records

3. What auxiliary services were provided to enhance marketing?

Indicators:

- sorting and quality control
- processing and packaging
- storage
- transportation
- least cost distribution networks

Data Sources: project records, service use logs

4. What pricing/payment policies were established?

Indicators:

- price variations based on quality
- immediate or deferred payment
- distribution or use of profits

Data Sources: accounting records, pricing policy, payment policy

5. How were new or expanded markets generated?

Indicators:

- advertising
- cooperative owned outlets
- affiliation or combination with other organizations

Data Sources: accounting records, examples of advertising, media records, project records

6. How well did the marketing system function?

Indicators:

- proportion of offerings to sales
- timeliness of distribution to markets
- quality of products delivered to markets
- reasonable delivery costs

Data Sources: accounting records, supply distribution records, transportation logs

7. Did the marketing system affect market conditions?

Indicators:

- changes in cooperative share of the market
- new products marketed
- increased production

Data Sources: production records, supply distribution records

D. Agricultural Supply

1. How was the demand for joint purchase determined?

Indicators:

- formal surveys
- discussion in meetings

Data Source: needs assessment

2. How and what resources were mobilized to provide farmers with needed inputs?

Indicators:

- capitalization by farmers
- capitalization by other organizations or banks
- mortgage provisions or repayment arrangements
- amortization plans

Data Sources: project records, bank records, other organization records

3. How were the sources of goods, services, and equipment identified?

Indicators:

- volume arrangements with local sources
- order arrangements with wholesalers
- direct orders
- participation with other cooperatives

Data Sources: order records, records of other cooperatives

4. What procedures were established for distribution?

Indicators:

- order facilities
- retail outlets
- centralized supply organization

Data Sources: project files, observation checklist

5. How timely and cost-effective was the supply process?

Indicators:

- supplies in time to meet needs
- sufficient supplies to meet delivery
- cost comparisons in terms of price
- cost comparisons in terms of interest rates and payment terms

Data Sources: supply logs, supply inventories, pricing policy, accounting records, other business records

6. What were the terms of payment and repayment and delinquency rates?

Indicators:

- payment schedules
- payment rates
- delinquency and default rates

Data Sources: accounting records, payment plans

7. Were the supplies used as intended?

Indicators:

- agricultural vs. other uses
- sound technological utilization
- sharing or resale

Data Source: user surveys, user requests

E. Agricultural Credit

1. Was the need for credit recognized by appropriate groups (e.g., farmers, existing cooperatives, government)?

Indicators:

- farmer meetings, discussions, resolutions
- cooperative planning documents
- government credit policy statements

Data Sources: needs assessment, government policy documents

2. Were reliable and adequate sources of credit identified?

Indicators:

- market study of credit sources
- discussions with financial institutions and other organizations
- contact with government lending agencies

Data Sources: market analysis, project files, government records

3. Was the management of credit resources competent and honest?

Indicators:

- appropriate accounting procedures
- auditing provisions

Data Sources: accounting records, audit reports

4. What were the lending policies and financial conditions?

Indicators:

- rates of interest
- schedules of repayment
- auxiliary loan services
- collection procedures
- delinquency rates
- source of coverage for losses (operating revenues, assets, etc.)

Data Sources: accounting records, payment schedules, collection procedures

5. Who received credit and in what amounts?

Indicators:

- distribution of credit by income level
- distribution by sex and social group

Data Sources: credit applications, accounting records

6. What effects did credit have on farm finance?

Indicators:

- equity increases
- proportion of land owned vs. rented
- sales and repossession of land and equipment
- profitability increases

Data Sources: farmer surveys, government records, equipment supplier records

7. Are subsidies, if any, clearly defined as to purpose and method of use?

Indicators:

- separate accounting of subsidy capital
- formal application for subsidies

Data Sources: accounting records, subsidy applications

8. Are appropriate concepts of credit built into the credit program?

Indicators:

- line-of-credit
- use of credit
- use of credit for social as well as production purposes

Data Source: credit records

F. Agricultural Production

1. To what extent did a clearly profitable production technology exist?

Indicators:

- research and demonstration
- bulletins and other information
- extension service recommendations

Data Sources: technology bulletins, technology research reports, extension service memos

2. To what extent was the technology adaptable to local conditions?

Indicators:

- present usage by farmers
- local demonstration or use in similar locales
- cultural acceptance
- acceptance by local leadership

Data Sources: farmer surveys, leader surveys, technology use reports

3. To what extent could farmers benefit from the new technology?

Indicators:

- sufficient resources to adopt technology
- positive cost-benefit ratio

Data Sources: farmer surveys, cost-benefit analysis

4. What is the level of awareness of the new technology among farmers?

Indicators:

- extent of usage in the area
- awareness of usage in other areas

Data Source: farmer surveys

5. To what extent did farmers need new knowledge and skills to implement the new technology?

Indicators:

- special knowledge/skills needed (mathematics, mechanisms, etc.)
- general literacy needed to profit from publications

Data Sources: knowledge/skill assessment, publication readability assessment

6. How was such knowledge or skills imparted to farmers?

Indicators:

- special courses
- literature
- demonstration schools or shops
- existing training sources such as schools or cooperative extension

Data Source: technology transfer records (e.g., literature distributions log, training materials, training plan, training source list)

7. To what extent did farmers accept the new technology?

Indicators:

- rate of usage over time
- reasons for non-usage

Data Sources: farmer surveys, observation checklist, equipment/supply purchase records

8. What were the effects of the technology on production levels?

Indicators:

- yield by product type
- cost per unit of yield
- profit level

Data Sources: production records, cost of production records

9. To what extent was there a change in the nature of crops raised?

Indicators:

- percentage of farmland per crop type
- cash value of crop types
- labor utilization
- changes in nutrition patterns

Data Sources: farmer surveys, crop sales records, crop purchase records

G. Non-Agricultural Credit

1. How were the needs for credit determined?

Indicators:

- survey of potential users
- public meetings, petitions, etc.
- determined by governmental agency or cooperative institution

Data Source: needs assessment for credit

2. What resources were mobilized in what ways to create a credit union?

Indicators:

- capital from members or employees
- capital from banks or other institutions
- professional experience of employees

Data Sources: project files, bank records, other institution records, employee resumes

3. What were the characteristics of the membership?

Indicators:

- eligibility criteria
- policy on obligatory savings
- size of membership

Data Sources: membership roster, member applications, cooperating policy documents

4. What was the status of the loan portfolio?

Indicators:

- number and size of loans to employees, members, and non-members
- minimum acceptable savings/loan ratio
- actual savings/loan ratio
- recovery and delinquency rates
- ratio of earnings to expenses

Data Sources: loan applications, savings records, accounting records

5. How effective and efficient was the recordkeeping system?

Indicators:

- extensiveness of records
- accuracy of records
- timeliness of records

Data Source: cooperative records

6. Were education programs on credit and purchasing power conducted for members?

Indicators:

- general literature
- specialized courses

Data Sources: credit literature, credit training materials, training plan, trainee roster

7. What effect did the credit union have on other financial institutions?

Indicators:

- changes in interest rates
- changes in repayment schedules
- changes in the availability of credit

Data Sources: bank records, other financial institution records

8. What positive or negative outcomes resulted from an increase in the availability of credit?

Indicators:

- purchasing power more evenly spread over the year
- increased discretionary funds
- abuse of credit or extended debt

Data Sources: farmer surveys, cooperative records, bank records

H. Handicrafts and Small Industry

1. What were the areas of concern of the cooperative?

Indicators:

- joint purchases of supplies or equipment
- cooperative production arrangements
- cooperative marketing
- credit

Data Source: needs assessment

2. How and what resources were mobilized to meet member needs?

Indicators:

- member financial shares
- loans from banks or other institutions
- loans from other cooperatives
- administrative and management skills

Data Sources: cooperative records, bank records, other cooperatives records, administrator resumes, administrator surveys

3. If marketing, how was a market established?

Indicators:

- use of existing facilities
- expansion of facilities or creation of new market outlets
- marketing agreements
- advertising

Data Sources: observation checklist, marketing agreements, advertising copy, advertising log

4. If marketing, was product standardization established?

Indicators:

- standardized production methods
- development of product grading standards
- development of price standards

Data Sources: product policy, pricing policy

5. If joint purchase, what were the effects of joint purchase?

Indicators:

- cost savings
- increased accessibility
- timeliness of supply
- amortization schedules/interest

Data Sources: accounting records, supply log

6. If credit, what were the fiscal characteristics?

Indicators:

- interest rates and payment schedules
- timeliness of credit
- delinquency and default rates

Data Sources: accounting records, credit requests

4. Study Questions Relating to Institutional Purposes

A. Develop New Cooperatives

1. How was the need for a cooperative organization established?

Indicators:

- presence of needs assessment
- economic need of community
- lack of appropriate existing institution to meet need
- appropriateness of cooperative structure for the cultural setting

Data Source: needs assessment

2. How were the appropriate resources for the development of an organization identified?

Indicators:

- presence of resource assessment
- available leadership and expertise
- available capital (if appropriate)

Data Sources: resource assessment, governmental policy, government regulations

3. How were the appropriate resources for development mobilized?

Indicators:

- acquisition of government recognition
- use of available leadership and expertise
- effective use of available capital (if appropriate)

Data Source: cooperative records

4. Was the organization structured according to cooperative principles?

Indicators:

- voluntary nature of membership
- lack of discrimination in membership guidelines
- leader selection by democratic procedures
- equal or equitable voting procedures
- limited return on capital investment
- use or distribution of surplus democratically determined
- distribution of surplus, if any, in proportion to transactions
- provision of educational services to members, employees and the general public
- break even operating budget
- break even total budget
- constraints of government rules and regulations

Data Sources: cooperative records, accounting records

5. How many members were there? What was the economic condition of members?

Indicators:

- membership requirements
- membership totals by year
- annual family income per member
- source of family income
- number of dependents per member
- quality of family dwelling

Data Sources: membership roster, member applications

6. Was the cooperative legally constituted?

Indicators:

- adoption of a constitution or bylaws
- recognition as a legal entity

Data Sources: cooperative constitution or bylaws, legal status document

7. How were member administrative groups involved?

Indicators:

- duties of the board of directors
- duties of committees
- delegates to regional organizations (if applicable)

Data Sources: board of directors duties description, committees duties descriptions, cooperative records

8. How actively did members participate in the cooperative?

Indicators:

- frequency of meetings
- attendance at meetings
- participation in the activities of the cooperative

Data Sources: meeting logs, cooperative records

9. How were cooperative employees involved?

Indicators:

- duties of manager
- duties of fiscal agent
- functions of other personnel
- fiscal auditors

Data Sources: manager job description, fiscal agent job description, other personnel job descriptions, audit reports

10. What was the volume of cooperative activity?

Indicators:

- total value of transactions by members by year
- total value of transactions by non-members by year
- average member transactions by year
- average non-member transactions by year
- total value of transactions by type of product or service

Data Source: accounting records

11. To what degree did the cooperative organization achieve self-sufficiency?

Indicators:

- income transactions vs. expenses by year
- size of capital outlay across time
- staffing pattern (paid vs. volunteer, full time vs. part time)
- relationship with other organizations (e.g., cooperative headquarters, host government, private sector)
- length of time in existence
- size of organization
- verbal approval by beneficiaries
- support from other organizations
- autonomy
- spread of innovative norms to others

Data Sources: accounting records, time sheets, cooperative records, cooperative staff surveys, member surveys, other organization surveys

12. Did the cooperative increase the level of community self-reliance rather than reliance on government institutions to meet needs?

Indicators:

- community initiated planning and needs assessment
- community initiated projects

Data Sources: cooperative records, community initiated project status reports

B. Strengthen Existing Cooperatives

1. Was there a continuing need for the cooperative organization?

Indicators:

- presence of needs assessment
- economic need of community
- existing cooperative only partially meets needs or is appropriate to meet new need

Data Sources: needs assessment, cooperative staff

2. Were the appropriate resources for continuing operations available?

Indicators:

- presence of resource assessment
- continued government approval
- necessary leadership and expertise
- needed capital (if appropriate)

Data Sources: resource assessment, government policy, government regulations

3. Did the organization function according to cooperative principles?

Indicators:

- voluntary nature of membership
- lack of discrimination in membership guidelines
- leader selection by democratic procedures
- equal or equitable voting procedures
- limited return on capital investment
- use or distribution of surplus democratically determined
- distribution of surplus, if any, in proportion to transactions
- provision of educational services to members, employees and the general public
- break even operating budget
- break even total budget

Data Sources: cooperative records, accounting records

4. How many members were there? What was the economic condition of members?

Indicators:

- updated membership roster
- annual family income per member
- source of family income
- number of dependents per member
- quality of family dwelling

Data Sources: membership roster, membership applications

5. Was the cooperative legally constituted?

Indicators:

- adoption of a constitution or bylaws
- recognition as a legal entity

Data Sources: cooperative constitution or bylaws, legal status document

6. How were member administrative groups involved?

Indicators:

- duties of the board of directors
- duties of committees
- delegate to regional organizations (if applicable)

Data Sources: board of directors duties description, committees duties descriptions, cooperative records

7. How actively did members participate in the cooperative?

Indicators:

- frequency of meetings
- attendance at meetings
- participation in the activities of the cooperative

Data Sources: meeting logs, cooperative records

8. How were cooperative employees involved?

Indicators:

- duties of manager
- duties of fiscal agent
- functions of other personnel
- fiscal auditors

Data Sources: manager job description, fiscal agent job description, other personnel job descriptions, audit reports

9. What was the volume of cooperative activity?

Indicators:

- total value of transactions by members per year
- total value of transactions by non-members per year
- average member transactions across years
- average non-member transactions across years
- total value of transactions by type of product or service

Data Source: accounting records

10. What was the economic viability of the cooperative organization?

Indicators:

- productivity rates over time, including seasonality
- patterns of capital investment over time
- types and rates of employment over time
- units of credit extended to members over time
- costs of goods and services to members versus costs in private sector
- use of by-products
- maintenance of activities despite occurrence of natural calamities (e.g., floods, droughts, earthquakes, hurricanes)
- maintenance of activities despite political turnover, change in support groups, change in government regulations

Data Sources: accounting records, time sheets, cooperative records, cooperative staff surveys, business surveys

11. Did the cooperative increase the level of community self-reliance rather than reliance on government institutions to meet needs?

Indicators:

- community initiated planning and needs assessment
- community initiated projects

Data Sources: cooperative records, community initiated project status reports

C. Help Create Cooperative Policy

1. What was the previous cooperative policy?

Indicators:

- identification of what elements, if any, made up cooperative policy
- identification of how elements, if any, of previous cooperative policy fit together
- nature of government policy, laws, regulations concerning cooperatives

Data Sources: cooperative records, government policy, government regulations

2. Why was new cooperative policy established or previous policy changed?

Indicators:

- presence of a policy needs assessment
- lack of coordinated planning for cooperative development
- failure to solve needs of members by existing organizations or cooperatives

Data Sources: policy needs assessment, member surveys

3. What activities were needed to establish or change cooperative policy?

Indicators:

- presence of a feasible plan to establish cooperative policy or change existing policy
- available leadership and expertise to implement plan
- relationship of plan elements to identified needs

Data Source: policy plan

4. What were the anticipated effects of new or modified cooperative policy?

Indicators:

- statements of expected results of new or modified cooperative policy
- plans for modified policies

Data Source: policy impact paper

5. Were activities to change cooperative policy implemented as planned?

Indicators:

- activities implemented according to time frame proposed
- stage of progress

Data Sources: policy plan, project files

6. Were changes in cooperative policy effected?

Indicators:

- changes in cooperative policy (planned and unplanned)
- timing of policy changes
- administrative/governmental support for policy changes

Data Sources: project files, government cooperative files, government policy

7. What were the results of new or modified cooperative policy?

Indicators:

- dissemination of new cooperative policy to relevant audiences
- understanding and acceptance of new cooperative policy by relevant audiences
- changes in guidelines and operations of cooperatives based on new policy
- changes in effectiveness of cooperatives

Data Sources: project files, key audience surveys, dissemination plan, new policy materials

5. Study Questions Relating to Beneficiary Purposes

A. Resources, Services, or Technologies Provided to Beneficiaries

1. What specific benefits were expected to accrue to beneficiaries based on membership or contact with the local cooperative?

Indicators:

- purpose of the cooperative
- nature of resources, services, or technologies to be provided

Data Source: cooperative records

2. Were potential beneficiaries involved in determining the nature of resources, services, or technologies to be provided?

Indicators:

- presence of needs assessment
- personal or community needs identified
- type and extent of participation by beneficiaries in planning

Data Sources: needs assessment, cooperative records, member surveys

3. Were the resources, services, or technologies to be provided compatible with the socio-cultural environment?

- acceptance by beneficiaries
- use of resources, services, or technologies by similar socio-cultural groups

Data Sources: member surveys, cooperative staff surveys, literature review

4. How were potential beneficiaries informed of the resources, services, or technologies which are to be provided?

Indicators:

- formal advertising
- informal communication networks

Data Sources: advertising copy, advertising logs, meeting logs, training logs, member surveys

5. What were the nature and amounts of resources, services, or technologies which were made available to beneficiaries?

Indicators:

- types of resources, services, or technologies offered
- unit measures of amounts of resources, services, or technologies which are offered
- resources, services, or technologies which are to be replaced, if any

Data Source: cooperative records

B. Resources, Services, or Technology Used by Beneficiaries

1. What were the nature and amounts of resources, services, or technologies which were used by beneficiaries?

Indicators:

- types of resources, services, or technologies used
- unit measures of amounts of resources, services, or technologies used

Data Sources: cooperative records, member surveys

2. What was the nature of the beneficiary group receiving resources, services, or technologies? Were the poor and women receiving resources, services, or technologies?

Indicators:

- occupation
- family income
- social status in the community

Data Sources: member applications, member surveys

3. Which cooperative-provided resources, services, or technologies were considered most useful by beneficiaries?

Indicators:

- attitude/behavior assessment of beneficiaries
- unit measures of amounts of resources, services, or technologies used

Data Source: member surveys

4. To what degree were cooperative-provided resources, services, or technologies used for their intended purposes?

Indicators:

- use of resources (e.g., credit, electricity, fertilizer, etc.)
- changes in practices based on training or information
- adoption of new technologies

Data Sources: member surveys, observation checklist

5. To what degree were cooperative-provided resources, services, or technologies used to expand business opportunities?

Indicators:

- small businesses established
- employment increased
- improved business (agricultural) practices adopted to increase productivity
- expanded resources leading to increased production
- increased marketing activity

Data Sources: member surveys, production records, business surveys

6. What were the results of unintended uses of resources, services, or technologies?

Indicators:

- extent of inappropriate use of resources or technologies
- type of inappropriate resource or technology utilization
- "spread-effects" to others by receivers of services

Data Sources: member surveys, observation checklist, referral surveys

6. Study Questions Relating to Goals

A. Beneficiary Social Impacts

1. Did beneficiaries of the project increase their level of political participation in their society?

Indicators:

- voting behavior in the cooperative and the political system
- participation in meetings, etc.
- leadership in political institutions

Data Sources: cooperative records, voting records, meeting logs, cooperative staff surveys

2. Did beneficiaries of the project gain personal/social skills?

Indicators:

- education, basic skills
- organization, group leadership skills
- business and economic skills
- marketable business trade skills

Data Sources: member surveys, training/technical assistance logs

3. Did beneficiaries of the project gain additional health and sanitation services?

Indicators:

- health care services
- assistance in sanitation services
- disease rates

Data Source: cooperative staff surveys

4. Did the health status of beneficiaries improve?

Indicators:

- disease rates
- nutrition needs met

Data Sources: health care surveys, health organizations records, member surveys

5. Did beneficiaries of the project increase their level of social integration with the society?

Indicators:

- positive transactions with government institutions
- positive transactions with economic institutions
- use of available relevant social and educational services

Data Sources: member surveys, government records, business records, social organizations logs, school enrollment forms, training logs

B. Beneficiary Economic Impacts

1. How did the project influence the economic circumstances of beneficiaries?

Indicators:

- increased family income
- decreased family expenditures
- more efficient use of existing resources

Data Sources: member surveys, observation checklist

2. Did the project lead to greater personal economic productivity?

Indicators:

- total goods or services generated
- time devoted to generating goods or services
- cost per unit of goods or services generated

Data Sources: production records, member surveys

3. Did the project lead to diversification or new types of production?

Indicators:

- new products or services generated
- more efficient use of resources

Data Sources: cooperative records, cooperative staff surveys, member surveys

4. Did the project lead to increased employment opportunities?

Indicators:

- new jobs created
- more work within existing jobs
- more efficient use of employee skills

Data Sources: cooperative records, cooperative staff surveys, member surveys

5. Were there differential impacts among different types of beneficiaries?
Were the circumstances of the poor and women improved?

Indicators:

- income distribution of beneficiaries
- changes in income distribution of beneficiaries

Data Source: member surveys

C. Structural Impacts

1. Did the project lead to a shift in income distribution favoring the poor?

Indicators:

- number of people in extreme poverty
- development of a lower-middle class
- more equitable income distribution

Data Sources: cooperative staff surveys, member surveys

2. Did the project lead to increased services to the poor as a group?

Indicators:

- number of programs serving the poor
- number of poor people receiving services

Data Sources: cooperative records, government records, program logs

3. Did the project lead to cooperative organizations gaining a greater share of economic markets (assuming a free market economy)?

Indicators:

- market penetration percentage
- influence on market conditions (costs, prices, etc.)

Data Sources: cooperative records, cooperative staff surveys, business surveys

4. Did the project lead to an increased role by women in economic/political decision making?

Indicators:

- economic leadership/responsibility by women
- community participation/decision-making by women

Data Sources: cooperative records, cooperative staff surveys, member surveys, community surveys

5. Were disincentives created in other sectors of the economy?

Indicators:

- Reduced or suppressed productivity by others due to free or inexpensive goods provided by the cooperative
- Fewer business opportunities for others because of cooperative provided resources, services or technologies

Data Sources: community surveys, business surveys

AFTERWORD

The list of questions in Chapter VIII should not be daunting to potential evaluators. Anyone who thinks about a particular cooperative project in a concentrated fashion will devise a similar list. There may be other questions in a specific context that have not been posed here. Those will occur to a careful, creative evaluator and should be asked as well.

Creativity is always desirable in an evaluation, and in evaluators, so long as it is anchored in a bedrock of facts and informed judgments. Creativity will enlighten others to see the answers to difficult problems, or better to understand the nature of the problems only vaguely perceived.

The good evaluator, therefore, is not interested only in uncovering the beetles in someone else's garden. He or she is an essential, contributing person in the effort to provide the best possible assistance in cooperative development and to insuring the success of cooperative projects.

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APPENDICES A-C

Introduction

The following three appendices are included as illustrations of how to use the general evaluation system presented in this volume. Each illustrates the system's use with a different type of project and for a different purpose. They are presented as examples, not as models. Each is somewhat flawed by the limitations of available data, constraints on time and resources, and other realities of project implementation.

Appendix A is a draft evaluation system developed for the Agricultural Cooperative Development International's (ACDI) Regional Service Cooperative project in Honduras. The system was created several months after the beginning of the project, and was constrained by that fact. Optimally, the system would have included more complete plans for baseline data collection as well as an impact evaluation design in which appropriate comparison groups were identified. The general approach to the system, however, in which study questions, indicators, and data sources are first identified and the elements of project recordkeeping and monitoring visits are described, provides a useful example of how to develop an evaluation system for a particular cooperative project.

Appendix B is a draft design for the evaluation of urban housing projects in Honduras. It is provided to illustrate the possibilities of adopting a somewhat flexible and non-traditional approach to evaluation design. Although developed to accomplish an impact evaluation of a completed cooperative housing project, the design takes advantage of surveys already conducted or planned by the Mission. Specifically, it is an example of using existing data as a basis for conducting an impact evaluation of a completed project and of integrating the evaluation of a specific project with the study of larger development issues.

Appendix C is the Executive Summary of an evaluation of a project designed to provide training in cooperative principles and management to small farmer organizations in Honduras. The purpose of the evaluation was to illustrate the

use of the evaluation system as the framework for conducting an evaluation, including identifying lessons or factors which would make for better evaluations in the future, and to provide for the record an evaluation of the particular project. It illustrates the constraints imposed on evaluations by the lack of evaluation planning before and during the project's lifetime.

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APPENDIX A

DRAFT
EVALUATION SYSTEM
ACDI - HONDURAS
REGIONAL SERVICE COOPERATIVES

Submitted To:

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Contract No. AID/SOD/PDC-C-0394, Work Order No. 7

Prepared By:

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March 4, 1982

PREFACE

The following is a draft system for a process and impact evaluation of the ACDI Regional Service Cooperative project in Honduras. The project began in the summer of 1981, the first cooperatives are currently being organized, and the project is expected to conclude in 1985. The evaluation system is based on extended discussions with ACDI, staff in Honduras, participation with the project staff in designing the projects basic recordkeeping and cooperative membership and loan application forms, and discussions with ACDI staff in Washington. The system presumes: (1) quarterly monitoring reports as designed and currently in use -- the first such report has already been received by ACDI; (2) an annual monitoring/process evaluation visit by a staff person from ACDI/W -- a visit of the needed scope and duration has been a part of the project plan since inception; the evaluation design simply provides a new structure for that visit; and (3) an impact evaluation which would occur either at the end of the project, or preferably a year or two thereafter; almost all the data needed (all if funding is short) will come from the quarterly and annual reports and analyses of coop files.

ACDI - HONDURAS

REGIONAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE EVALUATION DESIGN

I. Project Overview

The goal of the project is to improve the economic conditions of Honduran small farmers through the establishment of a set of at least two economically viable, autonomous, regional, agricultural service cooperatives which are well administered and capable of generating the means of their further growth through their own operations. The cooperatives are to provide timely and effective supply, credit, marketing and technical services to all the farmers in a valley or other market town area that wish to join.

This is to be accomplished over a period of four years. Beginning in July 1981, a team of two full-time senior technical advisors working with approximately six person-years-worth of Honduran professionals, four person-years-worth of Honduran support personnel and five person-months-worth of short term technical advisors began a two-year assignment. It is expected that this team will continue, under a renewed contract agreement, for another two years. The project team will work with and receive support from DIFOCOOP and USAID/H. They will maintain separate offices, and will be provided with all supplies and equipment necessary for maintaining their operations and organizing the autonomous regional cooperatives.

During the project period, the team is expected to conduct several preliminary investigations and then full-scale feasibility studies leading to the organization of the regional service cooperatives. Once geographic target areas have been selected, the team is expected to recruit and organize farmers into the new cooperatives and then to work with the cooperatives' leadership to assure organizational effectiveness and viability. It is expected that by the end of the project (i.e., after four years), the cooperatives will be solidly established and have served as models for other

regions in the country. At the end of one to two years thereafter, it is expected that the cooperatives will continue to be effective and viable and will have been of demonstrable economic benefit to their members.

II. Evaluation Questions

A. Project Inputs

- (1) Was the number of project personnel adequate and were they well qualified?
- (2) Were project funds and equipment provided at the level and schedule planned and were these adequate?
- (3) Was the organizational and technical support adequate from (a) DIFOCOOP; (b) USAID?
- (4) Was adequate capital and credit for the cooperatives available on a timely basis?
- (5) Were there any unanticipated events or conditions which had a major influence on project implementation or results (e.g., political, unrest, economic crises, acts of nature, etc.)?

B. Project Outputs

- (1) How were areas for cooperative development identified; what procedures were followed and by whom?
- (2) How many areas for cooperative development were selected; what criteria were used; and how many cooperatives were formally organized (i.e., received legal standing)?
- (3) How were coop members identified and recruited; what criteria for membership were used?
- (4) How were the needs for T/TA of coop members and staff assessed?
- (5) What improved crops or technologies have been identified which are suitable for area farmers?
- (6) How much of what types of T/TA was provided to different categories of coop members and staff?
- (7) Was the T/TA provided relevant and timely?

C. Project Purpose

- (1) How many members were there of each cooperative at key points of development? What were their economic circumstances?
- (2) Have the organizations been structured in accordance with national laws and cooperative principles?
- (3) Were the coops able to access adequate and reliable sources of supplies and credit?
- (4) Have coop members had access to needed supplies and credit on a timely basis and how much have they received?
- (5) How many coop members have made use of coop supplies and credit, and have some types of members made more use of the coop than others?
- (6) What is the volume of cooperative activity?
- (7) To what degree have the cooperatives achieved self-sufficiency?
- (8) Have they been models for cooperatives in other regions?

D. Project Impacts

- (1) Have members of the coop increased their agricultural productivity because of the coop?
- (2) Have members of the coop increased their agricultural income because of the coop?
- (3) Have costs of agricultural inputs been effected by the coop: (a) for members; (b) generally in the region served by the coops?
- (4) Have members of the coop gained organizational leadership skills?

III. Measures and Sources

A. Summary Relating Evaluation Questions for Indicators and Data Sources

Question	Measure/Indicator	Source
<u>Inputs</u>		
A.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number and adequacy of staff by person months/number planned ● Staff qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion with staff of project, USAID, DIFOCOOP ● Contract ● Personnel files--resumes and subsequent actions/assessments
A.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amount rate of expenditures/amount and rate planned ● Equipment and supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Budget and expenditures reports ● Inventory ● Discussion with staff
A.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to key staff (a) DIFOCOOP (b) USAID ● Quality of staff advice and council ● Willingness to defend project interests ● Willingness to commit resources (material or symbolic) on behalf of project ● Consistency of support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project files/reports ● Discussion with staff of: project, USAID, & DIFOCOOP
A.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amount of capital and credit at key points (e.g. prior to planting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coop financial reports
A.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Major crises or events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● News reports ● Discussions with staff
<u>Outputs</u>		
B.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No. reports/feasibility studies completed ● Dates completed and by whom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Husmeo studies; ● Feasibility studies; ● Discussion with staff
B.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No. areas selected; ● No. cooperatives organized 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Reports; ● Legal documents.
B.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promotional materials developed ● Meetings/promotional events held ● Membership policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project files ● Project reports ● Coop policies

Question	Measure/Indicator	Source
<u>Outputs (Cont.)</u>		
B.4	● Needs assessments	● Coop files ● Extension Agent discussion*
B.5	● Crops or technologies identified ● Expert judgement re appropriateness	● Coop staff ● Survey of members* ● Area agricultural specialist*
B.6	● Types of T/TA ● Amount of training (hours/days by type training and recipient) ● Amount of technical assistance ~ by staff and average coop member	● Extension Agent field records ● Coop activity records (board agendas; staff training agendas; board/committee minutes; correspondence, etc.)
B.7	● Expert judgement re relevance and timeliness ● Member judgement re relevance and timeliness	● Area Agricultural specialist* ● Survey of members* ● Coop staff
<u>Purpose</u>		
C.1	● No. members by quarter ● No. of members by - Size of farm - Level of technology - Type of crop - level of production	● Coop membership lists (project quarterly reports) ● Membership applications forms ● Credit application forms
C.2	● Open, voluntary membership ● Member control ● Distribution of surplus in accordance with member policy ● Education to members re coops ● Education to members re agricultural and economic improvement ● Professional, skilled management ● Legal status	● Articles of incorporation and by laws; board minutes ● Financial statements and budgets ● Personnel Job Descriptions and qualifications ● Coop staff ● Survey of members*
C.3	● Existence of formal relations with sources of credit and supplies ● Amt of credit received ● Amt of supplies received	● Coop files ● Coop manager ● Fiscal records

*Informal interviews during ACDI annual monitoring visit/process review

Question	Measure/Indicator	Source
<u>Purpose (Cont.)</u>		
C.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Member needs met/not met (% unmet due to lack of supply) ● Time of disbursement relative to crop cycle ● Amt of credit and supplies received per member 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Credit application/disbursement files ● Survey of members* ● Coop staff (extension agents and manager)
C.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of members by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - size of farm - level of technology - type of crop - level of production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Membership application forms ● Credit applications and disbursement forms (multi-year comparisons)
C.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Amt credit given ● Amt credit outstanding ● Amt and type supplies to members ● Inventory of supplies/equipment ● Amt and type services to members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coop financial statements and audit reports ● Loan files ● Extension Agent reports
C.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number and % fully active members (e.g. % utilizing services/credit, etc.). - involvement in organization (% on local committees; % on central committees; vacancies on committees; attendance/participation on committees; % new members in offices/on committees). - Education--time devoted to training in coop operations, agricultural improvements ● Budget/Finances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - profit/loss - rate of loan delinquency by members - debt/assets ● Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number - quality (experience, training; formal preparation; job performance) - turn-over 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Membership records ● Coop organizational lists/reports; minutes ● Coop staff ● Survey of members* ● Financial statements ● Loan files ● Audit report ● Personnel file ● Board Personnel Committee* ● Coop staff

*Informal interviews during ACDI annual monitoring visit/process review

Question	Measure/Indicator	Source
<u>Purpose (Cont.)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Future access to credit and supplies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - agreements with suppliers - coop's reputation as an economic entity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coop files (e.g., contracts, letters of agreement, etc.) ● Suppliers of credit and other inputs
C.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of cooperatives using project cooperatives as a model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● USAID, DIFOCOOP, and Project staff ● Manager of cooperative(s) reported as using project cooperatives as a model
<u>Impact</u>		
D.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Area cultivated ● Yield/manzana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Credit application ● Post hoc survey of members (if feasible)
D.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Farm size ● Area under cultivation ● Crops grown ● Yield/manzana 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Membership application ● Credit application ● Post hoc survey of members (if feasible)
D.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cost of seed, fertilizer, herbicide and other inputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feasibility study ● Post Hoc market/cost survey ● Coop sales records
D.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● % of members receiving T/TA in organization/management of coops (e.g. committee, board training, etc.). ● % of members having participated as member of coop committee or board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extension Agent records ● Coop organizational lists/reports ● Survey of members* ● Discussions with DIFOCOOP, USAID

*Informal interviews during ACDI annual monitoring visit/process review

B. Process Evaluation

As shown in the foregoing table, the evaluation of the performance of the regional service cooperatives will be based on data from the following sources:

- Organizational files of the project and the cooperatives -- (personnel files, feasibility studies, incorporation papers, by-laws and organizational policy statements, inventories of supplies and equipment, correspondence files audit reports);
- Fiscal Reports of the project and the cooperatives -- (budgets, expenditure reports, profit/loss statements, asset and liability statements);
- Official membership lists;
- Applications for membership;
- Credit applications;
- Member loan files;
- Extension agent field reports;
- USAID project files;
- DIFOCOOP project files;
- Discussions with project staff -- (ACDI senior technicians, extension agents/promoters, short-term consultants);
- Discussions with USAID staff associated with the project;
- Discussions with DIFOCOOP staff associated with the project;
- Discussion with coop staff -- (managers, extension agents);
- Discussions with coop members -- (board and committee members, members not actively involved);
- Discussions with local agricultural experts; and
- Discussion with providers of credit and supplies.

For the most part, the necessary data will be gathered and recorded as part of the project's and ACIDI's internal management procedures. Specifically, a quarterly report will be/is being completed by the project manager in Honduras and sent to ACIDI/W headquarters and to USAID/H. This

report will contain summary data on coop membership, credit/loan activity, loan payments, and the coop's financial condition. It will also provide a brief narrative discussion of successes and problems encountered during the reporting period. From the statistical portion of this report it will be possible to monitor the growth and prosperity of the cooperatives and to construct trend lines and perform various aggregate analyses as part of both process and impact evaluations.

As an additional aspect of the project's management plan, there will be one formal monitoring trip per year to the project by an official from ACDI/W. On this visit, there will be a review of project progress and plans with the senior technical staff and then a review of the operations of the regional cooperatives with which they are working. The purpose of the visit will be to assist on-site staff and cooperative leaders reflect on their activities and plan for the year ahead; it will also provide ACDI and AID management with additional facts and insights regarding the project and the coops with which it works. The specific product of the visit will be a monitoring report (or mini-process evaluation) which will reflect reviewing project and coop files; discussions with USAID, DIFOCOOP, project and cooperative staff; and discussions with coop members and local agricultural experts in the field. On the basis of the quarterly reports and the data collected on site, the annual monitoring reports should provide the answers to the evaluation input and output questions as well as the first six questions dealing the purpose of the regional service cooperative project.

C. Impact Evaluation

The last two of the purpose questions (i.e. cooperative self-sufficiency and demonstration effect) and the goal-level questions should be addressed either in an end of project evaluation, or more appropriately, in an impact evaluation scheduled to occur one to two years after the project has ended. The baseline data needed to address these questions have been incorporated in the coop feasibility studies (question D.3) or are being gathered on an on-going basis as part of the cooperative's applications for membership and applications for credit. Specifically, these

applications contain data about: number of manzanas owned, number under cultivation, crops cultivated, yield by crop for the preceeding year, and basic agricultural practices followed. From these data it will be possible to estimate current income level and productivity and shifts in agricultural income productivity over time. To be complete, an impact evaluation should provide for interviewing a sample of coop members about their then current agricultural holdings and practices (essentially the items on the membership and credit application forms), and their experiences with and attitudes toward the cooperative. However, an impact evaluation could be performed based simply on an analysis of the information to be collected in an ongoing manner (i.e. quarterly reports, annual monitoring reports, and membership and credit applications).

The design of the impact evaluation is presented below. The design assumes that new members will be joining the cooperatives each year, and also that data will be collected yearly from members on credit application forms. This design will allow a longitudinal assessment of early members on such variables as socio-economic status, farm income, types of crops, and modes of production. The status of farmers who join in years 1 and 2 thus can be compared in the second and fifth years of project operation to assess impact. Comparisons also can be made between new and old members in years 4 and 5 and between new members in years 1 and 2 versus new members in years 4 and 5. These comparisons will allow the project management and others outside the project to determine if the project is appearing to have impact on participating farmers.

Evaluation Design

<u>Farmers Joining Coop in Year:</u>	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>	<u>Year 3</u>	<u>Year 4</u>	<u>Year 5</u>
1	X	X	X	X	X
2		X	X	X	X
3			X	X	X
4				X	X
5					X

IV. Summary of Interviews to be Conducted and Areas Covered

As part of the annual project monitoring and process evaluation, discussions should be held with the following:

- ACDI project manager and senior staff;
- USAID;
- DIFOCOOP;
- Managers of regional cooperatives;
- Cooperative extension agents/promoters;
- Cooperative board chairpersons;
- Members of key cooperative committees;
- General membership of regional cooperatives; and
- Agricultural specialists from the regions the cooperatives serve.

The major topics to be raised in the discussions with each of these categories of respondents are summarized below:

(1) ACDI Project Manager and Senior Staff

- Review quarterly reports -- problems and successes encountered.
- Relations with USAID -- access to and support from key staff and the Mission overall.
- Relations with DIFOCOOP -- access to and support from key staff and the organization overall.
- Relations with regional coops -- tensions and disagreements regarding policies and practice; style of interactions.
- Strength of regional coops -- quality of staff; quality of programs and activities; access to credit and supplies; prospects for the future.

(2) USAID -- (Cooperative Specialist; Agricultural Development Officer; Others associated with the project)

- Progress and problems of the project.
- Relations with project staff -- responsiveness; USAID's ability to support the project.
- Relations with Government of Honduras effecting the project.
- Budget and logistical issues, if any.

(3) DIFOCOOP (Staff relating to project)

- Impressions of Regional Coops -- problems and strengths (membership, finances, staff).
- Relations with project staff.
- Conditions in country effecting project and the cooperatives performance and prospects.

(4) Managers of Regional Cooperatives

- Relations with project staff -- access; responsiveness; quality of advice received.
- T/TA received -- amount; appropriateness; timeliness; results.
- Access to credit and supplies -- sources; amounts; timeliness; restrictions; future prospects.
- Functioning of board and committees -- attendance; education/quality of officers; wisdom/record of decisions made.
- Staff -- strengths and problems; vancancies; turn-over; experience.
- Adequacy of equipment, supplies and other operating resources.

(5) Extension Agents/Promoters of Cooperatives

- T/TA received -- quality; topical appropriateness; timeliness.
- Assessing coop member needs for T/TA -- how and when done; agricultural; organizational.
- Disbursement of credit and supplies to member -- adequacy of amount; timeliness; repayment issues or problems.
- Membership and recruitment -- difficulties encountered; receptivity of community; criteria applied; expectations for future.

(6) Chairperson of Cooperative Boards

- Involvement of coop members on board and committees.
- Relations with project -- T/TA received and its appropriateness and timeliness.
- Needs of membership and officers for T/TA and services.
- Quality of staff -- access and responsiveness to members; diligence; quality of TA provided.
- Quality of services provided to members -- kind; amount; timeliness.

(7) Members of Key Coop Committees (two or three committee chairs per coop)

- Involvement of coop members on board and committees.
- T/TA received from project or other sources -- appropriateness and timeliness.
- Quality of coop services provided to members -- kind; amount; timeliness.
- Needs of membership and officers for T/TA and services.

(8) General Coop Membership (five to ten informal interviews with members of each coop; ideally during visits to their farm)

- Involvement of coop members on board and committees.
- Importance of credit, supplies and other services received from the coop.
- Problems with credit, supplies and services -- amount; type; timeliness.
- Quality and relevance of T/TA received from coop.

(9) Agricultural Specialists from Region (someone not directly associated with the coop but familiar with its operations)

- Appropriateness of agricultural T/TA being provided to members -- crops; technologies; etc.
- Crop and market conditions in region during past year (to provide insight into coop and member productivity).

V. Outline of Annual Monitoring (Process Evaluation) Report

This report will be completed annually by a member of ACDI/W staff based on a one-to-two week monitoring visit to Honduras plus a review of project quarterly reports and correspondence.

The purposes of the report are to:

- (1) Provide feedback to the project field staff;
 - (2) Inform ACDI/W and AID of the project's status and the need for any particular actions; and
 - (3) Provide input for a post-project impact evaluation.
-

OUTLINE

- A. Project Overview -- one or two paragraph overview of project scope and purpose (the report's audience will all be familiar with the project; this section is simply to provide a brief orientation).
- B. Trip Activities -- who was seen; where went; schedule.
- C. Answers to Process Evaluation Questions -- question by question response to evaluation questions A.1-C.6; be as brief as possible with most data summarized and included as part of the report.
- D. Personal Observations/Impressions.
- E. Conclusions and Recommendations.

COOPERATIVA REGIONAL DE SERVICIOS AGRICOLAS

HOJA DE INSCRIPCION

No. _____

1. Nombre _____
2. Dirección _____
(calle, aldea, municipio, departamento)
3. Nacionalidad _____ Cédula de Identidad No. _____
emitida en _____ Dpto. de _____
el _____ de _____ de _____ .
4. Edad _____ Sexo: M F
5. Estado Civil: S C V Número de hijos _____ No. de personas en casa _____
6. Nombre del cónyuge _____
7. Años de educación formal _____
8. Es socio de otra Cooperativa Agrícola / / ; o fue socio y pidió su retiro / / ;
cuál es el nombre de la Cooperativa _____
9. Información sobre su empresa agrícola al momento de llenar esta hoja:

9.1 EXPLOTACION AÑO ANTERIOR

USO	EN MANZANAS			TOTAL
	PROPIA	ARRENDADA	OTRA*	
Cultivada				
En Pasto				
Bosque				
TOTAL				

*Si es otra, explique: _____

9.2 PRODUCCION AÑO ANTERIOR

CULTIVOS	MZS	Producción por Mz.	Destino en qqs		Precio por quintal	No. Cosechas al año
			Doméstico	Venta		
Maíz						
Frijol						
Arroz						
Chile						
Café						

Observaciones:

**COOPERATIVA REGIONAL DE SERVICIOS AGRICOLAS
LTD.A."**

Para uso de la Coop.
Solicitud No.

SOLICITUD DE CREDITO

Yo, Socio N°
del grupo local de asociados.....
por la presente solicito a la Cooperativa Regional de Servicios Agrícolas me sea otorgado un
crédito por la suma de.....
..... (L.....) para atender mis necesidades agrícolas durante el ciclo 19..... /19.....
de acuerdo a la siguiente información:

I PLAN AGRICOLA Y DE CREDITO DEL CICLO:

Cultivos	Prod. a Ms. año antes.	Extensión Hec.	Credito Solicitado	Producción Estimada Total eq.	Destino		Precio Unitario eq.	Valor Producción Venta	Tenencia Tierra			Observaciones
					Doméstico eq.	Venta eq.			P	A	O	
Totales	XXXX			XXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX					

II PLAN DE UTILIZACION DEL CREDITO:

Detalle	Precio Unitario	CULTIVOS										Cantidad Total		
		Cant.		Valor L.		Cant.		Valor L.		Cant.			Valor L.	
Fertiliz. Fórmula:														
Semillas:														
Insecticida:														
Herbicida:														
Otros:														
Suma Lempias				XXXX			XXXX			XXXX			XXXX	

III GARANTIAS:

IV DECLARO: que pagaré el presente crédito más los intereses correspondientes al% anual a más tardar el día de de 19..... aceptando capitalizar el% sobre el monto del mismo, mi incumplimiento a las obligaciones contraídas autoriza legalmente a la Cooperativa a disponer de las garantías ofrecidas

(.....) Asociado (.....) Testigo (.....) Testigo Planificador

V INFORME DEL GRUPO LOCAL:
La directiva del Grupo Local de asociados..... acordó sí no recomendar que se otorgue el crédito solicitado.

Representante del Grupo Local: (Nombre) (Firma)

VI RESOLUCION:
El de la Cooperativa, acuerda aprobar denegar el crédito solicitado hasta un monto de sujeto a los Reglamentos y normas de la Cooperativa.

..... de de 19.....
(Firma)

OBSERVACIONES:

Original: Cartera de Préstamos
Duplicado: Archivo del Asociado

AGRICULTURAL SERVICES REGIONAL COOPERATIVE

REGISTRATION FORM

No. _____

1. Name _____
2. Address _____
(street, town, municipality, department (state))
3. Nationality _____ ID Card No.: _____
Issued in (place) _____ Department (state) of: _____
Date _____
4. Age _____ Sex: M F
5. Marital Status: Single Married Widowed Number of Children: _____ No. persons in household _____
6. Name of Spouse _____
7. Tears of formal education _____
8. Are you a member of another Agricultural Cooperative / /; or were you a members and have withdrawn your membership / /; what is the name of the Cooperative _____
9. Current information about your agricultural enterprise:

9.1. OPERATIONS LAST YEAR

	IN MANZANAS			TOTAL
	Own	Rented	Other*	
Cultivated				
In Pasture				
Forest				
TOTAL				

*If other, please explain: _____

9.2. PRODUCTION LAST YEAR

CROPS	MANZANAS	PRODUCTION PER MANZANA	USE IN QUINTALS		PRICE PER QUINTAL	# HARVESTS PER YEAR
			Domestic	For Sale		
Corn						
Beans						
Rice						
Chiles						
Coffee						

Observations: _____

9.3 OWN ANIMALS LAST YEAR

ANIMALS	QUANTITY	USE		SALE PRICE	OBSERVATIONS
		Domestic	For Sale		

10. Used previously: chemical fertilizer / /; insecticide / /; herbicide / /; improved seeds / /;
 _____ / /; _____ / /

11. Did you use machinery in preparing you land / /; oxen / /; _____ / /

12. Did you receive technical assistance? / /; from whom? _____

13. Number of days you had paid manual labor _____; Number of days you worked on your farm _____;
 elsewhere _____

14. In case of death, who assumes the rights and obligations associated with this organization? _____

15. Observations: _____

I hereby certify that the above information is correct.

_____, _____ 19_____
 (signature) (Date)

Witness:

Signature _____

Name _____

 (Signature or fingerprint)

Local group to which you belong _____

A-22

APPENDIX B

A DESIGN TO EVALUATE
URBAN HOUSING PROJECTS
IN HONDURAS

May 1982

I. BACKGROUND

Honduras has experienced rapid urbanization of its population in recent decades. The migration of people from rural to urban areas has been most pronounced in Tegucigalpa, the capital, although San Pedro Sula and many other towns have experienced substantial growth. Major needs created by the influx of people into urban areas have been housing and basic services like water and sewers. Over the years, the Government of Honduras and other agencies and organizations have worked toward alleviating housing and service shortages. New, low cost housing has been constructed and basic services have been provided to existing housing.

USAID/Honduras has taken an active interest in urban housing for more than a decade. The Mission has helped fund a variety of housing programs. The Mission has also sponsored several studies of the characteristics of the residents in various housing settings.

Programatically, three types of housing areas can be identified in urban locales in Honduras. These are:

- (1) Neighborhoods that have developed on their own with no outside inputs,
- (2) Existing neighborhoods that have received limited inputs in the form of basic services, and
- (3) Neighborhoods that have been newly created as a function of the construction of new housing complexes.

In order to best use development assistance resources to meet housing needs, it would be desirable to know what impacts housing programs have had on residents in the three types of areas. The purpose of this paper is to present a design for such a study.

The design builds upon two sources of housing data that are already available. One, a data tape and a report exist for the survey conducted in 1979 by the Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF), formerly the Foundation for Cooperative Housing. In 1978, CHF administered a lengthy questionnaire to probable participants in the cooperative housing project "Centro Americano" and to a similar group of people who would not receive new housing. This housing project was the primary

responsibility of FEHCOVIL, Federacion Hondurena de Cooperativas de Vivienda. Two, reports are available which present findings from the 1980 and 1981 surveys conducted by USAID/Honduras, in cooperation with the Central District Metropolitan Council, Concejo Metropolitano del Distrito Central (CMDC). The same questionnaire was administered in both years to residents in AID-supported housing project barrios and non-project barrios.

In addition, other existing housing information may be useful. FEHCOVIL, has issued several reports that have included information on the general characteristics of the recipients of new cooperative housing. Some of these reports also include financial aspects of its housing projects. Additional information about the "Centro Americano" project is contained in the FEHCOVIL liquidation report on the project. The USAID/Honduras paper outlining its proposed up-grading projects contains substantial data about the areas where improvements were to be made. Since this paper was written, improvements have been made in a variety of neighborhoods and information has been collected on some of these neighborhoods in the CMDC/USAID surveys.

II. DESIGN OVERVIEW

To evaluate the impacts of urban housing projects, the primary focus of the study design is on the three housing strategies: untouched neighborhoods (no outside inputs); improved neighborhoods (provision of basic services to existing housing); and new neighborhoods (provision of new housing).

A secondary focus of the study design is on the two management approaches used with the creation of new housing neighborhoods. The two types of new housing are: cooperative housing projects and non-cooperative housing projects.

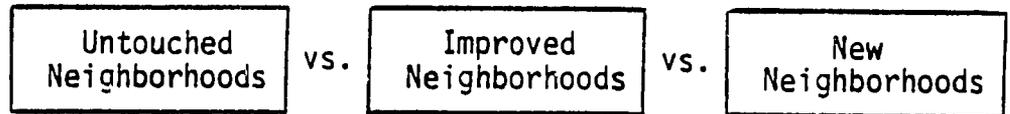
Exhibit 1 illustrates the primary housing comparison groups and the secondary management comparison groups. Level I identifies the three housing strategies and Level II identifies the two new housing management strategies. Within each of these levels, key topics of investigation are listed.

Exhibit 2 illustrates the potential comparison groups across time, within the three housing strategy categories and the two management subcategories. Data are

EXHIBIT 1
OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION DESIGN

LEVEL I:

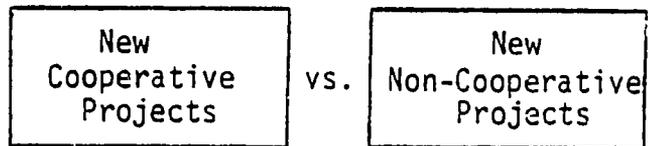
Housing
Strategies



- Self-help improvements to houses
- Social and educational services
- Health and sanitation services
- Health of residents
- Family expenditures
- Income distribution

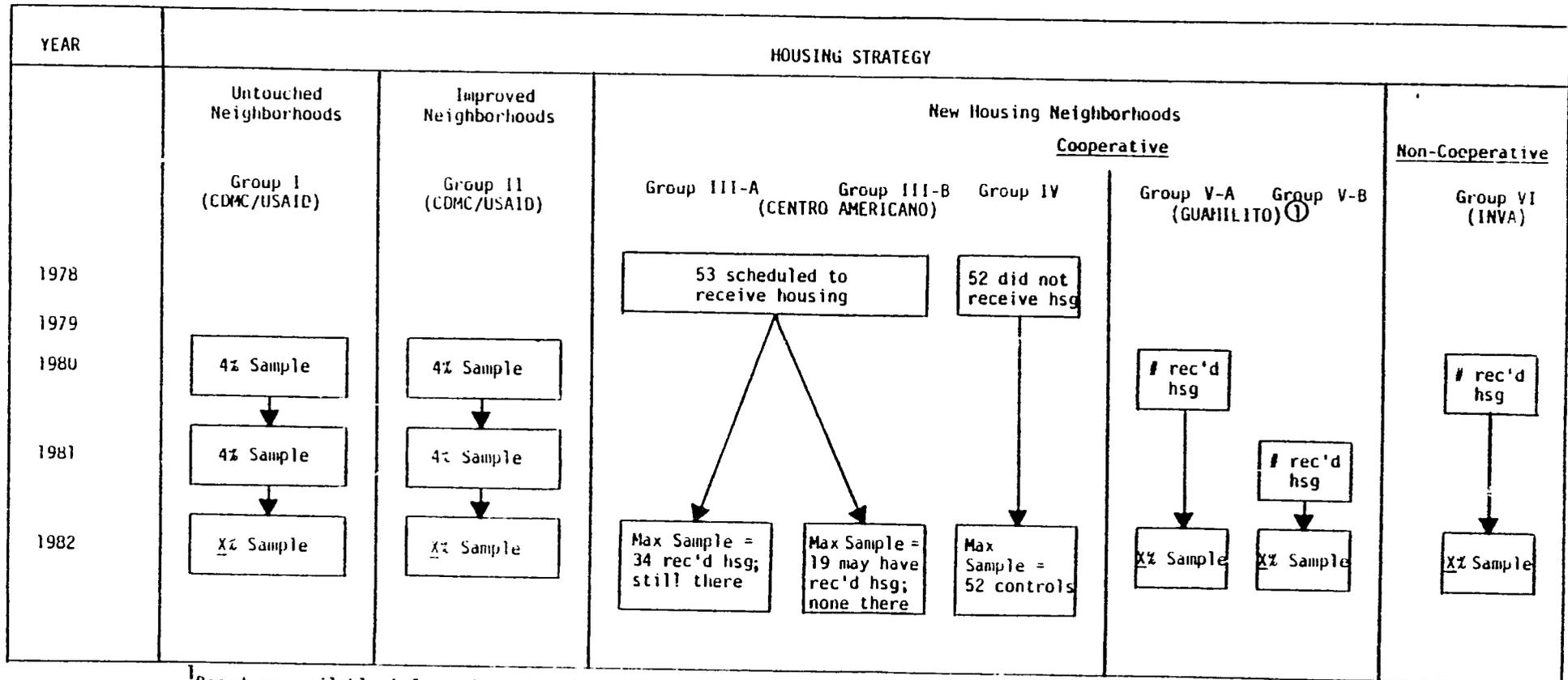
LEVEL II:

New Housing
Management
Strategies



- Delinquency and default rates
- Rate of return to developer
- Equity holding of residents
- Community self-help projects
- Involvement in community/civic affairs

**EXHIBIT 2
POTENTIAL COMPARISON GROUPS ACROSS TIME BY HOUSING STRATEGY**



① Based on available information, Guamilito has been shown here as a cooperative new housing project. This categorization may be incorrect.

clearly available for 1980 and 1981 for Groups I and II as a result of the CMDC/USAID surveys and for 1978 for Groups III and IV as a result of the CHF survey. Additional information about the Centro Americano project is available in FEHCOVIL's liquidation report on the project. Some data, perhaps of a limited nature, may be available for Group V-A for 1980 and for Group V-B for 1981 in FEHCOVIL reports and in participant selection documents for Guamilito. Similarly, limited data for Group VI should be available for 1980 in INVA reports and in participant selection documents.

Proposed data collection in 1982 may not be feasible for some groups since current whereabouts of group members are unknown. This is the case for Groups III-B and IV. While desirable to follow-up these groups in 1982, associated costs may make it prohibitive.

In addition, the size of most 1982 samples is negotiable. While it may be desirable to increase the sampling rate beyond 4% in each of the 10 barrios making up CMDC/USAID Groups I and II to insure adequate representative samples, such additional demands on data collection and processing may prove excessive. Furthermore, the size of the samples for Groups V-A, V-B, and VI need to be determined, given constraints of available resources. In general, identifying and surveying members of Groups III-B and IV provide data for important comparison groups, and increasing the sample size of the CMDC/USAID survey Groups I and II increases confidence in the representativeness of the information obtained. Furthermore, the sample sizes for Groups V-A, V-B and VI will influence the degree to which resulting data are representative.

Exhibit 3 presents the evaluation study questions and their indicators for both Levels I and II in the study design. Level II questions and indicators are presented in two categories: those concerned only with cooperative housing projects and those concerned with both cooperative and INVA housing projects.

To collect information in 1982 to help answer the study questions presented in Exhibit 3, the sources of information and the methods of data collection are listed for each study question in Exhibit 4. Information coding forms should be tailored to the type of information to be collected.

EXHIBIT 3

EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND INDICATORS FOR LEVEL I HOUSING STRATEGIES
AND LEVEL II MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN NEW HOUSINGLevel I - Housing Strategies (Untouched Neighborhoods v. Improved Neighborhoods
v. New Neighborhoods)

1. What housing resources, services or technologies were provided?

Indicators:

- houses -- size, cost, materials, etc.
- basic services like sewer and water
- training and/or technical assistance in such areas as housing construction, repair, painting, gardening

2. What were the characteristics of the residents receiving the housing resources, services or technologies?

Indicators

- occupation
- family income
- social status in the community

3. Once housing inputs were provided, what improvements did residents make in their housing?

Indicators

- types of improvements made
- types of resources, services or technologies used
- unit measures of amounts of resources, services and technologies used

4. Once housing inputs were provided, did residents use social services, educational services and additional health and sanitation services?

Indicators

- social services
- educational services
- health care services
- assistance in sanitation services

5. Once housing inputs were provided, did the health status of residents improve?

Indicators

- disease rates
- nutrition needs met

Exhibit 3 (Cont.)

6. How did housing inputs influence the economic circumstances of residents? Did housing differentially affect residents according to their economic circumstances?

Indicators

- decreased family expenditures
- increased family income

Level II - Management Strategies in New Housing Neighborhoods (Cooperatives v. Non-Cooperatives)

A. Cooperatives Only

1. How was the need for a cooperative organization established?

Indicators

- presence of a needs assessment
 - economic need of community
 - lack of appropriate existing institution to meet need
 - appropriateness of cooperative structure for the culture setting
2. How were the appropriate resources for the development of a cooperative organization identified?

Indicators

- presence of resource assessment
 - available leadership and expertise
 - available capital
3. Was the cooperative organization structured according to cooperative principals?

Indicators

- voluntary nature of membership
- lack of discrimination in membership guidelines
- leader selection by democratic procedures
- equal or equitable voting procedures
- limited return on capital investment
- use or distribution of surplus democratically determined
- distribution of surplus, if any, in proportion to transactions
- provision of educational services to members, employees and the general public
- break even operating budget
- break even total budget
- constraints of government rules and regulations

Exhibit 3 (Cont.)

4. Was the cooperative legally constituted?

Indicators

- adoption of a constitution or bylaws
- recognition as a legal entity

5. How many members of the cooperative were there? What was the economic condition of members?

Indicators

- membership requirements
- membership totals by year
- annual family income per member
- source of family income
- number of dependents
- quality of family dwelling

6. How actively did members participate in the cooperative?

Indicators

- frequency of meetings
- attendance at meetings
- participation in the activities of the cooperative

B. Cooperatives v. INVA

1. What was the role of the cooperative and INVA in the management of new housing?

Indicators

- sale and resale
- maintenance
- collection of payment
- supervision of modifications to housing

2. What were the responsibilities of cooperative and INVA employees in the operations of the projects?

Indicators

- duties of managers
- duties of fiscal agents
- functions of other personnel
- fiscal auditors

Exhibit 3 (Cont.)

3. What were the responsibilities of the cooperative board and community groups in the operations of the projects?

Indicators

- duties of the board of directors
- role of civic associations

4. What were the fiscal characteristics of the housing projects?

Indicators

- delinquency and default rates on payments
- rate or return to developer
- equity holdings of residents

5. To what degree did the cooperative organization and INVA project achieve self-sufficiency?

Indicators

- income transactions v. expenses by year
 - size of capital outlay across time
 - staffing pattern (paid v. volunteer, full time v. part time)
 - relationship with other organizations (e.g., cooperative or INVA headquarters, host government, private sector)
 - length of time in existence
 - size of organization
 - verbal approval by beneficiaries
 - support from other organizations
 - autonomy
 - spread of innovative norms to others
6. To meet community needs, did the cooperative and the INVA-sponsored civic association increase the level of community self-reliance instead of reliance on government institutions?

Indicators

- community initiated planning and needs assessment
- community initiated projects

7. Did residents increase their level of political participation in their society?

Indicators

- voting behavior in the cooperative and civic association
- participation in meetings, etc.

EXHIBIT 4
STUDY QUESTIONS, DATA SOURCES AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

<u>Study Question</u>	<u>Data Source</u>	<u>Data Collection Method</u>
I-1	Housing Officials ¹ /Housing Project Records	Information Coding Form
I-2	Residents/Housing Project Records (Applications, etc.)	Questionnaire ² Information Coding Form
I-3	Resident Housing/Residents	Observation Checklist New Questions Added to Questionnaire
I-4	Residents	Questionnaire
I-5	Residents	New Questions Added to Questionnaire
I-6	Residents	Questionnaire
I-7	Residents	Questionnaire
II-A1	Cooperative Staff/Cooperative Records	Information Coding Form
II-A2	Cooperative Staff/Cooperative Records	Information Coding Form
II-A3	Cooperative Staff/Cooperative Records	Information Coding Form
II-A4	Cooperative Staff/Cooperative Records	Information Coding Form
II-A5	Cooperative Staff/Cooperative Records	Information Coding Form
II-A6	Cooperative Staff/Cooperative Records	Information Coding Form
II-B1	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records	Information Coding Form
II-B2	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records	Information Coding Form
II-B3	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records	Information Coding Form
II-B4	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records	Information Coding Form
II-B5	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records	Information Coding Form
II-B6	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records Civic Association Staff Civic Association Records	Information Coding Form
II-B7	Housing Project Staff Housing Project Records Civic Association Staff Civic Association Records	Information Coding Form

¹ Refers to both FEHCOVIL and public housing officials.

² CMDC/USAID Questionnaire.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Answering Level I Study Questions

Based on a preliminary review of the 1981 report presenting findings from the CMDC/USAID 1980 and 1981 surveys, it appears that the questionnaire solicits information that would be useful in answering Level I study questions 2, 4, and 6. New questions should be added to more completely answer study question 4. In addition, it may be desirable to add questions to expand on the information collected for study questions 2 and 6.

Housing agency staff should be queried and/or housing project records should be searched to collect information to answer study question 1 about what housing inputs were provided. An observation checklist could be constructed to code improvements made to housing to answer study question 3. To determine amounts of resources, services and technologies used to make improvements, new questions should be added to the questionnaire.

A different questionnaire was used to gather baseline data in 1978 from Groups III and IV. There is relatively little exact duplication of items in the CHF questionnaire with items in the CMDC/USAID questionnaire. However, a fair number of similar items are included in both questionnaires. The extent of overlap is illustrated in Exhibit 5. The comments column notes when duplication is identical and when coding categories differ as well as other information.

If the CMDC questionnaire is used in 1982 with Groups III and IV, manipulation of most of the items in Exhibit 5 for the CHF questionnaire would be required to make responses compatible with those obtainable with the CMDC/USAID questionnaire. Out of the near 300 items comprising the CHF questionnaire, results from 52 items were presented in the survey report. These 52 items appear to be the most relevant in an impact evaluation. An alternative to using the CMDC/USAID questionnaire exclusively with Groups III and IV, as

EXHIBIT 5
SPECIFICATION CMDC/USAID ANC CHF VARIABLES IN INSTRUMENTS

Item Description	CMDC/USAID		CHF		Comments
	Question	Variable	Question	Variable	
Sex, head	4.1	SEXO	20	V009	Codes same
Mar.Sta., head	4.1	ESTCIV	20	V010	Codes differ
Age, head	4.1	EDAD	22.23	V011	Codes same
Occ., head	4.1	ACTIVIDAD	25.26	V013	See V014
Hrs work, head	4.1	DIAS/HORAS	36.37	V019	Codes differ
Income, head	4.1	GANANCIA	INGRESOS	V025	Ck periods
Ages in house	4.1	EDAD		V105-V117	Codes differ
House expense	12a-12b	GASRNT/GASBUY		V056	Combine codes
Food costs	12h	GASFOOD		V057	Codes same
Family income	14	GANSUELDO	(Sum V031/39/45/51)		Codes same
Reside time	5	TENRES	6.8	V177	Codes same
Floor	6c	MATPISO	59.68	V207	Codes differ
Roof	6a	MATROOF	59.69	V208	Codes differ
Walls	6b	MATWALL	59.70	V209	Codes differ
Bath	9	BANO	59.66	V205	Codes same
Tenancy	11	TENANCIA	6.9	V178	Codes differ
Commute costs	12a	GASTRANS		V059	Codes same
Ed costs	12f	GASEDUC		V062	Codes same

relevant, is to ask the 52 items from the CHF questionnaire in addition to using the CMDC/USAID questionnaire. An explanation could be given to respondents about the duplication of questions.

B. Answering Level II Study Questions

Available cooperative and INVA records and discussion with cooperative and INVA staff represent the major sources of information to answer Level II questions. The INVA-sponsored civic association staff and association records are key data sources for questions IIB3, IIB6 and IIB7.

C. Data Analysis

The existence of the Centro Americano data tape in CHF, data on the CMDC/USAID surveys, and probably some information from selection documents greatly improve the possibility of meaningful analyses. The computer capability of USAID/Honduras, and the survey resources of the several institutions contemplating cooperation with the study, further enhance the potential for worthwhile results.

Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency like means and medians, and percentages, should be computed on all items. Statistical significance should also be calculated.

Because of different numbers of data items and varying numbers of categories within individual items, tests of statistical significance must be carefully interpreted. There may be cases of statistical significance that have no practical significance.

Preliminary analyses and interpretation may single out some variables of potentially greater impact. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures could help clarify the contributions of the examined items to project impact. These may be further explicated by deriving the relative contributions of a set of items using stepwise regression.

The USAID/Honduras computer system is being updated and should include the full capabilities of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) when completed. That system should provide all the capability necessary to perform the statistical calculations needed for the evaluation. Longitudinal assessments are somewhat more difficult with SPSS than with some other systems but careful coding of the data in specified formats can alleviate the problems.

D. Summary

To summarize, the study is intended to address two major urban housing issues. First, the study is concerned with changes over time that have occurred as a result of each of the three housing strategies -- no inputs, limited inputs in the form of basic services, and major inputs in the form of new housing. Second, the study is concerned with the effects of providing new housing by cooperatives as contrasted with INVA provided new housing.

APPENDIX C
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TESTING A COOPERATIVE EVALUATION SYSTEM:
SMALL FARMER ORGANIZATIONS OF HONDURAS

This report was prepared as part of a contract with the Agency for International Development to develop a system for evaluating projects to establish or strengthen cooperatives in less developed countries. Honduras was selected as a country in which to field test the evaluation system because it contained a variety of cooperative development projects at various stages of completion. The cooperative project described herein was selected for evaluation because it provided an opportunity to test that part of the system which focused on conducting impact evaluations of completed projects.

The purpose of the report is two-fold:

- To illustrate the use of the evaluation system as the framework for conducting an evaluation, including identifying lessons or factors which would make for better evaluations in the future; and
- To provide, for the record, an evaluation of the Honduras project.

The evaluation was conducted by two Development Associates' staff with the assistance of a representative from ACDI's Washington office during the second week of February 1982.

I. RESULTS OF PROJECT EVALUATION

A. Setting

The project being evaluated was implemented by Agricultural Cooperative Development International (ACDI), under contract with USAID Honduras through the Government of Honduras' Office of Cooperative Promotion (DIFOCOOP). The basic aims of the project were:

- To improve small farmer organizations by training staff in management and accounting which in turn should lead to improved condition for members.

- To better qualify DIFOCOOP in the training of administrators and accountants of small farmer organizations and to extend this training to programs carried out by other public and private institutions concerned with the development of small farmer organizations.

To accomplish these aims, ACDI provided two high level specialists, a secretary, and the necessary office and equipment. DIFOCOOP nominated two of its experienced trainers as counterpart personnel. In addition, DIFOCOOP arranged release time from regular duties for many of its staff so they could attend one or more of the courses. The project was conducted during 1976 and 1977.

B. Findings

- Appropriateness and Timeliness of the Project: The project took place during a period of very rapid expansion of cooperatives and small farmer associations in Honduras. The large number of newly formed organizations far exceeded indigenous training and technical assistance capabilities, and there were clear indications of need for management assistance. Thus, both the content and timing of the project were appropriate.
- Quality of Project Personnel: The two ACDI technicians had substantial experience and education in cooperatives and other small farmer associations, and both were fully fluent in Spanish. The chief of party was also a Honduras national who had been a leader in the Honduran credit union movement and then worked outside the country with ACDI for several years. The DIFOCOOP personnel assigned to the project were also well qualified. They were experienced trainers who had worked with small farmer organizations throughout the country in several capacities.
- Adequacy of Project Resources: The amount and timeliness of funding and the availability of project related equipment and other material resources were apparently adequate throughout. They posed no significant problems for project implementation.
- Management of the Project: The available evidence indicates that the project was well managed. Successful modifications of the original training design to accommodate trainee needs and the smooth incorporation of the DIFOCOOP personnel into project activities indicate the flexibility which was necessary to work with so many different institutions.
- Materials Developed: The project developed seven significant publications, several of which continue to be widely used. A set of three booklets contain all of the basic accounting operations and procedures needed in small farmer organizations, and a simple accounting example taken from an existing cooperative. A set of two booklets were designed for managers and boards of directors of small farmer organizations while a separate volume sets out all the documents needed to meet legal requirements associated with cooperatives in Honduras. Finally, a volume of selected readings was prepared for cooperative extension personnel. The documents are clear, simply worded and contain practical exercises. They appear to have been quite suitable for most

trainees, although almost always there were some semi-literate trainees who could not read the material presented.

- Training Provided: A total of 21 training courses were offered through the project, seven in accounting, twelve in business management, and two tailored to specific organizational needs. Seventeen of the courses were of five days duration, three were slightly longer and one was only a one-day course. A total of 695 persons attended the various courses, 323 in the management course, 236 in the accounting course and 88 in courses combining the two. The number of trainees was more than the number called for in the project plans. Virtually all the trainees came from small farmer associations, and available evidence indicates that the type of persons receiving the training were consistent with project goals. No data were available regarding the extent to which trainees gained skills or information during the training courses.
- Follow-up Assistance to Trainees: To be most effective, training and technical assistance efforts should provide for sustained post-workshop contact with participants in order to reinforce the information and skills addressed. Except for irregular contacts by DIFOCOOP staff, there were no indications of systematic follow-up with farmer trainees.
- Institutional Effects: The creation and adequate staffing of the Division of Education and Dissemination within DIFOCOOP was the most tangible institutional result. The ACIDI project's chief Honduran counterpart was named head of the Division and six workshop trainees sent from DIFOCOOP were assigned there to work. The chief and six staff members are still so employed. In addition, nearly a dozen other DIFOCOOP staff were identified who received training and continue to make use of what they learned. Also training manuals and the accounting system developed as part of the project were still being used by DIFOCOOP staff in the training and technical assistance they offer small farmer organizations. At the level of local and regional associations, much less evidence of impact was found. Examples were given and subjective judgments supplied indicating that there were some lasting effects on some local organizations, but systematic evidence was not available. It is not likely that the use of additional evaluation resources would have produced much more evidence.
- Impacts on Rural Residents: For a variety of reasons no evidence of impacts on rural residents could be found. The logic of the project was that the training courses would lead to improved small farmer associations which, in turn, would contribute to improved conditions for their members. Since there was little evidence of impacts on farmer associations, little traceable impact on rural residents would be expected. This is even more likely since several of the assisted farmer organizations have not survived, other have fragmented, and there was much movement of personnel from one organization to another. Thus, there is little reason to believe that the five day training courses, worthwhile as they might have been in some respects, could have produced discernable impacts on individual small farmers. Further, review of records and discussions with participants and project staff provided no indications, however subjective, of impacts on that level. Thus, even if adequate pre and post data had been available it is unlikely anything meaningful would have been found.

C. Conclusions

In broad terms the project operated efficiently; it was on schedule, within budget and more persons were trained than planned. It was also effective in that it addressed a legitimate need and produced some results which have lasted well beyond its close. Materials were produced which were judged effective at the time and are still in use four years later. A reasonably well staffed and trained education division was established within the Government's Office of Cooperation Promotion (DIFOCOOP), and more than 600 managers received training in accounting and management techniques. Further, these managers returned to their organizations and, for the most part, continue to work with small farmer groups in rural Honduras. On the other hand, there is no real evidence that the project made a substantial difference to many small farmer organizations or impacted on the lives of small farmers themselves. Thus, the basic terms of the project were achieved; the purpose of better qualifying DIFOCOOP to provide future training was accomplished, but no more than anecdotal data indicated that the project accomplished its aim of directly improving the management and financial control of small farmer associations. Given the size and scope of the project and the information available on site, the evaluation team judges the project to be a reasonable success.

II. THE RESULTS OF TESTING THE EVALUATION SYSTEM

At one level the field test of the evaluation system went well, while at another there were substantial problems. Applying the system and its draft manual to the project went smoothly. Essentially, the system calls for: (1) matching the logical structure of a particular project to a general model of cooperative development projects; (2) identifying the sets of evaluation questions in the manual corresponding to the elements in the particular project model; (3) selecting specific questions from the manual and developing additional questions as needed; (4) editing the list of questions; and (5) selecting indicators from among those in the manual and elsewhere as needed. From there, evaluators are expected to draw on their skills and experience to develop specific work plans, instruments and analytic plans and then to proceed to implement the evaluation and report the results.

The Honduras project fit the general model without difficulty. The evaluation questions in the manual were generally relevant to the project. There was, however, a need to develop one entirely new set of questions plus several individual questions for particular topics. There also seemed to be some unnecessary redundancy among questions that should be corrected before the system is complete. Further, the draft manual did not include indicators for all sets of questions, and it would have been more convenient if it had done so. Finally, the manual did not include directions for its use, and those not previously familiar with its content and logic were initially at a loss regarding how to proceed. Those weaknesses were important to identify and will be addressed in the final revisions to the manual. Perhaps more important, however, was to confirm that the basics of the system were appropriate and useful. In a very short period of time it enabled relative strangers to a project to develop and implement a suitable evaluation design.

The implementation of the evaluation, however, was much more difficult. The project staff had kept careful records oriented toward their own operational needs and toward completing periodic statistical monitoring reports. They did not, however, collect baseline data on the pre-project conditions in the targeted small farmer organizations, the circumstances of organization members which might have been affected by project activities, or even the level of knowledge or skills of project participants before and after particular training events. Essentially, data on which to base judgments regarding many of the expected project results was totally absent. The judgments that could be made were based on tangible products produced (i.e., manuals and organizational units) and retrospective assessments by participants and staff. To be complete an impact evaluation of the project should have included visits to farmer associations and interviews with former trainees. However, given the lack of any recorded baselines as well as the apparently random nature of any follow-up, this seemed an unproductive use of time and funds. Thus, the evaluation itself is not as complete as one might wish, but nothing more of substance was likely to be found.

The paucity of baseline data available in this situation demonstrates clearly the need for advance planning for evaluation. It also illustrates the potential evaluation related roles that different actors in a project could play. Available

project records suggest that the only questions being asked the staff about project performance pertained to the number of trainees and types of organizations served. There appears to have been no requirement for the staff to report indications that participants benefited from the training or that their organizations were effected as a result. While such information clearly would help project staff know whether their materials or procedures needed change, this was not among their priorities. Nor, was it apparently of particular interest to USAID or ACDI. Any of the three parties responsible for the project could easily have caused the quite competent project staff to devise a simple way of gathering such data. As is often the case, however, the evaluative process was viewed as unessential to project success. Thus, the evaluation reflects the lack of advance planning, and some useful lessons from what appears to have been a reasonably successful enterprise may have been lost.