



A Midterm Assessment of the Agricultural Policy Reform Program in Egypt

April 2000

**Rural and Agricultural Incomes in a Sustainable Environment
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USAID/Egypt**

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PREFACE

This Midterm Assessment Report of the Agricultural Policy Reform Program is based on a draft report dated 12th March 2000. It was prepared by an ARD-RAISE¹ team comprising Tom Cusack, Team Leader; Jeff Dorsey, Institutional Management Specialist; Mahmoud Hussein Kamel, Agricultural Organizations Specialist; Mohamed Zakaria Abdel Khalik, Agricultural Economist and Gender Specialist; Salah M. Abdel Razek, Capacity Building Specialist; Atef Abdel Halim Salaam, Training Specialist; and Seth Schick, Resource Economist. Jeff Dorsey was provided by Cargill Technical Services, all the others were ARD employees.

This final report includes the revisions to the draft report which were suggested by USAID and other stakeholders.

The team would like to thank all those individuals and institutions who have contributed their time, ideas, comments, documents, and other resources to this work. The team was greatly assisted by the excellent collaboration received from stakeholders at all levels and in all areas of activity of the program. The team would particularly like to thank the APRP PMU team and the EG/AP team at USAID, for their support and advice throughout the study period.

The team has greatly appreciated the free and frank exchange of ideas with all participants during the course of the study, and feels — as a result — that a useful level of consensus was reached on the findings and recommendations of the assessment.

The team feels that the assessment, particularly the stakeholder consultations during the course of the work, has provided useful assistance to participants as they plan out strategies for the remaining thirty months of the Agricultural Policy Reform Program.

¹ The ARD-RAISE Consortium provides technical management and resources to USAID's **Rural and Agricultural Incomes with a Sustainable Environment Program**. Its members are: Associates in Rural Development, Cargill Technical Services, Associates for International Resources and Development, CARANA Corporation, A.P. Gross & Company, International Programs Consortium, Land O'Lakes, Purdue University, and Technoserve.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(INCLUDING A LISTING OF MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS)

In support of Egypt's continuing economic reform efforts, the Government of Egypt (GOE) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are currently implementing the Agricultural Policy Reform Program (APRP). The program makes annual cash disbursements to the GOE as sector program assistance upon completion of policy reform benchmarks. The program also provides technical assistance to GOE to assist with policy reforms. Until recently, APRP operated through nine separate TA components, often referred to as units. Four units were officed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR), with five being collocated with the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (MPWWR) — now renamed the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI). Other Ministries closely involved in the implementation of the APRP include the Ministry of Trade and Supply (MoTS) — now renamed as the Ministry of Supply and Home Trade (MSHT), the Ministry of Public Enterprises (MPE), and the Ministry of International Cooperation (MIC). Currently, however, APRP technical assistance has been reduced to five units.

APRP covers the spectrum of activities associated with the policy process related to agriculture and water in Egypt, from policy development to enactment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and the assessment of impacts.

The primary purpose of this midterm assessment of APRP was to assist program participants with planning of strategies and activities for the final thirty months of the program. The assessment team's approach was to work with the individual units, their collaborators, and their intended beneficiaries to jointly review progress to date in order to suggest possible adjustments to programs in the future. This assessment was as collaborative and participatory as schedules and resources would allow, to facilitate the usefulness of the activity, given that major structural changes had already been made to APRP in 1999 prior to agreement on the extension of the program to September 30, 2002. During the process of the assessment, the team has assisted in building consensus amongst stakeholders on APRP progress and future strategies.

The team placed greater emphasis on the activities of the five units which are expected to continue to the end of the program. Data collection was centered on the main stakeholders, using both formal questionnaire and informal rapid appraisal methods; more than two hundred stakeholders were interviewed, and more than one hundred documents reviewed. The team visited numerous field sites in Upper Egypt, the Nile Delta, Alexandria, and the Sinai.

Overall, the assessment of the historical record of APRP shows that the objectives of the program are being achieved in a timely fashion and with high levels of efficiency. The GOE is effectively removing remaining policy barriers to private enterprise through the activities of the APRP, in ways that not only result in policies being developed and implemented, but that also strengthen the process itself. There are clear indications that important improvements in the policy environment, such as the ability of the agriculture and water related ministries to work together, and the increased participation of the private sector in the policy process, have been achieved through the activities of APRP. The reasons for such exceptional success, despite a difficult operating environment, were found to include (i) flexibility in management by the

USAID EG/AP team, the TA contractors, and Egyptian counterparts; (ii) the high levels of technical and administrative competence of the main participants; and (iii) the commitment of high-level GOE managers to the intended reforms. In particular, the principal APRP managers successfully responded to constraints early in the program by redesigning the processes of stakeholder interaction, enabling more limited but realistic benchmarks to be developed and achieved.

Overall, the assessment finds that APRP is generally on track to consolidate its existing gains during the final thirty months of implementation. No further structural changes in the program are needed to effectively achieve program objectives as expressed through the benchmarks. Existing program infrastructure, especially the successful establishment of high levels of communications and confidence among the major participants, is expected to yield even larger gains in terms of policies developed and implemented, as well as in terms of strengthening the policy process itself. Regarding process, the assessment team feels that more attention should be placed by participants on activities that will further strengthen the Egyptian policy process itself, to increase sustainability following the termination of APRP. Regarding content, the assessment team feels that some additional effort to address more ambitious and broader policies is justified given the level of confidence the benchmark system now enjoys, and the need to prepare for possible future USAID/DSP and other donor investments in the agricultural policy arena.

Regarding the program's **management structures**, they have been very effective in meeting the program's objectives. Further, given the constraints USAID APRP staff, TA contractors, and GOE have faced, participants made excellent, coordinated, and strategic changes, such as replacing the task forces with the working groups, internal unit reorganizations, and reducing the number of APRP units from nine to five. Management has generally been excellent across the board in all TA units and at USAID. Given this productive framework, there appears little doubt that APRP will continue to achieve its objectives as defined by the benchmarks. The Program Planning Committee (PPC), particularly through the key role of the Program Director, Dr. Saad Nassar, has played a central role in enabling often sensitive policy issues to be adequately addressed through APRP. Linkages between Ministries, within Ministries, and with other projects and donors have been promoted and strengthened.

Regarding the **sustainability** of the policies and processes supported by the program, more has been accomplished than is generally recognized, despite the fact that sustainability was not an explicit objective of the program. New policies developed under the program are generally robust, with very limited levels of "backsliding". Many of the improvements made under APRP to the management of policy process itself are pervasive, and will no doubt greatly strengthen the ability of the major Egyptian stakeholders to undertake future reforms. Much of this capacity building is due to the overall excellent training achievements. Some of the training of local level staff, however, was overly academic. The current training plan needs to be updated and implemented more flexibly, and there has been insufficient follow-up to training events.

Regarding the **monitoring and evaluation** elements, these have served the needs of the program well, and present plans to increase the intensity of impact studies appears justified if all participants are to learn essential lessons from APRP. In particular, these impact studies will help focus attention on the generally unsung successes of the program, which have not been

sufficiently communicated to date. The quality of data collection and analyses in MALR has improved significantly due to the program.

The **policies** developed under APRP have been well-designed and appear to be readily implementable, according to experience to date. The APRP policy design and implementation procedures are increasingly being used as a model for policy development in other sectors. The APRP policy framework has been flexibly applied, and an excellent level of participation from the Ministries and others concerned has been achieved through careful consensus building.

The conclusions of the assessment for each of the nine units can be summarized as follows:

- ? The **Program Management Unit (PMU)** has provided the operational, administrative, and financial management support required to implement APRP, and has provided the necessary overall program facilitation role in linking with the APRP Project Director, the PPC, and USAID/Egypt's Agricultural Policy Division. The effective role played by the Program Coordinator has been particularly successful in ensuring that the APRP can work effectively at the highest levels of government.
- ? The **Monitoring, Verification & Evaluation Unit (MVE)** is successfully fulfilling its mandate of monitoring APRP activities, verifying benchmarks, and assessing program impacts in an effective and timely way. Through interaction with the other participants in the reform process, MVE has (i) precipitated a reduction in the number of benchmarks, (ii) established clearly defined and measurable indicators of progress, and (iii) improved MALR data quality. The unit has made excellent strategic decisions to (i) avoid complicated modeling from the outset, (ii) link effectively with IFPRI's work on baseline household survey and farm management data, and (iii) emphasize lessons learned via impact assessments and special studies (planned for the final thirty months of APRP).
- ? The **Reform Design and Implementation Unit (RDI)** has been central to the success of APRP, particularly regarding the leadership shown by the unit in creating consensus on a particular policy reform and then taking the essential steps toward implementation which can demonstrate impacts on the lives of beneficiaries. Early APRP efforts were able to consolidate previous gains in private trade in fertilizer. Privatization efforts have been successful in rice milling to the extent that the subsector is now dominated by private sector firms, and leasing arrangements developed for cotton textiles are currently being widely applied to other sectors. RDI's technical assistance on policy and procedural matters has been a key factor in the establishment and consolidation of private sector associations and councils, while its support for seed research, variety registration and property rights, and for the transfer of seed multiplication and marketing to the private sector, are major accomplishments of GOE through APRP. Other areas of success include trade analyses, the design and implementation of transportation policies affecting farm exports, and possible improvements made in cost of production and farm income data, and in data collection techniques. RDI's excellent collaboration with MALR, with other USAID projects, and with other donors such as GTZ, FAO and the World Bank, has greatly contributed to the effectiveness of the whole APRP program and to improving Egypt's long-range agricultural strategy.

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- ? The **Food Security Research (FSR)** activities, in collaboration with MOTS and MALR, provided a secure empirical basis for GOE decision-making in the areas of food subsidies, rural employment generation, and wheat market stabilization and liberalization. The institutional capacity of the collaborating Ministries to collect survey data has been greatly strengthened in the process. National dialogue on poverty issues has been significantly advanced by IFPRI's work. Nevertheless, FSR activity ceased to function as an independent TA component unit under APRP on October 21, 1999.
 - ? The **Water Policy Reform Assistance (EPIQ)** has been a key factor in the success of APRP by effectively assisting MWRI in identifying and carrying out a wide range of water-related policy reforms. The unit coordinated all activities and has worked very successfully with the MWRI Steering Committee, the Water Policy Advisory Unit (WPAU), and key Ministry officials. Coordination with USAID and WPAU has been particularly effective in identifying and achieving annual policy reform benchmarks, and Ministry decision-makers who are responsible for actually implementing policy reform measures have been included in all stages of the policy reform process. In addition, this unit has fostered excellent collaboration with MALR and other GOE agencies, other USAID projects, and related donor activities. With EPIQ assistance, significant reforms have been achieved in drainage water reuse, broadening water user participation at higher levels of the irrigation system, maximizing groundwater in horizontal expansion areas, water quality, and drainage reuse.
 - ? The **Water Policy Advisory Unit (WPAU)** is effective in initiating water policy processes related to the MWRI, and has achieved significant policy change. The MWRI now has, for the first time, a strong link with a unit that is capable of leading the water policy process. The leadership shown by the Head of WPAU has been particularly important in this success.
 - ? The **Water Education & Communication Unit (GreenCOM III)** has successfully strengthened the Water Communications Unit's (WCU) irrigation field staff with more effective communications skills, and has effectively guided the institutional development of the WCU. The GreenCOM/WCU program was closely linked with implementation of specific policies, and this was crucial for its overall success within the context of APRP. Working in close harmony with EPIQ and the WPAU, this unit assisted MWRI in tasks directed at increasing farmer participation in the policy process and in changing farmers' behavior. The work of this unit is central to improving the enabling environment for strengthening the policy process and for the achievement of broad-based policy reform in the water area. The potential impact of communications activities for the achievement of policy reform is much reduced following the termination of external assistance to this program. This activity ceased as a separate TA component under APRP as of October 28, 1999, when the technical assistance provided to the Ministry's Water Communications Unit under APRP ended.
 - ? The **Main Systems Management II (MSM)** activity successfully achieved its objective of assisting the Planning Sector of the MWRI to install a telemetry data system to manage water distribution. The new telemetry system has been fully installed and MWRI staff adequately

trained it its maintenance and operation. MSM was terminated as a separate activity providing technical assistance to the Ministry's Telemetry program as of November 4, 1999.

- ? The **Monitoring, Forecasting and Simulation (MFS)** activity is being successfully implemented and the technical assistance provided to MFS under APRP will end on June 30, 2000. MFS has already been institutionalized within MWRI, and MFS staff have been well-trained through effective technical assistance to take full responsibility for unit management and operation. This component operates the Ministry's Nile Forecast Center, which monitors Nile River flow above the High Aswan Dam.

The main recommendations of this midterm assessment are:

- ? Policy development and implementation work should continue as planned, although increased effort to further broaden the policy dialogue and the design of future policy is appropriate in the final period of APRP.
- ? More private sector participation on the PPC should be encouraged, through the addition of representatives of trade and farmer associations.
- ? Additional work on price policy and privatization in the cotton industry is needed through APRP or other donor activities such as the Development Support Program (DSP).
- ? Employment and gender should be crosscutting issues for more of APRP's work.
- ? MVE should increase its efforts in impact assessments and special studies so that the lessons learned are captured and future opportunities are identified. IFPRI's household survey should be repeated and extended.
- ? It may now be possible to intensify "big picture" studies and work on issues affecting agriculture and water that have been too controversial to cover as benchmarks in the past. Some examples could be the impact of changes in the exchange rate on agricultural trade, the comparative advantage of changes in cropping patterns, constraints to improving water quality, and cost sharing of water conveyance costs.
- ? The telemetry system structure could be divided into regional submanagement systems based on MWRI's formal institutionalized structure nationwide.
- ? Training programs in some areas such as the environment, and gender issues, should be designed as a collaborative effort bringing the staff of the main implementing Ministries together on joint activities.
- ? The constraints placed on APRP for its hiring of higher-cost but highly productive Egyptian staff should be reviewed.
- ? APRP should continue to encourage and stimulate interministerial cooperation for all activities.

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- ? Increased levels of daily working contact between the junior-level WPAU staff and EPIQ TA advisors on practical policy-related matters should be encouraged.
 - ? WPAU functions should be incorporated into MWRI by September 2001, to enable APRP to support the policy process in the Ministry itself.
 - ? For Tranche V, APRP should immediately try to integrate social sciences into its policy studies at the earliest stages.
 - ? Institute a policy within MWRI that all new APRP programs that have impact on water users, including the activities of directorate level and below irrigation engineer's activities, should be implemented with a water communications component, designed from the outset as an integral part of the package. This implies, and would further support, the need for external assistance to this unit.
 - ? Encourage, plan, and implement communications tasks jointly carried out by appropriate MALR and MWRI units.
 - ? Some funding should be reserved, without being earmarked for particular studies, for use in studying reform issues that come up between now and the end of APRP.
 - ? Although the APRP approach is well-documented in terms of individual studies of policies that it has assisted in changing, a more general study of the approach to policy design and implementation used by TA and national staff might be worthwhile in order to leave behind lessons for future reform programs in agriculture and in other areas.

The APRP program has been extraordinarily successful to date, although with somewhat greater emphasis on policy development and implementation for specific commodities than originally envisaged. APRP should now extend its policy reform programs to broader, possibly systemic initiatives, at the same time limiting the various foci on more specific policy areas. In particular, can overarching broader policy objectives be incorporated into the benchmarks, given the APRP's formidable policy process infrastructure and its success with generally more circumscribed policies to date?

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APRP	Agricultural Policy Reform Program
DSP	Development Support Program
DT2	Development Training 2 Project
EG/AP	Agricultural Policy Division of the USAID Economic Growth unit
EPIQ	Water Policy Reform Assistance
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FSR	Food Security Research
GOE	Government of Egypt
GreenCOM III	Water Education & Communication Unit
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IIE	Institute of International Education
MALR	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
MFS	Monitoring, Forecasting and Simulation
MIC	Ministry of International Cooperation
MoTS	Ministry of Trade and Supply (see MSHT)
MOU	Memoranda of Understanding
MPE	Ministry of Public Enterprises
MPWWR	Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (see MWRI)
MSHT	Ministry of Supply and Home Trade
MSM	Main Systems Management II
MVE	Monitoring, Verification & Evaluation Unit
MWRI	Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation
PACD	Project Assistance Completion Date
PMU	Program Management Unit
PPC	Program Planning Committee
RDI	Reform Design and Implementation Unit
TA	Technical Assistance
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WCU	Water Communications Unit
WPAU	Water Policy Advisory Unit

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

In support of Egypt’s continuing economic reform efforts, the Government of Egypt (GOE) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) are currently implementing the Agricultural Policy Reform Program (APRP). The program consists of two main contractual elements: the Agricultural Sector Program Assistance element (263-K-631) and the Technical Assistance for Agricultural Policy Reform element (263-0219). Cash disbursements are made to GOE as sector program assistance based upon completion of policy reform benchmarks. The program also provides technical assistance to GOE to assist with policy reforms. Until recently, APRP operated through nine separate TA components, often referred to as units. Four units were officed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR), with five being collocated with the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (MPWWR) — now renamed the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation (MWRI). Other Ministries closely involved in the implementation of the APRP include the Ministry of Trade and Supply (MoTS) — now renamed as the Ministry of Supply and Home Trade (MSHT), the Ministry of Public Enterprises (MPE), and the Ministry of International Cooperation (MIC). Currently, however, APRP technical assistance has been reduced to five units.

The nine activities (“units”) can be briefly described as follows:

- ? **Program Management Unit (PMU):** (i) provides the overall coordination and technical services to ensure synergy among all APRP units; and (ii) provides key operational, administrative, and financial management support required to implement APRP. This unit is the main link with the Program Planning Committee (PPC), which oversees APRP activities,

with the APRP Project Director, Dr. Saad Nassar, and with USAID/Egypt's Agricultural Policy Division.

- ? **Monitoring, Verification & Evaluation Unit (MVE):** (i) monitors and verifies GOE performance in meeting the policy benchmarks agreed to in the annual Memoranda of Understanding (MOU), (ii) provides input to the formulation of policy benchmarks and to the development and implementation of local currency funded projects, and (iii) provides policy impact assessments and studies.

- ? **Reform, Design and Implementation Unit (RDI):** (i) provides guidance on removing remaining barriers to private enterprise development in agriculture; (ii) takes the lead in policy benchmark formulation and the development of local currency funded projects, including ex ante impact assessments; (iii) makes recommendations regarding the use of the local currency generated from the sales of U.S. source/origin commodities; and (iv) collaborates with the MVE unit to develop verifiable policy benchmarks and indicators to monitor APRP reform activities.

- ? **Food Security Research (FSR):** (i) determines the possible impacts ongoing reforms may have on the food security of Egyptians, with a particular focus on impacts among the poorer segments of society, (ii) identifies alternatives for a more cost-effective social safety net, (iii) assists with the design of a more cost-effective system of food subsidies, (iv) makes recommendations for pilot testing food subsidy system(s), (v) generates indicators for

tracking food insecurity during the course of economic adjustment, and (vi) was responsible for the household expenditure and income survey.

- ? **Water Policy Reform Assistance (EPIQ):** assists MWRI (i) identify, plan, and carry out water-related policy reforms; and (ii) identify and achieve annual policy reform benchmarks, working closely with the MPWWR Steering Committee, Water Policy Advisory Unit (WPAU), and other key ministry officials.

- ? **Water Policy Advisory Unit (WPAU):** as the GOE counterpart to EPIQ and decision support unit for the Minister's office, it assists MWRI to (i) identify and carry out water-related policy reforms; and (ii) identify and achieve annual policy reform benchmarks, interceding with the Minister's office and the MWRI Steering Committee on behalf of all USAID-sponsored APRP activities.

- ? **Water Education & Communication Activity:** assists MWRI's Water Communications Unit (WCU) to (i) improve MWRI skills in organizing and communicating with water users, (ii) increase farmer participation in policy development and implementation, and (iii) change farmers' behavior toward water resources and management.

- ? **Main Systems Management II (MSM):** assists the Planning Sector of MWRI to (i) install a telemetry data system to manage water distribution, and (ii) improve the efficiency of telemetry system operation and maintenance.

? **Monitoring, Forecasting and Simulation (MFS):** assists MWRI in establishing a monitoring, forecasting, and simulation program for hydrologic and meteorological conditions in the upper Nile basin. It is commonly called the Nile Forecast Center.

APRP is scheduled to end in September 2002, so the primary purpose of this midterm assessment was to assist program participants with planning of strategies and activities for the final thirty months of the program.

The assessment team consisted of three U.S. and four Egyptian consultants, as follows: Tom Cusack, Team Leader; Jeff Dorsey, Senior Institutional Management Specialist; Mahmoud Hussein Kamel, Agricultural Organizations Specialist; Mohamed Zakaria Abdel Khalik, Agricultural Economist and Gender Specialist; Salah M. Abdel Razek, Capacity Building Expert; Atef Abdel Halim Salaam, Training Specialist; and Seth Schick, Resource Economist. Jeff Dorsey was provided by Cargill Technical Services, all the others were ARD employees.

Following initial discussions, the team developed a work plan, based on the original Statement of Work (Annex 1). The objectives of the assessment were to assist stakeholders in

- ? assessing management structures, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, and policy reform aspects of the program; and
- ? developing recommendations for future program implementation.

Emphasis was placed on the five units that are expected to continue until the PACD: RDI, EPIQ, MVE, WPAU, and PMU. For each unit, progress towards declared objectives was reviewed,

including the identification of those factors important in assisting or constraining progress. This was followed by the development of recommendations. During the process of the assessment, the team has assisted in building consensus amongst stakeholders on APRP progress and future strategies.

Data collection activities were centered on the main stakeholders: MALR, MWRI, MPE, MoTS (now MSHT), USAID staff, TA Contractors, GOE officials, and the private sector. More than one hundred persons were interviewed (Annex 2), many more than once, and more than one hundred documents were reviewed (Annex 3). The team visited field sites in Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt and the Sinai, as well as numerous stakeholders in and close to Cairo. During the last weeks of the assessment, the team shared emerging results with stakeholders via meetings and draft documents in order to obtain additional feedback and consensus before finalizing the assessment report.

The remainder of this report analyses the context of APRP (Chapter 2), and presents the study's findings and conclusions (Chapter 3), and recommendations (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER 2. APRP AND ITS CONTEXT

The continuing Egyptian policy process of developing agricultural policy through the appropriate Ministries in collaboration with stakeholders, enacting legislation to provide a secure basis for implementation, implementing enacted policies, and monitoring policy impacts, has been paralleled in APRP by a set of structures which are related to but for the most part not an integral part of the mainstream Egyptian policy process.

APRP has created a Ministerial-level committee, which seldom meets, and a more formal Program Planning Committee to oversee policy development at the highest levels, as well as Task Forces to provide the principal focus for policy development in specific identified areas of concern. In addition, APRP has also created six “units” (PMU, EPIQ, WPAU, MVE, RDI, and FSR) which do not operate as integral parts of the existing policy infrastructure, although they have close links with the infrastructure. These units work primarily with hired APRP local personnel. The three other APRP units (MFS, MSM, and GreenCOM III), which were in existence prior to project start-up, have operated directly through existing structures, and work principally through existing Ministry personnel. The functions of each of the APRP units are described in Chapter 1. Essentially, the APRP policy formulation and implementation activities are led by RDI/PMU for agriculture and related Ministries and by EPIQ/WPAU for the water and related Ministries. MVE and FSR concentrate on monitoring of implementation and impact, and other studies which may support the basis for policy development. MSM, MFS and GreenCOM III are in the implementation area of the policy process, although they potentially, in common with other Ministry units, could impact policy formulation activities.

An important feature of APRP is its cash disbursement system, where USAID provides cash payments directly to GOE upon achievement of policy benchmarks, which are agreed upon and verified on a tranche basis. In order to develop, agree, and implement specific benchmarks, the stakeholders concerned have created "working groups". RDI and EPIQ/WPAU take the lead for developing and enacting benchmarks, which are annual indicators of achievement of agreed-upon policy reform measures related to agricultural and water resources policy, with MVE providing an assessment of the level of achievement at the end of the implementation period (usually one year).

Thus, APRP was designed as a parallel structure, which would be able to generate the necessary policies by energizing important elements of the existing structure, without becoming internal players in the system. The main requirement here was for APRP staff to have productive relations with a relatively few well-placed decision-makers, so policy could be formulated and agreed upon more effectively, largely outside of the Ministry structures.

This parallel process seems to have worked well, if measured according to the agreed benchmarks. Benchmarks were generally achieved, and good progress was made in implementing policy activities. The basis for this achievement was excellent management of the process by the TA contractors and by USAID; only benchmarks that had been carefully negotiated with senior management were selected, and these were perceived as having a high chance of success. In particular, the ability of APRP and USAID personnel to liaise directly with high-ranking personnel was crucial to this success; in this regard, key influential Egyptian staff was selected to lead the APRP/GOE linkage process. If the agreed benchmarks are taken as the

objectives, then the APRP can be said to have been a great success to date. Many policy reforms were developed and implemented, and the verification process undertaken was effective in demonstrating the level of achievement that then provided the basis for cash disbursement. In addition, the agriculture and water Ministries have shown that they can work together on specific tasks, and the benchmark process is well-established and functional, providing a base of experience on which to build for the future.

If the original intent of APRP — to develop and enact broad policies related to water and agriculture — is the criterion of success, however, then APRP has possibly been less successful. Benchmarks have represented relatively minor changes, compared to the ambitious program envisaged by the original APRP Project Paper.

Nevertheless, the team feels that the strategy chosen by the USAID and TA teams, of ensuring a stream of outputs at a relatively modest level, was a good choice, given the constraints to attempting to implement a more ambitious program. Thus, it appears that USAID, the TA teams and GOE have implemented the program using a coordinated, practical, and balanced approach.

The constraints that have pressured the program into more mini-step policy development and policy implementation activities included:

? A difficult enabling environment for the policy process, due to a general lack of transparency, excessive departmentalism within GOE, undeveloped information systems,

limited vehicles for creating public awareness, and a lack of collaborative and participatory approaches.

- ? The policy process itself is a relatively new phenomenon, especially in water-related matters, so there was a need to bolster and extend the existing policy process infrastructure.
- ? The USAID results package ensures that short-term (usually annual) and low-risk activities are preferred over long-term and high-risk ventures. This is because results must be measurable and attainable, if further funds are to be assured. The constant competition for funds at USAID, typically under a decreasing overall funding and staffing plan, is intense, and a lack of achievement of benchmarks of result indicators can expose a whole program to immediate cutbacks. USAID staff members are therefore encouraged to pursue the sure and short, rather than the potentially higher payoff activities, especially in the case of agricultural policy that is normally risky and long-term. It would appear to be difficult for USAID to effectively use its current tools to implement such a policy program.
- ? The TA contractors are in a similar position to USAID, but even more sensitive, as they will be the first affected if agreed results are not being achieved.
- ? GOE learned early in the APRP policy process that cash disbursements were available only upon annual results achievements, and so, to the extent that GOE participation in the process is itself evaluated on the basis of success in attracting all available funds, GOE participants would have an incentive to design relatively unambitious and secure benchmarks. This was reinforced by the early perception through the PPC that undisbursed tranche funds may be lost to the program in future years.

Another element of “balance” in the program is in the level of strengthening of the Egyptian policy process. APRP was not conceived as a capacity-building project, although substantial training funds were made available and used, and considerable capacity building has been achieved. Again, the USAID need for measurable indicators of progress, the long-term nature of institutional strengthening, and recent strategic moves by USAID away from capacity building, have ensured that APRP outputs are actual policies and related implementation activities, rather than increases in the Egyptian system’s ability to develop and implement policies in the future. Consequently, APRP will leave relatively little institutional capacity when it ends, unless the activities of the final 30 months of APRP are more closely linked to institutionalization. One example of a possible development in this regard, is the strategy WPAU; should an attempt be made to institutionalize it while APRP is still able to support his transition, or should it drive through more policies while it is still functional? This is a matter of judgement by the participants, and the relative importance they place on potential long-term process benefits, compared to short-term policy enactment benefits.

APRP was originally conceived of as an agricultural program; only at the last moment were the water units added, given the need for a financial home for these programs in the absence of a separate water program at USAID. Although the implementation of the APRP water and agriculture programs has remained largely separate, one of the most striking features of the program is the way it has enhanced communication and coordination between the agriculture and water Ministries, with interministerial networking productively supported through APRP funds.

APRP was significantly changed during 1999, with only five of the nine original units, PMU, EPIQ, WPAU, RDI, and MVE extended up to the new program completion date of September 30, 2002. Given the reductions in program funding, this was an appropriate restructuring of the program, which will assist in focusing the overall APRP effort on the main targeted areas of policy.

CHAPTER 3. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The assessment team has discussed details of the findings and conclusions with APRP units and their clients, and detailed background notes have been prepared and shared with the units concerned. This chapter summarizes the main findings and conclusions discussed.

3.1 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

From a thorough review of documentation, numerous interviews with key players, and participation in/observation of management processes during the assessment period, the team finds that the overall management, organization, focus, and implementation progress to date has been appropriate, coordinated, and is functioning to achieve project objectives of removing remaining policy barriers to private enterprise in the agriculture and water sectors through the benchmark system. APRP is therefore making significant contributions to creating a liberal, competitive marketing system, and to stimulating sustainable agricultural growth.

The TA teams and their home offices have provided excellent intellectual leadership and implementation support. In the rare case where TA was not performing, then quality replacements were quickly found, with virtually no disruption to the program.

The level and quality of USAID support from EG/AP has been excellent. APRP is supported by a technically and administratively competent team, which works collaboratively with the other main stakeholders and has effectively negotiated necessary changes in APRP management structure, to take account of significant constraints both within and outside of USAID.

The team has observed that coordination and integration between APRP and other USAID projects and other donors who have responsibility for policy reform has been most productive and generally timely. This has particularly been the case with the related USAID privatization and export related projects.

The TA contractors and USAID have effectively planned and managed their consultants to ensure that they are being properly and effectively utilized by the main participants.

The PPC, the MPWWR Steering Committee, and numerous informal links between key individuals have performed well in terms of ensuring consensus on proposed policy benchmarks is reached at the highest levels. The leadership and facilitation roles of the APRP Director, the APRP Coordinator, the Directors/Chiefs-of-Party of RDI, WPAU, and EPIQ, and USAID EG/AP staff has been particularly effective. Just as crucial has been the — often courageous — commitment to reform demonstrated by the key APRP collaborators of GOE. Strong and crucial linkages have thus been developed to senior decision-makers within participating ministries.

The PPC has been effective within the context of agreeing upon benchmarks and overseeing the management processes of APRP itself. It has not generally been able to effect broad policy dialogue through the Task Forces, however, and the participation of the private sector has been weak. Private sector membership is too small and could be strengthened by appointment of active participants who have a strong private sector agenda to bring to the table.

APRP participants have ensured that management structures have changed in response to operating constraints. The Task Forces were abandoned in favor of working groups, which were much more effective in focusing effort on the benchmarks. Overall, the program's policy and decision-making processes have been strengthened. Strengthening of the overall Egyptian policy process has been more limited, due to the parallel rather than integrated nature of the APRP's management structures, the lack of participation of the private sector at the Task Force/PPC level, and the lack of APRP Interministerial Committee meetings.

Specific findings and conclusions included:

- ? Program and administrative leadership is strong across all APRP units, USAID, and the key GOE participants. The quality of work of both long-term and short-term consultants is high.
- ? Through interaction with the other participants in the reform process, MVE has encouraged the reduction in the number of benchmarks, has established clearly defined and measurable indicators of progress, and is improving MALR data quality.
- ? MVE's decision to avoid complex modeling from the outset released resources for more valuable and focused activities.
- ? RDI has developed strong linkages with decision-makers both within participating ministries and in the ever larger number of ministries that have been brought in to solve policy or procedural issues relevant to their ministry. In conjunction with EPIQ, RDI's work in some water and fisheries areas has had the effect of improving communication within MALR and MWRI.

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- ? RDI's technical assistance on policy and procedural matters has been a key factor in the establishment and consolidation of private sector associations and councils.
 - ? Support on transportation policies affecting farm exports, seed research, variety registration, property rights, and transfer of seed multiplication and marketing to the private sector, are major accomplishments of RDI.
 - ? Although privatization is a major issue in policy reform, very limited TA human resources are allocated to implement such activities. No specific counterpart assigned to this activity exists within MPE and this deficiency should be corrected. There is also a need for better coordination with privatization efforts of MPE, which is working at present with another USAID-funded project. Absence of the appropriate counterpart at MPE limits APRP's ability to achieve objectives in accomplishing privatization benchmarks. This conclusion, however, must be viewed within the current context of refocusing APRP away from privatization.
 - ? An example of the effectiveness of informal groupings of key players within the more formal APRP management structure is that of USAID coordinating at regular intervals with the EPIQ Chief-of-Party and the Head of WPAU. This close working relationship has helped to guide the development of water-related policy reform within the scope of APRP.

3.2 SUSTAINABILITY

From a thorough review of APRP training plans and other documentation, numerous interviews with key players (including a formal survey of 140 participant trainees), and participation in/observation of program activities during the assessment period, the team finds that the technical assistance contractors, with careful USAID guidance, have effectively designed and implemented policy reform design, implementation, monitoring, verification, and evaluation of

reforms, training, and program support services to enhance MALR, MWRI, MSHT, and other participating ministries' involvement and decision-making processes. The level of participation by PPC members and GOE officials has been sufficient to help sustain future programs in the context of APRP activities. These processes have been very successful according to APRP objectives, which did not explicitly call for sustainability, except in the case of “back sliding” on policies already enacted. The team finds that the extent of “back sliding” has been minimal, given the fluctuating world market conditions and domestic short-term protection pressures.

The prospects for institutionalizing a formalized policy reform planning process within the participating ministries have thus been much improved through APRP actions. This has not been a major pursuit of the program to date, however, and would need considerably more attention in the months ahead if significant progress is to be made. In particular, APRP continues as a parallel, rather than as an integrated operation. Given that policy reform process is new to MWRI and the fact that a water policy unit has been established within the Ministry under APRP, this would seem an excellent opportunity for that unit (WPAU) to become a formal part of MWRI structure and budget, instead of existing only by ministerial decree, as at present.

APRP's professional training programs (in-service and participant) have been timely and relevant, with the needs and constraints of beneficiary groups, including women, being addressed to the extent practically possible. APRP training plans have been clearly based on institutional needs, satisfying program goals and objectives and the requirements of ADS 253 and related Mission Orders. Current training plans would be more applicable if they were updated, however,

with increased participation of the implementing units such as RDI and EPIQ/WPAU in all training aspects.

Specific findings and conclusions included:

- ? The impact of training is clearly shown to have improved the standard of preparation and publication of quality studies and reports, and the quality of questionnaires and data analysis.
- ? The needs and constraints of specific targeted beneficiary groups such as women have been studied, mainly through RDI, while MVE has monitored progress on how policies might affect such groups.
- ? The privatization and leasing arrangements developed specifically to get around privatization roadblocks in the textile industry are also being successfully applied in other sectors.
- ? Although capacity building is not addressed in the TA contract, it has been achieved as an effect of the units' activities. For example, MVE's need for high-quality data fueled its joint efforts with MALR to develop practices improving data quality, which have since been adopted by MALR. The TA team provides the ministries with diagnosis, recommendations, and required training on an ongoing basis to improve data collection and handling methods. Furthermore, forecasting models for crops such as wheat and cotton help the ministry staff provide estimates for principal crops. The operations of all APRP TA units appear to have a similar impact.
- ? The training plan for MALR was originally designed to be implemented over three years. Due to Development Training 2 (DT2) procedures and contractual arrangements, implementation occurred over the short span of one year. This situation led to an *ad hoc*

selection of trainees. Some of those selected were over-trained, with some individual staff members attended five training sessions with an average of 17 days each.

- ? There is a need to update the training need assessments for the participating GOE implementing agencies, given the dynamic nature of APRP since its inception in 1996. Although training needs have been well catered for through RDI and DT2 training plans to date, the needs of the next 30 months are almost certainly not well reflected in the original training plans
- ? The results of the assessment team's survey of participant trainees in MoTS (now MSHT), MALR, MWRI, and MPE showed that almost all training plan objectives were achieved. Participants were satisfied with the quality and content of the instruction, with high levels of subsequent use of the new skills in their workplace being reported. The participants felt that there should be more attention to practical rather than academic instruction, and that it should be more tailored to the Egyptian environment. Less than 50 percent felt that their employment/promotion prospects had increased as a result of the training.
- ? The proportion of women in training programs was generally equal to their proportion in the targeted workforce, but many programs included a much higher proportion of women.
- ? The post-training follow-up for trainees by APRP and DT2 units was inadequate, particularly regarding post-training evaluation of impact, and a lack of further communication with trainees regarding APRP news.
- ? In many programs, participants felt that the degree of homogeneity among participants was inadequate.

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- ? There is currently a high level of sustainability of WCU as a unit, partly due to the crucial and effective technical assistance provided by APRP to specific policy implementation activities.
 - ? The new telemetry system has been fully installed and MWRI staff has been adequately trained in its maintenance and operation. MSM, although it was a post-design attachment to APRP, could have benefited from closer interaction with APRP. The APRP Steering Committee and others may have been able to suggest policy reform or even new policies to correct the problems that now exist in utilizing the new telemetry system.
 - ? The management of MSM has not yet made the transition from the traditional delivery system using anticipated cropping patterns and using water levels at the various control locations on each Directorate irrigation system. The MSM manager may, however, be able to begin volumetric control in limited areas after the pilot experience called for in Tranche IV.
 - ? MFS has been institutionalized and is functioning effectively within MWRI. Although the unit could benefit from further short-term technical assistance and training, MFS staff has already been well-trained to take full responsibility for unit operation and management.
 - ? WPAU and EPIQ have been effective in initiating water policy processes related to MWRI, and have achieved significant policy change.
 - ? Three of the five units in MWRI were attached to APRP mainly as a convenience for funding of preexisting USAID projects. USAID financial support has now ended for MSM and WCU, and financial support for MFS will end in mid-2000. The three units that have or will have finished USAID financial support have been institutionalized into MWRI and will have direct funding from the Ministry. APRP's remaining two units in the MWRI, EPIQ and

WPAU, will continue to be funded until the latter part of 2002. Funding for the APRP units in MWRI was adequate for the work planned and accomplished.

3.3 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

From a thorough review of the units' terms of reference, monitoring and evaluation reports, and other documentation, numerous interviews with key players, and participation in/observation of monitoring and evaluation activities during the assessment period, the team finds that the program's monitoring and information systems produced sufficiently quantitative, accurate, relevant, and timely data to satisfy the information needs of all major stakeholders. APRP decision-makers have been adequately informed on possible impacts (to the extent possible at this stage) and on implementation progress. The project's impact on farmers, agricultural investment, and overall increases in agricultural productivity and farm incomes are being documented by the units concerned, although more effort could usefully be applied to extending the effective series of "success stories" being documented by RDI and EPIQ/WPAU.

The annual disbursement system has certainly lubricated the APRP policy process, and this is where the PPC has been particularly effective. The short-term nature of the benchmark/tranche cycle, and the potential penalties incurred by participants if benchmarks are not met, however, have constrained the scope of the process. In addition, the disbursements themselves have not generally been closely tied into supporting the Egyptian policy process, partly because disbursements are slow to appear at Ministry and Department levels, and there is no serious follow-up by the PPC or other main participants regarding direct use of the funds for policy development or implementation. Although the disbursement system has provided an effective engine to drive the APRP policy process (and this has possibly helped increase the efficiency of

the participating ministries), disbursements have not specifically offset the costs of implementing reforms or directly contributed to increases in efficiency of the policy process. The conditionality of disbursement, in itself, has provided incentives to keep the system rigorous, although it is less clear if it is the major incentive for implementing policy reform.

Specific findings and conclusions included:

- ? MVE will use the baseline household survey originally carried out by IFPRI and farm management data to assess the impact of policy reforms on overall employment and on other parameters.

- ? Having monitoring and verification procedures well in hand, MVE is appropriately planning to concentrate its future efforts on impact assessments and special studies, providing lessons learned and guidance for future work in agricultural policy reform.

3.4 POLICY REFORM

From its extensive interviews with all major stakeholder/beneficiary groups in APRP and Egyptian policy processes during the assessment period, and its thorough review of documentation, the team finds that the overall design, operation, and impacts of the policy reform element have been appropriate. The process of identifying policy objectives and benchmarks, and of verifying progress, has not only been very satisfactory but will continue to serve as a model for use in other sectors in Egypt and elsewhere.

The policy reform element has been well managed. The nature and levels of resources devoted to monitoring already agreed-upon actions and designing future reforms have been appropriate. Past negotiations and project monitoring have resulted in adequate initial commitment and follow-up action by the key decision-makers, within the context of the benchmarks.

Although it would have been more productive if the PPC and the four key participating ministries had taken a stronger and more leading role in the preliminary analysis and design of future policy reforms, the levels of participation to date have been optimal given the constraints under which the principal stakeholders were working. The APRP Policy Framework has been appropriate as a general guide to benchmark development, continues to be used flexibly to meet changing conditions, and has generally been used by and shared with key players.

The team finds that the expected nature and distribution of socioeconomic, political, and institutional impacts of proposed reforms have generally been analyzed ex-ante, although there is much more that could be done, and that the results have been used effectively to promote specific policy changes.

The major impacts of policy reform are long-term and are difficult to assess in terms of measurement and in terms of attribution to a specific policy or program. APRP will continue to address this question, despite its resource limitations. Future APRP studies are likely to show that the intended impacts on farmers and others will be achieved, although the true effects of specific policy reforms on beneficiaries, and the effects of APRP's strengthening of the Egyptian policy process, will be felt only long after the program's completion date.

Specific findings and conclusions included:

- ? Once additional Ministries become partners in the APRP policy process, they should be rewarded by sharing in the tranche payments.
- ? There have been major accomplishments in agricultural policy reform as a result of the work of APRP. Many of these have been due in large measure to APRP's approach of creating consensus on a particular policy reform and then taking the essential steps toward implementation which make broad policies into realities improving the lives of individual stakeholders.
- ? Privatization efforts have been so successful in rice milling that the subsector is now dominated by private sector firms.
- ? Fisheries and aquaculture work should be pursued, as high potential payoff exists.
- ? RDI should reconsider its approach to water issues, especially to the "mismatch" issue, and should forge even stronger linkages with EPIQ/WPAU through formal or informal APRP channels. Gated-pipe technology appears too narrow a solution; perhaps a more general water-saving policy is needed. Credit aspects to support water-saving technologies also need to be followed up to make implementation on a grand scale possible.
- ? Possible lucrative areas for future emphasis include the fisheries and aquaculture field, tying in with a water-quality benchmark for the northern lakes and perhaps another tackling issues of first use of water.
- ? Impact assessments and special studies are particularly necessary before the end of APRP to widely transmit the lessons learned, and to enhance the chance for replicating the actions in

other sectors and extending them further in agriculture. Given a possible trade-off between more such studies and more implementation, it would appear that studies would be more productive in terms of impact on future policy.

- ? APRP has analyzed many of the distributional impacts of proposed reforms and these studies have been effective in promoting adoption of proposed reforms. These studies should be more extensively diffused at local level, within interested ministries, and among private sector stakeholders.

CHAPTER 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The assessment team has discussed details of potential recommendations with APRP units and their clients, and detailed background notes have been prepared and shared with the units concerned. This chapter summarizes the main recommendations discussed. Recommendations are directed towards USAID, the APRP units, GOE, and other stakeholders.

The current policy development, implementation, and evaluation efforts should continue with relatively minor changes, given the excellent process infrastructure already established, and the excellent outputs in terms of design and implementation of policies which have already been achieved. Previous APRP successes provide a secure basis for expecting even greater productivity in the future from existing programs.

The APRP should emphasize elements of sustainability, and of more ambitious policy reforms, more than has been the case to date. Increased sustainability will help ensure that APRP's gains in terms of process and policies will endure to provide the intended impact, most of which will be felt long after APRP ends. Broader policy reforms are now more feasible as a result of the program's success to date, and would considerably increase the program's impact in the long term, providing a more pervasive improved enabling environment.

More emphasis should be placed on the following areas of the existing program, where the work of design and implementation needs to be accelerated prior to program termination: price policy and privatization in the cotton industry, employment and gender as crosscutting issues, trade

issues, horticulture, costs of production and farm income data, transportation issues, taxation of export commodities, land registration, and fisheries and aquaculture development.

MVE should carry out more extensive impact assessments and special studies in the remaining months of the program, to provide the necessary guidance to future policy activities which the rich harvest of the APRP program can provide. In this context, IFPRI's household survey should be repeated. Other studies should include the new lands, horticulture, and employment. Additional staff economists in the areas of resource/production economics and water are probably necessary in MVE, if this unit is to perform to its potential.

WPAU functions should be incorporated into MWRI by September 2001, to enable APRP to support the policy process in the Ministry itself. Increased levels of daily working contact between the junior-level WPAU staff and EPIQ TA advisors on practical policy-related matters should be encouraged. For Tranche V, the unit should make a particular effort to integrate social sciences into its policy studies, particularly at the earliest stages.

Management of the MSM telemetry system should be strengthened by dividing it into regional subsystems, and through further outside assistance to effectively bring volumetric delivery into operation, and to integrate the new system into MWRI management.

The MFS should become more closely associated with the telemetry operation of the Irrigation Sector in MWRI, to facilitate the use of MFS information for improving the efficiency of reservoir and downstream system management.

APRP could initiate a policy that would encourage greater openness and transparency between units and collaborating ministries by, for example, initiating a policy that would not allow deployment of improvement programs without a WCU component. As an illustration of this, WCU could implement joint communications tasks with the MALR communications unit for specific policy implementation campaigns (e.g., night watering). This would extend the present inter-ministerial cooperation to the main bodies of staff, which has been slow to develop from the initiative relatively recently provided by top management.

All policy reform measures implemented through APRP should be examined for their public awareness needs, and public awareness programs should be implemented wherever feasible. For example, there should be a policy within MWRI that all new programs that have impact on water users, including the activities of directorate level and below irrigation engineer's activities, should be implemented with a water communications public awareness/education component, designed from the outset as an integral part of the package.

The constraints placed on APRP for its hiring of higher-cost but highly productive Egyptian staff should be reviewed.

APRP should further divest itself of specific implementation activities which need to be taken up by implementing development agencies, sooner rather than later given the short period of time remaining on APRP. This divestiture could be both rapid and effective in some cases due to the excellent implementation-level linkages built up by APRP with partners such as GTZ.

Candidates for divestiture could include privatization of pest management service in cotton, and the promotion of gated-pipe technology for water conservation.

APRP needs to find the means to broadly address important but highly controversial issues of importance to agricultural policy reform that the most senior GOE officials feel need to be addressed. For example, internationally known economists or other policy experts could facilitate the analysis of specific issues without compromising either the government or USAID with their views.

APRP should make arrangements to undertake “big picture” studies, and to work on issues effecting agriculture but which are too controversial to cover as benchmarks. Some examples could be the impact of changes in the exchange rate on agricultural trade, the comparative advantage of changes in cropping patterns, constraints to improving water quality, and cost sharing of water conveyance costs.

Some unearmarked funding should be reserved for use by RDI, MVE, and EPIQ/WPAU in studying broad reform issues that may arise within the next two years.

The work of the PPC could be enhanced by adding several additional private sector representatives who are able to make an effective contribution (e.g., private sector businessmen with direct interests in APRP activities, preferably chairpersons of private-sector agribusiness associations).

Both RDI and EPIQ/WPAU should apply more resources to the networking/consensus-building “training” activities between key stakeholders (which have proved so effective), and to orient these towards broader policy issues.

There should be increased participation of RDI and EPIQ/WPAU, and especially of MALR and MWRI, in the design and implementation of training programs undertaken by IIE, to strengthen targeting and evaluation of the programs.

Training priorities should include developing economics/policy and business management skills of those key Ministry and private sector players who are most likely to sustain their reform efforts in the long term.

Training programs in some areas such as gender issues should be designed as a collaborative effort bringing the staff of the main implementing Ministries together on joint activities.

The excellent approaches to the policy process undertaken by RDI and EPIQ/WPAU are well documented in terms of individual studies of the policies which they have assisted in changing, but a more general documentation and study of these approaches would be useful to current and future participants, as well as to the planning of similar endeavors elsewhere and in other sectors.

ANNEX 1

AGRICULTURAL POLICY REFORM PROGRAM
(263-K-631 & 263-0219)
MIDTERM ASSESSMENT
Statement of Work

The Contractor shall be responsible for conducting a midterm assessment of Agricultural Policy Reform Program (APRP). The contractor shall provide all resources except for logistics, which shall be provided by the APRP/PMU.

A. ACTIVITY TO BE ASSESSED

Program Title: Agricultural Policy Reform Program,
Technical Assistance for APR (263-0219)
Policy Reform ProAg (263-K-631)

PACD: 9/30/2002

Period to Be Assessed: Project Authorization - September 1999

Program Goal and Purpose: The *goal* of the Agricultural Policy Reform Program (APRP) is to increase production, productivity and incomes in the agricultural sector including agribusiness. The *purpose* of APRP is to remove remaining policy barriers to private enterprise in agriculture, thereby creating a liberal, competitive marketing system, and stimulating sustainable agricultural growth. The APRP is a four-year grant program (1996-2000) with a budget of \$245 million for cash disbursement as Sector Program Assistance to participating GOE entities. The program is designed to achieve policy reform in the following five key areas:

- (1) prices, markets and trade;
- (2) private investment and privatization in agribusiness;
- (3) agricultural land and water resource investment utilization and sustainability;
- (4) agricultural sector support services; and
- (5) food security and poverty alleviation.

Annual cash disbursements are made to the GOE upon completion of policy reform benchmarks, as established and agreed to through annual memoranda of understanding signed by both the GOE and USAID/Egypt. Policy Reform measures contribute directly to the Mission's Strategic Objective 1, "Private Sector-Led, Export-Oriented Economic Growth".

USAID is also assisting the GOE to make needed policy changes with a \$50 million grant for the Technical Assistance for Agricultural Policy Reform Project. This project provides assistance through nine separate projectized activities, four of which are officed in the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation (MALR). The remaining five activities are co-located with the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (MPWWR). There are other ministries



involved in the implementation of the APRP such as Ministry of Trade and Supply (MoTS), Ministry of Public Enterprises (MPE), and Ministry of International Cooperation (MIC). The nine activities, also referred to as units, are described below, in Annex 1.

B. PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The primary purpose of the assessment is to review the progress made in the program assistance and the technical assistance elements of APRP since project authorization to assess performance of management structures, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation, and policy reform elements of the program. In addition, the assessment will include a review to determine whether any redirection is required for APRP. The assessment is intended to be useful to MALR, MPWWR, MPE, MoTS, USAID staff, TA Contractors, and GOE officials.

The assessment will draw upon interviews, site visits, and analysis of information collected by existing project monitoring, evaluation and survey systems.

C. BACKGROUND AND APRP STRUCTURE

APRP is an important element in USAID's support to economic reform in Egypt. The program began in FY 1995 as an amplification and follow-on to the successful Agricultural Production and Credit Project (APCP, USAID-263-0202). Project amendments have increased life of project funding to \$245 million for cash disbursement as Sector Program Assistance and \$50 million for the technical assistance with the PACD of 6/30/2000.

The program consists of two main elements: The agricultural Sector Program Assistance element and the technical assistance element to support implementation of the needed policy reform. The Sector Program Assistance element of the APRP, which helps offset the costs of major government policy changes, is expected to disburse \$245 million to the GOE by the 2000 PACD. A total of \$154 million has already been disbursed in three separate tranches: 1997/98 (\$44 million out of planned \$50 million); 1998 (\$57 million out of planned \$65 million); and 1999 (\$53 million out of planned \$65 million). The remaining \$65 million and the non-disbursed amounts will be disbursed in subsequent Tranches, pending the GOE meeting the policy benchmarks included under the Memoranda of Understanding. The GOE was able to achieve benchmarks related to cotton marketing and pricing, fertilizer distribution, trade and tariff policy, seed liberalization, private trade associations, land reclamation and land tenure, water user associations, water rationalization and water policy, MALR institutions, privatization of farm input supply activities, and privatization of textile and wheat and rice mills, and other important policy measures in the five APRP policy areas.

APRP is directed by the MALR and is implemented by a Program Planning Committee (PPC). The Minister of Agriculture chairs an informal Ministerial Committee comprised of himself, the Ministers of Public Works and Water Resources (MPWWR), Trade and Supply (MoTS), and Public Enterprises (MPE). The three Ministries, in addition to the MALR, are the most directly concerned with APRP objectives.

The PPC is comprised of representatives of the MALR, the MPWWR, the MoTS, and the MPE; a Program Coordinator of the PPC; representatives of the private sector; and other members representing USAID and the Ministries of Economy, and International Cooperation. Each Ministry has one representative, with the exception of the MALR, which has two. The Program Coordinator and USAID representatives are ex-officio members.

The PPC is chaired by a representative from the MALR and includes a Program Management Unit (PMU) to carry out operational, administrative, and financial tasks associated with APRP. The key member of the PMU is the Program Coordinator who works on a full-time basis and takes direction from the PPC to ensure achievement of its objectives. As the reform program proposed for APRP is technically complex, eight other technical assistance units exist in addition to the PMU to carry out: a) monitoring, verification and evaluation of policy reforms; b) assistance with the design and implementation of reforms including water policy reforms; and c) medium- to long-term research on food security. The PPC provides overall guidance to these technical assistance units. This is accomplished through the Program Coordinator. The specific tasks and responsibilities of the nine Units are stated in Annex 1.

Some of the nine units works closely with Task Forces. The objectives of the Task Forces are: (1) to further the development of free markets for agricultural and related sectors; (2) to privatize public enterprises providing inputs to agriculture and marketing or processing agricultural outputs, and to encourage private sector investment in these areas; (3) to provide food security in a carefully targeted, non-wasteful fashion to the needy; (4) to develop the capacity of institutions to manage water resources more efficiently, to establish effective agricultural market information services, and to improve agricultural research and extension; and (5) to achieve an improved irrigation and water management system. The original design of the Task Forces was altered during the path of implementing APRP and was replaced by Working Groups pertaining to specific policy benchmarks.

D. STATEMENT OF WORK

The contractor shall review and provide guidance for implementation related to the following key concerns:

1. How adequate and effective have the APRP organizational and management structures been in supporting implementation to achieve the project goal and purpose and produce outputs and outcomes?

Have the planning, programming and budget processes been adequate to ensure that consultants, and participants are being properly and effectively utilized? Have the PMU and the program coordinator effectively utilized the PPC members? Have the TA teams and their home offices provided adequate intellectual leadership and implementation support? Have the development resources, project management assistance, and guidance provided by USAID been appropriate and sufficient? Has PPC, and Task forces staffing been adequate? Has the PPC policy and decision-making process been strengthened? Have linkages been developed to senior decision-makers inter- and intra- participating ministries? Has coordination and integration between

APRP and other USAID projects and other donors who have responsibility for policy reform been productive and timely?

The team shall:

- a. Determine whether the overall management, organization, focus and implementation progress to date has been appropriate, coordinated, and functioning to achieve project objectives by PACD.
 - b. Make specific recommendations for improvements, if and where warranted.
- 2. Have technical assistance contractors effectively designed and implemented Policy Reform Design, Implementation, Monitoring, Verification, and Evaluation of Reforms, Training, and Program Support Services to enhance MALR, MPWWR, MoTS and other participating ministries' involvement and decision-making process in the policy reform program?**

Have the reform design and implementation, the monitoring/ verification process, and the evaluation/impact assessment process been successful to date? What are the prospects for institutionalizing a formalized policy reform planning process within the participating ministries by the PACD?

The team shall:

- a. Review specific project implementation activities, comparing actual progress to workplan goals and best practice in policy reform programs to determine whether: implementation progress has been satisfactory; the professional training (in-service and participant) has been timely and relevant; needs and constraints of beneficiary groups, including women, have been adequately addressed; the implementation process has resulted in institutionalization of improved systems and procedures to design, implement, and monitor needed policy reform; participation by PPC members, and other GOE officials has been sufficient to ensure that systems will be sustained after program completion.
 - b. Examine the APRP/RDI training plans to determine and assess whether they have been clearly based on institutional needs, program goals and objectives, and that they satisfy the requirements of ADS 253 and related Mission Orders.
 - c. Make specific recommendations for improvement and areas for emphasis during the project extension, if and where warranted.
- 3. Are there aspects of the monitoring and evaluation activities which could be modified to improve their effectiveness?**

Have the project's monitoring and information systems produced sufficiently quantitative, accurate, relevant, and timely data to satisfy the information needs of PPC and APRP Management, TA contractors, and USAID project management? Are decision-makers adequately

informed regarding program impact and MALR, MPWWR and other participating ministries functions, reporting, and implementation progress?

The team shall:

- a. Using existing work completed by the project, summarize the project's impact on farmers, agricultural investment, and overall increase in agricultural productivity and farm incomes.
 - b. Review how much of the budget increase of the four key ministries (MALR, MPWWR, MoTS, MPE) is attributable to annual performance disbursements over the LOP. Evaluate whether annual performance disbursements have increased efficiency of the ministries and effectively offset the costs of implementing reforms.
 - c. Review and analyze the design, operation and impacts of the monitoring and evaluation element and, if warranted, make recommendations for modification. Make specific recommendations for enhancing the quality and usefulness of ex-ante and ex-post impact evaluation activities, where warranted.
- 4. Are there aspects of the design and operation of the policy reform program elements which could be modified to improve their effectiveness?**

Has conditionality of disbursement provided a sufficient incentive for policy reform? Are there ways performance might be improved? Has the process of identifying policy objectives and benchmarks and verifying progress been satisfactory? Have past negotiations and project monitoring resulted in adequate initial commitment and/or follow-up action by the key decision-makers? Has the mix and amount of resources devoted to monitoring already agreed-upon actions and designing future reforms been appropriate? Would it be advisable for the PPC and the four key participating ministries (MALR, MPWWR, MOTS, MPE) to take a stronger and more leading role in the preliminary analysis and design of future policy reforms? Have the expected nature and distribution of socioeconomic, political, and institutional impacts of proposed reforms been adequately analyzed ex-ante and have the results of these analytical studies been used effectively to promote policy changes? Is this policy reform model likely to be adaptable for use in other sectors in Egypt or other AID-assisted countries? Has the APRP Policy Framework been utilized and shared with key players? Has APRP Policy Framework been adjusted, modified, or changed appropriately to meet the dynamic nature of the APRP?

The team shall:

- a. Review and analyze the design, operation and impacts of the policy reform element and, if warranted, make recommendations for modification.
- b. Make recommendations regarding the applicability of this performance-based disbursement model, or adaptations of it, to other sectors in Egypt or to other AID-assisted countries.

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- c. Assess the likelihood that desired policy reform impacts will be achieved by PACD.

E. TEAM COMPOSITION

The midterm assessment shall take about 6 weeks and the team shall include:

1. Policy Program Specialist/Agricultural Economist (6 weeks): The Policy Program Specialist/Agricultural Economist shall be designated team leader with full responsibility for developing all required deliverables. This team member shall have had overseas experience in the implementation and analysis of policy reform projects. S/he shall have had experience in the development and operations of conditionality based cash disbursement policy reform programs and in the economic analysis of their impacts.
2. Senior Institutional/Management Specialist (6 weeks): This team member shall have had experience with agricultural development projects, privatization of agribusinesses, and/or rural associations/institutions in developing countries. S/he shall have had broad experience in and knowledge of standard developmental project operations and procedures. These include, but shall not be limited to, project management structure, human resource development, and development assistance program monitoring systems. Private sector experience and knowledge of USAID would be a plus.
3. Resource Economist (4 weeks): This team member shall have had experience with agricultural natural resources, water economics, environmental aspects of policy reform, and related areas. S/he shall have had broad experience in and knowledge of agricultural policy reform programs and understanding of institutional economics.
4. Two local specialists (6 weeks each): These members will act as co-team for the Policy Program Specialist/Agricultural Economist expatriate and the Institutional/Management Specialist expatriate, respectively. The main tasks of these specialists, who shall work under the supervision of the team leader, will be drafting appropriate sections of the final report, and to ensure the team is getting access to data, information and staff.

F. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

1. The team shall base their findings, conclusions, and recommendations on data, documents, and other information provided by the TA contractors, USAID project officers, USAID economics office, PPC members, private sector, and participating ministries (MALR, MPWWR, MPE, MoTS, MIC) as well as site visits and interviews. Documents consulted should include, but not be limited to, the project paper (PP) and the Program Assistance Document (PAAD), and its amendment, the project's annual workplans and quarterly reports, records, studies, the APRP Policy Framework, USAID and APRP analyses in support of proposed policy reforms, relevant Memoranda of Understanding, performance disbursement annual verification reports for Tranches I, II, and III, and past implementation and project-related reforms, and other documentation as requested and as deemed relevant.

2. The assessment team shall review project documentation and studies conducted (e.g., by the RDI, EPIQ and the MVE Units).
3. The assessment team shall interview appropriate USAID, TA Contractors, PPC, MPWWR, MPE, MoTS, and MALR staff.
4. The team shall conduct site visits to some governorates.
5. The team shall prepare a final report providing findings, conclusions and recommendations responsive to the questions in the Statement of Work above, based on the analysis of information obtained as stated under Section E. above.

G. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND DELIVERABLES

All reports shall be submitted to USAID/EG/AP and the PPC.

1. The contractor shall hold regular meetings, the frequency of which will be agreed to with USAID, to brief the PPC and USAID staff on progress. Final debriefing(s) shall be held for USAID, PPC, and TA contractors after submission of the draft report.
2. On or before the fifth working day, the contractor shall submit a workplan, which describes roles and responsibilities of each team member and includes a detailed outline and suggested table of contents for the midterm assessment report.
3. The contractor shall submit a draft report during or before the end of the sixth working week. The draft findings shall be reviewed and discussed with key PPC, USAID and TA contractors' field staff during or before the end of the sixth working week. Comments on the draft report will be provided to the contractor within two calendar weeks after the departure of the team. The team leader will be authorized up to four working days to finalize the report in the U.S. The final report for reproduction, to be delivered within two additional calendar weeks, shall include changes or revisions requested by USAID and PPC members. The contractor shall provide 25 copies of the final report.
4. The proposed format for the midterm assessment report, to be provided in English, should be as follows:

Executive Summary: Not to exceed three single-spaced pages.

Listing of the Major Conclusions and Recommendations: This section should briefly summarize the most important conclusions and recommendations in the assessment.

Main Report: The report should respond directly to the key questions in the Statement of work and should not exceed 30 double spaced typed pages.

Annex 1- APRP Units and Contractors

The APRP includes nine units and contractors as follows:

1) Program Management Unit (PMU): As AID Direct contract with Datex, Inc., the PMU provides the overall coordination and technical services to ensure synergy among all APRP units. PMU also provides key operational, administrative, and financial management support required to carry out APRP. This unit is the main link with the Program Planning Committee (PPC), which oversees APRP activities, with the APRP Project Director, Dr. Saad Nassar, and with USAID/Egypt's Agricultural Policy Division.

2) Monitoring, Verification & Evaluation Unit (MVE): The primary objective of the MVE unit is to monitor, verify and evaluate GOE performance in meeting the policy benchmarks agreed to in the annual memoranda of understanding (MOU). The MVE unit also provides input to the formulation of policy benchmarks and to the development and implementation of local currency funded projects. The contractor, Abt Associates, provides policy impact analyses and studies, and evaluates projectized activities developed and implemented under APRP. MVE develops and reviews the indicators for monitoring benchmark progress, conducts studies and analyses to verify benchmark achievement, and reports the results.

In addition to benchmark verification, the MVE unit is also responsible for evaluating the impact of policy reforms made under APRP in terms of on-farm production, private agricultural marketing, and private agro-industrial output. The MVE unit produces evaluation studies, which measure policy reform impacts on farmer income and productivity and consumer income and expenditures.

3) Reform Design and Implementation Unit (RDI): The contractor is Development Alternatives Inc., (DAI). The primary objective of the RDI unit is to provide guidance on removing remaining barriers to private enterprise development in agriculture, thereby creating a liberal, competitive marketing system, and stimulating sustainable agricultural growth.

The RDI unit takes the lead in policy benchmark formulation and the development of local currency funded projects. RDI is sometimes called on for recommendations regarding the use of the local currency generated from the sales of U.S. source/origin commodities. For example, it has examined early retirement programs to reduce labor redundancy in selected state-owned companies involved in cotton textile manufacturing and rice and wheat milling.

By closely monitoring the policy arena, RDI ensures that its technical assistance focuses on viable policy alternatives and implementable reform activities. The unit collaborates and coordinates closely with the MVE unit to develop verifiable policy benchmarks and to monitor APRP reform activities.

4) Food Security Research (FSR): The FSR program collaborates with several key ministries to determine the possible impacts ongoing reforms may have on the food security of Egyptians, with a particular focus on impacts among the poorer segments of society. The expected benefits of FSR research include: (1) identification of alternatives for a more cost-

effective social safety net; (2) design of a more cost-effective system of food subsidies; (3) recommendations for pilot-testing new food subsidy system(s); and, (4) generation of meaningful indicators for tracking food insecurity during the course of economic adjustment. This is a grant to IFPRI.

5) Water Policy Reform Assistance (EPIQ): The objective of this technical assistance unit is to assist the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (MPWWR) to identify and carry out policy reforms which will increase the global efficiency and productivity of Egypt's Nile Water System. Component activities are aimed at addressing such issues as: (1) improved water conservation, allocation and distribution; (2) workable cost recovery/cost sharing measures; (3) increased user involvement in system operation and maintenance; and, (4) improved protection of Nile River water quality. The TA team directly assists in identifying and achieving annual policy reform benchmarks, working closely with the MPWWR Steering Committee, Water Policy Advisory Unit (WPAU), and other key ministry officials. The Water Policy Reform Activity Contractor is International Resources Group, Ltd. (IRG)/Winrock International (WI).

6) Water Policy Advisory Unit (WPAU): The purpose of this unit, created in 1996, is to assist the policy reform effort through strategy review and policy recommendations. WPAU also serves as a decision support unit for the Minister's office. In effect, the unit is the GOE counterpart of the Water Policy Reform Activity team, and is designed to incorporate a multidisciplinary working group of experts to directly support the policy reform process within the MPWWR. The unit participates directly in the benchmark identification, review, and approval process, and contributes to the implementation of effective policy reform measures. WPAU leadership intercedes with the Minister's office and the MPWWR Steering Committee on behalf of all USAID-sponsored APRP activities. It is funded through a local-currency PIL.

7) Water Education & Communication Activity: This activity is carried out through GreenCom, a USAID/W global project. The technical assistance provided through this activity in Egypt is to work directly with the Water Communications Unit of the MPWWR to accomplish several tasks in support of overall policy reform in the water sector. One objective is to raise general public awareness about water availability and scarcity in Egypt and to enhance awareness of conservation requirements for the future. Another is to promote and build improved levels of communication between water users and MPWWR field staff and increase farmer participation in water user associations. Creating and conducting education programs and similar initiatives to support behavioral change related to water use, conservation, and management are also envisioned. The contractor is Academy for Educational Development (AED).

8) Main Systems Management II (MSM): This activity is implemented by the Planning Sector of the Ministry of Public Works and Water Resources (MPWWR) and is a continuation of an activity, which began, in late 1988 under a former USAID project. Currently, MSM is carried out under a technical assistance contract with two main objectives:

1. Improve operation of the Nile irrigation system by installing and fully unitizing telemetry data to manage water distribution;

2. Improve the efficiency of telemetry system operation and maintenance to ensure program sustainability.

An additional benefit from this activity is that MSM can provide accurate data useful for calculating irrigation system efficiency, identifying areas of resource misuse, matching alternative supplies with areas of need, or planning system operation modifications to ensure improved delivery. The contractor is HARZA Engineering.

ANNEX 2
LIST OF CONTACTS

More than two hundred stakeholders and beneficiaries of APRP were contacted, including:

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ANNEX 3

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The assessment team reviewed more than one hundred documents related to APRP, including the APRP Project Paper and related documents at USAID; the Terms of Reference, work plans, progress reports of APRP units, and APRP technical reports. A partial listing of documents reviewed is presented below.

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