# D R A F T  W O R K I N G  P A P E R

VOLUME I

PCI's Assessment of the Evaluation System in USAID/Vietnam

January 5, 1972

CONTENTS


| Section | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| ONE | BACKGROUND AND APPROACH | |
| | A. Background | 1-1 |
| | B. Approach | 1-4 |
| TWO | LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EVALUATION SYSTEM: THE BASIS FOR EVALUATION | |
| THREE | THE PRODUCTION OF OUTPUTS | |
| | A. Outputs Required to Achieve the Purpose | 3-1 |
| | B. Assessment of Progress on Output Indicators | 3-4 |
| | C. Assumptions at the Output Level | 3-30 |
| FOUR | ASSESSMENT OF PURPOSE ACHIEVEMENT | |
| | A. Measuring the Achievement of the Purpose | 4-1 |
| | B. Progress Toward End-of-Project Status | 4-1 |
| FIVE | ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT | |
| | A. The Evaluation System Goal | 5-1 |
| | B. Progress Toward Goal Achievement | 5-2 |
| SIX | CONCLUSIONS | |
| SEVEN | SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS | |

## SECTION ONE

## BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

### A. BACKGROUND

In the Fall of Calendar 1970, the Agency for International Development embarked on a world-wide program to establish its modified evaluation system in each of its overseas USAID Missions.

The emphasis for AID's new evaluation system was that it be above all a Mission-useful process. Key elements of the system included (1) the Logical Framework for organizing information and clarifying original intent and (2) an interactive process for organizing people.

The elements of the system were presented to East Asia and Vietnam Missions at Bangkok in November of 1970. The attendees from the Vietnam Mission, Messrs. Siegal, Zimmerly, Davis, and Johnson were quick to perceive the potential value of the evaluation system but felt (as has indeed been proven in Missions around the world) that the greatest near-term potential was in using the Logical Framework not just as a pre-evaluation clarification, but as a basic instrument of project design and planning.

The program for establishing the evaluation system in individual USAIDs included a two-week "installation" visit to each Mission by a joint AID/PCI team. These two weeks were

spent both in formal training sessions for Mission staff as well as in actually evaluating projects to demonstrate the function and value of the system. However, the sheer size of the Vietnam Mission and of its program, made it doubtful in the eyes of all parties concerned whether important beneficial effect could be achieved within the scheduled two-week period. Based upon the lack of confidence that the time available for a normal installation visit could achieve success in USAID/Vietnam, and upon an accurate perception that priority should be on clarifying project design before going into an evaluation process, USAID/Vietnam decided to waive the normal installation visit but to independently work out a technique for installing the evaluation system within USAID/Vietnam. (Although USAID/Vietnam was exempt from a formal evaluation system requirement the Mission made a voluntary decision to use these approaches to serve their own management needs, of course reserving the ability to make modifications as necessary.)

The course of action chosen by USAID Vietnam for implementing the evalution system was exemplary. Basically the approach was to first clarify project design by requiring that the Logical Framework be used for all projects in the PBS. Having thus clarified the intent and approach for each of the Mission projects, evaluation could be subsequently effected with much greater simplicity than had been the case in most Missions. (PCI concurred in this approach entirely, although it was not formally involved in the decision to proceed in this fashion.)

To facilitate summarization of projects in a Logical Framework format, the Mission set up individual task teams to both train personnel and work with them in the design clarification process. (This effort was undertaken under the leadership of the Program Officer, Mr. G. Zimmerly, with close functional support being given by Mr. W. Mulcahey, who was on TDY.)

Upon the conclusion of the original project clarification process the USAID/Vietnam Mission selected and put in place a full-time evaluation officer and supported him with two full-time staff members. (It is continued testimony to the Mission's judgement, as well as to its understanding of the evaluation system concepts, that it selected as its evaluation officer, Mr. William Lefes, who had proven during his Washington tour that he had complete command of the system concepts and approaches.) After the Mission Evaluation Officer had been in place and operating for approximately six months, the Mission requested that the Office of Program Evaluation send out an advisory team, of AID/W and PCI personnel, to assess the results of the work done to that point and make recommendations as appropriate for further improving evaluation within USAID/Vietnam.

In summary, as of the time of the team's visit, USAID/Vietnam had already:

1. Used the Logical Framework approach to summarize design of all projects in the PBS;
2. Started 18 projects into the evaluation process;
3. Assigned three staff members to full-time participation in the evaluation process.

Thus, the team was presented with an opportunity to observe a functioning evaluation system based on project designs already clarified in the system format. The team was thus oriented to learning from USAID/Vietnam as well as providing counsel to assist the Mission Evaluation Officer.

## B. APPROACH

The team's evaluation of the USAID/Vietnam evaluation system considered:

- outputs required to establish the evaluation system;
- sufficiency of these outputs to realize a Mission-useful evaluation system;
- Effect of the evaluation system on improving planning and implementation of USAID/Vietnam projects and programs.

This analysis is consistent with Logical Framework approach and considers evidence of progress at the output, purpose, and goal levels. The Logical Framework of the USAID/Vietnam evaluation system, which provides a basis for the evaluation, is discussed in Section Two.

Methods of gathering data during the team's visit included observation of normal evaluation activities, participation in working and discussion sessions with all levels of the Mission, and interviews with individuals at diverse levels of responsibility. Firsthand observations, and opportunities to attend working evaluation sessions, were limited by the short period of time spent in Vietnam. Thus, we rely heavily on observations made by Mission personnel as reported to members of the team during formal and informal sessions.

The methods of presenting conclusions and recommendations used by the team adopts the evaluation system tenet that the purpose of evaluation is replanning. Thus, Volume II of the report focuses on alternative plans to further strengthen evaluation in USAID/Vietnam.

2

## SECTION TWO

## LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE EVALUATION SYSTEM: THE BASIS FOR EVALUATION

In developing a basis for evaluation of the Mission's adoption of the evaluation system, the team reviewed the criteria used to determine effectiveness of the system installation in USAID Missions around the world. Those criteria were stated in terms of outputs required to establish the system, the system purpose and the goal to which the development of the system contributed.

Early discussion with the Mission Evaluation Officer in Vietnam, and our own assessment of the situation there, suggested that the outputs presumed to be necessary world-wide were also necessary for Vietnam.

However, it was clear to the MEO and the PCI team concerned that these were not necessarily a sufficient set of outputs. Therefore, additional outputs deemed necessary for the Vietnam circumstance were added to the list of "basic" outputs. The purpose of the system in Vietnam was deemed to be the same as in other Missions. However, it became apparent during the study that the world-wide goal of the evaluation system should be modified to reflect operational orientation of the Vietnam program.

The Logical Framework for the Evaluation System (Figure 1) defines the goal and purpose and separately delineates the required basic and Vietnam-specific outputs.

The vertical logic of the Logical Framework describes the necessary steps for institutionalizing the evaluation system. To the narrative statement of this vertical logic must be added the important assumptions made at the output, purpose and goal levels. The vertical logic defines the necessary conditions for institutionalizing the Project Evaluation System. However, the sufficiency of these conditions depends on the validity of the assumptions being made at each level. It is therefore important to make assumptions explicit and subject to review.

The horizontal logic of the Logical Framework, i.e., the objectively verifiable indicators and the means of verification, are successively more precise statements of what is expected at the goal, purpose and output levels. The Mission has identified indicators at the goal, purpose and output levels, and undertaken activities to establish the system. One objective of the evaluation was to assist the Mission in identifying appropriate targets for future efforts in terms of each of these indicators. The evaluation was to provide an objective basis for target setting, i.e., the identification of the expected magnitude and quality for each indicator, and the time frame for its accomplishment.

The following three sections of this report develop the evaluation of the USAID/Vietnam evaluation system based on the Logical Framework for the evaluation system. To meet the needs of the MEO and of top management, PCI assessments of progress included three sets of indicators.

- Indicators that the outputs deemed necessary to realize the purpose are being produced;
- Indicators that the purpose -- a Mission-useful Project Evaluation System -- is being achieved;
- Indicators that the evaluation system goal -- cost-effective developmental programs -- is being achieved.

c. ~~b.~~ Project Team Confidence in Replanning Decisions

For the most part, evidence on this indication depends on the completion of the Mission Evaluation Panel reviews, which have not yet begun.

Interim evidence from one project team which was preparing for a panel review during our visit indicates that the project group was confident that the recommended actions they intended to present to the panel would improve the project.

6. Projects are clearly defined in the Logical Framework

Two indicators were reviewed to determine progress on this output; the team reviewed each indicator separately:

- Mission personnel use Logical Framework and find value in this approach to project clarification.

- Mission Logical Frameworks meet Mission and Agency standards for concept use, linkage validity, indicators, means of verification, etc.

a. Mission use and perception of value from Logical Framework

The Logical Framework appears very well suited to USAID/Vietnam requirements and is already bringing considerable value, particularly to Project Managers and, more generally, the "working" levels of the organization.

All Mission projects were put into a Logical Framework type of outline for the FY 72 PBS submission. This effort represented a substantial advance in system use and set an example for other USAID Missions. This exercise was, however, considered time-consuming by many of those who participated. The perceived value of this project clarification exercise was uneven, with a negative slant at the time of the exercise.

At present, there is an intensive effort to achieve further project clarification and undertake evaluation in the Mission. The project teams involved in this process perceive the exercise as one which brings value to them. This shift in attitude appears to be partially attributable to a lag in the realization of benefit from the initial PBS exercise,* and partially due to efforts of the MEO to make the evaluation process non-stressful for participants.

The time spent on project design clarification in USAID/Vietnam far exceeds the time needed for evaluation, as in other Missions. In Vietnam, between one and three sessions are spent on developing each of three major concepts for the project design: Purpose, End-of-Project-Status, and Goal. Purpose and Goal are reported to be the most difficult aspects of the project to define.

---

*A lag between the initial Mission project clarification activity and a perception of value from the exercise were characteristic of the installations in several other Missions.

Although middle management is concerned about the time devoted to evaluation, Mission personnel generally give favorable reports on the current Logical Framework and PAR preparation exercise. There is some residual apprehension on the part of assistant directors and one associate director that projects will be altered to "fit" the matrix. One division reported that a few of its projects have been"changed" or redesigned during the process. A possible suppression of the real project appears to be implied in comments from assistant directors and APO's. Project managers, however, do not report this concern. Those involved in the current design/ evaluation process report that the Logical Frameworks do capture the essence of the project.

The guidelines and worksheets are being used by the Mission, although the MEO feels it is probable that Vietnam Mission-specific modifications could be usefully made to evaluation "check lists" included in the project managers' workbook. Given some of the budget reduction issues before the Mission, it may be appropriate to consider additions to the worksheets which introduce the possibility of radical changes in the project and force the Project Manager to think objectively about such change. For example, worksheets might appropriately ask how would the effect of a 50% reduction in contractor support effect the achievement of purpose,

In commenting on the value of the current evaluation system, Mission personnel at a number of levels were asked by the evaluation team to indicate what levels in the Mission received the "greatest" and the "least" benefit from the Logical Framework. The responses to this question indicated that there is some uncertainty about where the information contained in the project design is currently used and when it can potentially be useful.

- Project Managers saw value for themselves and for their supervisors, but did not see significant value for contractors and counterparts.

- Supervisory personnel saw great value for the Project Managers and their host counterparts. They saw little value for management levels above them, e.g., Mission Director, Washington, etc.

- The value of the Logical Framework to the Program Office was seen by the Program Office, but not by others.

The use of the Logical Framework as it has proceeded thus far appears to bring benefit to the individuals involved. The process, however, must be extended to higher levels of Mission management before an impact at the program level can be expected. In addition, it was noted at all levels that more extensive involvement of the host in the development of the Logical Framework would be a positive and desirable step toward developing greater compatibility of host and USAID objectives for the projects.

7. <u>There is a clear relationship between project purposes and higher level objectives, e.g., sector goals.</u>

The indicator reviewed to determine ~~success~~ progress in terms of this output was:

- o Mission programs clearly articulate program, sector and sub-sector goals to which projects contribute.

a. <u>Relationship between project purposes and sub-sector, sector and program goals.</u>

Judging from the comments that were made to our on-site team in Washington as well as at USAID/Vietnam, there is general agreement that projects are not clearly related to higher-level objectives. There was particular concern that the program budget submission and the country field submission were written in different time frames and by different people. The team was on numerous occasions told that project evaluation was futile when there are no clear program goals against which project significance can be assessed.

Within the Divisions, project personnel held slightly differing views of the need for intermediate goals. In Agriculture, the project teams have been able to identify with some higher level objectives. Self-sufficiency is a stated objective in the Division. Project managers have been able to identify specific sub-sector targets and define an expected time or set of conditions which will indicate that self-sufficiency in their area has been achieved*, e.g., by year M the growth rate of corn production, X, will meet local demand for corn which grows at rate Y.

The Division in charge of the land reform program administers a large project. The project and the program are basically the same, i.e., they have the same purpose and goal. The goal in this instance is explicitly political, and the Division has designed an evaluation of the impact at the goal level. This evaluation has not been approved. Nevertheless, this concern, in the Division, for goal level evaluation should be commended.

The remaining two divisions have had greater difficulty in identifying thier projects with Mission goals. These

---

* One agricultural project was able to both define and meet its purpose in this manner.

These differences between divisions, in the perception of difficulty with goal setting, however, are minor; in each division there are project groups for whom the identification of goal, purpose and output targets is a major problem.

The development of Logical Frameworks on the Mission projects has forced some goal definition by the lower levels of Mission staff. However, individual project goals had not been reviewed at the Associate Director level as of the time of our visit.

The "gap" between the PBS and CFS, and the lack of a clear delineated program [goals and sub-goals] within divisions was considered a problem by almost everyone we talked with below Associate Director level. The Director and the Associate Directors, in turn, felt they had defined goals. The issue here appears to be one of clarification rather than actual communication. Lower levels of the Mission were aware of what the Mission Director considered to be the goals, e.g., stabilization. However, the simple awareness of these objectives did not lead to a comprehension at the lower levels of how, what or how much a given project was expected to contribute toward these objectives.

8. Project Evaluation results are used to replan projects and to make re-programming decisions.

The team reviewed two indicators of the success of this output:

- o Evaluation results used in project replanning.
- o Evaluation results considered by top management and Program Office to be major input to further program re-planning/decision making.

a. Evaluation results as input to project replanning

The project evaluations begun by the MEO are just beginning to reach the evaluation stage. Several PARs have been completed and these indicate that the project teams are considering change in the project plans. The major changes which had occurred by the time of our visit were changes related to project design. One Division reported that Several projects had changed as a result of the process of clarifying the project Logical Framework. These changes constitute a form of replanning, as do the further changes expected as a result of evaluation. The real use of evaluation results in project replanning will not be clear until more evaluations have been completed.

b. Evaluation results as an input to program planning and decision making.

Progress in this important dimension is less than would be hoped. The important decisions being faced by the Mission during our visit were related to how much of what to eliminate from the Mission's list of activities. The results of project evaluations were not playing an important role in making these decisions. This was explained to us as due to a variety of factors, including:

1. There was not enough time to complete project evaluations for all projects;
2. The Mission re-programming exercise was basically a competition for funds rather than a candid and realistic appraisal of projects;
3. Associate Directors are reluctant to rely heavily on a system and approach that have not yet been fully demonstrated.
4. Program decisions cannot be based on <u>project</u> evaluations.

The Program Office has indicated an interest in having the project evaluations for use in Spring Reviews, but has set no targets for how many evaluations, or which evaluations, it needs.

The evaluation system appears to have made little impact as yet on the important decisions on programs, budgets, contracts, etc., within the Mission. The Program Office appears to be using across-the-board reduction criteria rather than programmatic criteria for decision making. They do not have explicit programmatic guidelines for differentiating projects in terms of their significance or impact on higher level goals. As one Program Officer reported, even with the results of evaluations the Program Office would still be in a position of choosing between "good" and "bad" projects at the purpose level unless clear programs existed which would allow choices in terms of programmatic impact to be made.

Reduced funding and increasing emphasis on economic development may well require important changes in the Mission program. Faced with the need for change, Mission management have embarked on reviews to reconsider programs and projects. If the evaluation system was functioning and of proven value, it seems likely that evaluation results would be required as informational input prior to such reviews. Certainly the press of time makes such a requirement difficult. However, the fact that the evaluation schedule was not accelerated in the face of this need, and that Mission management appears ready to face critical program decisions without the more objective appraisals available through project evaluations, suggests that project evaluation has not demonstrated its relevance to the urgent issues facing top Mission management.

## C. ASSUMPTIONS AT THE OUTPUT LEVEL

### 1. Assumptions related to the achievement of purpose

Two assumptions appear to be critical to the development of a Mission-useful Project Evaluation System in Vietnam:

- The "special" circumstances of the Vietnam Mission do not preclude the development of a Mission-useful system;
- Establishing such a system is a high priority to top Management.

### 2. Review of the Validity of the Assumptions

In reviewing the validity of the assumptions the team utilized the observations of the Mission staff, as well as their own observations during the visit,to assess the evidence regarding the assumptions concerning the evaluation system. Each assumption is reviewed separately.

a. Assumption: The System can be usefully employed in the Vietnam circumstance.

The important differences between USAID/Vietnam and other USAIDs throughout the world appear to be quantitative rather than qualitative. (This is based more importantly on the observations and opinions of those within the Mission than on direct observations of our PCI team.) It is not surprising, therefore, that the basic system concepts are extendable (and in fact have been extended) to USAID/Vietnam.

The USAID/Vietnam program decision process has two aspects: external country-team decisions and internal-USAID decisions. This duality is characteristic of USAID Missions around the world. The external decision-making process in Vietnam, as in other American Embassies is guided by a complex of factors. Economic and social development is only one factor, and in many embassies it is far from the most important factor. The added presence of the miliary and CORDS increases the number of factors to be considered in making decisions, but it does not at a general level alter the type of relationship of the AID program to country-team decisions. A complex Embassy program, in which the AID program is but one consideration, is the normal operating environment of most USAID Missions.

Absolute size of the American presence in general, and specifically the USAID program, on the other hand, does present a circumstance which may call for modification of the evaluation system. There are more administrative levels in the USAID/Vietnam Mission than is typical for AID programs. System modifications which seek to draw these additional levels of responsibility into the process are appropriate and should be undertaken.

As in other AID Missions, we should expect an institutionalized evaluation system to effect decision making within the Mission, and to influence the manner in which the USAID presents its programs and priorities to the country team and to Washington. The environment of the Vietnam/USAID has no characteristics which preclude the emergence of this type of pattern.

b. Assumption: The Establishment of the Evaluation System is of High Priority to Top Mission Management

The priority of the USAID/Vietnam, until very recently has been to provide the maximum foreign assistance possible in Vietnam. Finding appropriate places to develop projects, and appropriate institutions to support has been a preoccupation at all levels of the Mission. The concern with evaluation and project assessment has been skewed in the direction of developing evidence of the major efforts the U.S. has made to support the government-protected areas of the country.

The budget restraints now being placed on the program are alerting some members of the Mission staff to the need to assess their on-going activities. However, many members of the Mission staff appear to still be caught up in a perceived need to spend obligated funds on projects. Top Mission management appears to be caught between a need to continue the expansion of some activities and retrench on others. Evaluation, one vehicle for making decisions on how to reprogram, competes with the seemingly simpler process of shifting funds from one area to another. In addition, the institution of an evaluation system to do a job which appears to achieve the same result on a budget sheet, is perceived to be time consuming, and, if one is optimistic about further allocations for Vietnam, probably not necessary. The institution evaluation system does not appear to be a high priority to top management levels of the Mission.

4

## SECTION FOUR

## ASSESSMENT OF PURPOSE ACHIEVEMENT

### A. MEASURING THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

The world-wide purpose of the Agency Evaluation effort is a Mission-useful project evaluation system in each of the USAID Missions. This purpose was affirmed for Vietnam.

The objectively verifiable indicators at the purpose level, or the end-of-project status, are conditions which will signal the achievement of purpose. Three such conditions were identified and reviewed.

- Important Mission program/project decisions made utilizing results of project evaluation system
- Project personnel report system useful to them and express receptivity to continued use of system
- Associate Directors support evaluation system as important supplement to other management improvement efforts, e.g.,

### B. PROGRESS TOWARD END-OF-PROJECT STATUS

The evidence speaking for successful institutionalization of a Project Evaluation System in USAID/Vietnam is:

1. Key members of top Mission management have expressed a high degree of interest in such a system;

2. Project-level personnel have found the system useful and express receptivity to its continued use;
3. Both the Associate Director for Financial Management and the Office of the Auditor General feel that the continued use of the evaluation system will importantly support their interest in management improvement, and specifically in improving contract management.

However, the evidence suggesting that the system has not yet been fully institutionalized is compelling:

1. Few important decisions have been based on evidence developed in project evaluations;
2. It is by no means clear that the important decisions still to be made will be based on objective evidence developed by the Project Evaluation System.
3. Use of the discipline of the Logical Framework approach to project design and progress assessments has not yet been extended to PROAGs, PIO/Ts, contracts and other important project management documents.

Certainly, the lack of progress toward purpose can in part be explained by the fact that the most important demonstrations -- the Mission Evaluation Reviews -- have not yet been held. However, the evaluation system must demonstrate its relevance to real issues being faced by top management. As long as the important budget decisions are being made without reference to evaluations, it is difficult to see how the system can, over a reasonably short term, become relevant.

5

## SECTION FIVE

## ASSESSMENT OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

### A. THE EVALUATION SYSTEM GOAL

The goal of the evaluation system, as normally stated, is to ensure that there are cost-effective development programs in which Mission management has a high degree of confidence. In Vietnam, the focus of the program has not been primarily on economic development. Mission strategy and operation stress stabilization and the assumption of aid operational acitivities by the Vietnamese.

Modification of the world-wide evaluation system goal, to meet the circumstances of Vietnam, thus appears to be appropriate. The restated goal for Vietnam would be: cost-effective programs implement Mission strategy.

The burden is on top management. The evaluation system can support any management intent -- whether it be development, stabilization, or simply operational support.

However, the effectiveness of the evaluation system in supporting management intent will always vary directly with the clarity with which that

intent is articulated and communicated. The Logical Framework and the evaluation system provide one means of facilitating the requisite top-down management communication.

The measures of goal achievement are the same for the world-wide goal and for the modified Vietnam goal:

- o Mission management and staff report high degree of confidence in program
- o Mission routinely uses objective evidence to assess program success
- o Host validates Mission judgment of program importance and impact.

B. PROGRESS TOWARD GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

The evaluation system has had little impact at the goal level:

- o There have been difficulties in getting the system itself established.
- o Mission staff are not confident of the relationship between the projects and higher level Mission objectives.
- o Mission personnel have had difficulties articulating goals to which their projects contribute.

- The decision criteria for funding projects is not normally an objective assessment of the significance of a project in terms of higher level Mission objectives.

- Host validation of project importance and expected impact is required only at a general level.

The USAID/Vietnam program has been largely aimed at supporting assistance and the traditional AID role of technical assistance in economic development has been modified. This may account in part for the difficulties project teams have in articulating goals for their projects. Probably more important than the non-developmental origins of projects is the lack of awareness at the lower levels of the Mission as to just what the Mission strategies and priorities are.

## SECTION SIX

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the evaluation we conclude that:

1. The Mission has undertaken a major effort to install the Agency evaluation system. The Mission efforts were begun, appropriately, at the design clarification stage in the evaluation process. The formulation of Mission projects in the Logical Framework for the FY 72 Program Budget Submission set a new standard for Mission submissions.

2. The efforts of the Vietnam Mission to clarify project designs proves, more conclusively than does the experience in any other Mission, <u>that the design clarification process yields only partial benefit unless the clarified designs clearly articulate the linkages between projects and higher level Mission goals.</u> Mission success in undertaking project design clarification has not been matched by success in developing the linkages between projects and higher Mission goals.

3. The project teams have made important improvements in the designs of their projects. However, the development of linkages between the projects and the Mission goals cannot be undertaken solely by the project teams. They need assistance from higher levels

of Mission management in order to successfully establish the relationship of their projects to higher level objectives. The setting of goals for the projects by Mission management levels above the project team has not been clearly communicated.

4. Mission project teams use the evaluation system and feel that it brings value to them. However, despite the Mission efforts to utilize the system, Mission personnel do not receive full benefit from using the evaluation system concepts. The project personnel have limited understanding of the concepts; higher levels of Mission management have had limited exposure to them.

5. The important advances in design clarification made by the Mission have not yet been translated into improvements in project implementation. Specifically, comparable improvements are not reflected in such implementing documents as PIO. (The value of improved project designs is limited, even in the benefit derived by the project manager, unless design improvements become improvements in project execution by creating a basis for firm agreement with the host country and establishing a disciplined approach to monitoring contractor, commodity, and participant training performance.)

Section VII

~~SECTION TWO~~

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

We have three basic recommendations for improving the utility of the evaluation system to USAID/Vietnam.

1. Re-articulate and clarify the highest level Mission objectives "from the top down" to redefine the major program elements and clearly articulate the relationship between programs and projects.
2. Accelerate the project evaluation process, requiring that all projects be evaluated and related to the above-defined Mission programs before inclusion in the PBS.
3. Require that: (1) the Logical Framework be incorporated in the project agreements; (2) PIO/Ts and Contracts reflect elements of the project logical framework; and (3) Contracts use the logical framework approach to clarify contractor outputs and purpose.

By undertaking an accelerated project evaluation schedule and simultaneously but independently re-defining the entire Mission program, the Mission should be able to (1) realistically define what it can accomplish and what resources can be made available for accomplishment, and (2) select programs and projects on the basis of current priorities and clearly communicate that intent to all levels of the Mission.

Requiring approved Logical Frameworks in all implementing documentation (contracts and ProAgs) provides a plausible "carrot" for undertaking the design clarification and evaluation process (i.e., obligation of funds will depend on that clarification) and will also support concurrent efforts to improve contracting and contract management.

Implementation of the above recommendations can improve not only the implementation of individual projects, but most importantly can improve the responsiveness of those projects to programmatic intent. This can facilitate the forthcoming changes in emphasis of the Vietnam program.

Alternatives for implementing the above recommendations are spelled out ~~later in~~ in Volume II of this report.