

EVALUATION OF
INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICES, INC

by
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Abbreviations Used in Report

AETI:	Agricultural Extension Training Institute, Sylhet, Bangladesh
BARD:	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, Kotbari, Comilla
CEDEN:	National Evangelical Committee for Development and Emergency (Honduras)
EZE:	Evangelische Zentralstelle Fur Enticklungshilfe, Bonn, West Germany (a current funder of the Village Development and Training Program)
FIVDB:	Friends in Village Development, Bangladesh
FWVTI:	Family Welfare Visitors Training Institute, Sylhet
ICCO:	Interkerkelijke Coorinatie Commissie Onwikkelingsprojecten (Interchurch Coordination Committee for Development Projects), Zeist, Holland (another current funder of the Sylhet project)
IVS:	International Voluntary Services, Inc.
IRDP:	Integrated Rural Development Program, Bangladesh
RDTI:	Rural Development Training Institute, Sylhet, Bangladesh
VDTP:	Village Development Training Program, Sylhet (After mid-1980, title was changed to Village Development <u>and</u> Training Program)

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List of Supplementary Material

(On file with IVS Evaluation in Office of FVA/PVC)

- A. IVS "Thought Piece on Program Assessment and Evaluation," September 15, 1981
- B. IVS Program Planning, Reporting and Evaluation Manual, June, 1981
- C. Issues Paper and Related Memoranda on USAID-Dacca's 1979 Evaluation of VDTP
- D. "Village Development Training Program: Report and Prospectus, 1978-1984. IVS, Dacca, January, 1980.
- E. "Overview, Assessment and Recommendations on the Village Development and Training Program," End of Tour Report of David G. French, Country Director for IVS/Bangladesh, September, 1977 - August, 1980.
- F. "Village Development Training Program: A Study of the IVS Project in Sylhet," by M. Ghulam Sattar and M. Solaiman, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, September, 1980.
- G. Project Description, Village Development and Training Program, Submission to Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, GOB, May, 1980 by IVS and FIVDB; Proposal to EZE, Bonn, West Germany from FIVDB, October 23, 1980; Minutes of the VDTP Consultative Committee, June 12, 1980.
- H. "Report on Survey of Twenty-Eight Recently Trained Family Welfare Visitors Posted in Sylhet District," Caroline Carbould, IVS Volunteer Nurse, Midwife and Trainer, February, 1980.
- I. Progress Report on Functional Literacy Classes, VDTP, by IVS Volunteer James Jennings, July, 1981
- J. Evaluation of the Women's Health Program at FOVDB, by Fauzia E. Ahmed, August 25, 1981
- K. VDTP, "The Duck Project at a Glance," by S. I. Malik, Manager, Duck Project, October 30, 1981
- L. "A Statement of Goals and Objectives of the Village Development and Training Program: A First Step Toward an Evaluation System," and "An Internal Formative Evaluation System for the VDTP: A Possible Framework," papers prepared for FIVDB by Richard Fuller of University of Florida, June, 1981

I. INTRODUCTION

The last general evaluation of the International Voluntary Service by USAID was carried out in the summer of 1979. The contract evaluator, Cleo Shook, concluded that AID "was fully justified in continuing to support IVS and to encourage USAID Missions to utilize their services where applicable." At that time IVS had a General Support Grant from AID and had operational program grants from AID Missions in Bangladesh, Yemen, Botswana and the Sudan.

At the present time IVS is working in seven countries -- Bangladesh, Bolivia, Botswana, Ecuador, Honduras, Papua New Guinea, and the Sudan.

The backdrop of this current evaluation is the expiration on December 31, 1981 of AID's Institutional Support Grant and IVS's application to AID for a Matching Grant.

Although my field observations were limited to Bangladesh and Honduras, but two of the seven countries in which IVS operates, I had the opportunity to spend a number of days with IVS-Washington's staff who in a disarmingly open way gave me full access to their files as well as to their own thoughts and opinions. As part of my general orientation I was able to read descriptions of all the projects, to interview all top staff and to interact more informally with the

whole staff. By a happy coincidence of timing I was able to sit in on a portion of an IVS staff conference that brought together its country field directors with Washington Staff. All of this is to say that although my comments on the projects of the two countries I studied in depth may prove most valuable, I feel comfortable in making some observations and drawing some general conclusions about IVS itself.

II. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND ASSESSMENTS

A. Evolving IVS Philosophy

An IVS Concept Paper underlying its new application is reflective of an organizational philosophy that has been evolving since 1971 and has taken particular form and emphasis over the past five years. The major elements of it were detailed in the earlier evaluation, and in various IVS publications to which AID has long had access, but it would seem worthwhile here to highlight a few of the sections in the Concept Paper that reflect a shift over the years in IVS emphasis and operation.

"Unlike earlier years, when the exclusive resource of IVS was its complement of volunteers, IVS now has a management and administrative role in all of the projects with which IVS volunteers are associated. Thus IVS is far more heavily engaged in recent years in total development project context and is not limited to the role of recruiting, placing and supporting expatriate volunteers." (emphasis added)

The Concept Paper of this organization that has been placing volunteers in developing countries for 25 years appears to reflect an understanding of the difficulty of achieving the kinds of "skills transfer ... to indigenous institutions" that it sees as central to its development work. "We are dealing," says the Concept Paper, "with the matter of how indigenous groups and the people they represent, come to an ownership of the means to solve their own problems." The Paper points out that qualitative indicators would consist of

evaluation of skills appropriation and evaluation of institutional potential after IVS involvement.

B. How Does IVS Performance Match Its Stated Philosophy?

In Bangladesh I had the opportunity to examine "institutional potential after IVS involvement." From the viewpoint of institution-building, the Village Development and Training Project, now effectively under the operational control of the indigenous Friends in Village Development, Bangladesh, stands as an IVS success story. The relatively long section in this report on IVS in Bangladesh is essentially a case study in institution-building. It shows how IVS in Bangladesh itself changed, adapted and evolved over a nine-year period. It is also a story of how an organization, contrary to its original expectations and intentions, succeeded not only in building an institution but in transferring it to local control and encouraging the indigenous staff to take the direction and emphasis that it most wanted. It is not at all clear that the kind of institutionalization that IVS helped to bring about in Bangladesh is something that can be replicated in another country. By contrast, it would appear to be as true in Honduras as in the other two Latin American countries in which IVS operates that there is no shortage of development institutions and that the present and future role of IVS in those countries is to provide

technical expertise and guidance to on-going institutions.

In Bangladesh, with the creation of the VDTP in 1978, IVS began with a very strong "management and administrative role." But even in the two projects examined in Honduras, the soybean project and CEDEN water, IVS had played a strong managerial and administrative role, especially in the water project. My reading of project descriptions and project reports from other IVS countries would indicate that IVS indeed has gone far beyond the placement of volunteers. As one IVSer put it, "IVS has come a long way from the day it 'parachuted' volunteers into a country."

C. Budgetary Implications of IVS's Broader Role

One consequence of the stronger managerial and administrative role that IVS has assumed is that the number of volunteers bears little relationship to the total IVS involvement and to total IVS project costs. For example, in the CEDEN project in Honduras, in which more than 600 rural communities are being supplied water systems, the total annual cost for the single IVS volunteer engineer is \$16,000. The IVS country director has played a major role as advisor to the project. Another \$86,000 of the IVS costs, funded by PACT, goes to project expenses, including \$36,750 for local personnel, \$21,000 for equipment operation and maintenance, \$10,000 for a revolving loan fund for the villagers to provide the up-front money for pipes and equipment, \$9,000 for CEDEN

administrative costs, etc. Similarly, there are programs in Bolivia and Papua, New Guinea where the cost of the IVS volunteers is but a small proportion of the IVS budgeted costs.

D. How Well Is IVS Managed?

USAID has every reason to satisfy itself on this question with every PVO it funds. But there was some reason in the not-too-distant past for the question to emerge as a particularly important one for IVS. During 1979, the year when the last evaluation was made by AID, IVS had a deficit of \$465,000; by the end of 1980 it was down to \$165,000, and as 1981 draws to a close it has no deficit. But tighter fiscal control is only one indication that IVS-Washington management has improved. Every staff interviewee in Washington or in the field included the comment that IVS-Washington had greatly improved its management. "We've gotten our act together," said one. One field staff person says he now gets immediate responses to all administrative and financial queries. In reviewing all the reports and correspondence from 1980 and 1981 between IVS-Honduras and IVS-Washington, I was very favorably impressed on how well each side kept the other informed. The completeness of her own trip reports and her response to correspondence from staff and volunteers indicated that the IVS-Washington program officer for Latin

America was well-informed, supportive and generally "on top" of all that was going on in Honduras. Thanks to both her and the IVS country director, a spirit of trust and mutual support were reflected in the documents. For reasons that will be apparent in the section on Bangladesh, a similar situation did not exist between IVS-Bangladesh and IVS-Washington. The gap was partially but capably filled by the IVS Executive Director whose own trips made him over the last year the most knowledgeable member of IVS-Washington staff regarding Bangladesh. (And a former IVS staffer, Marshall Bear, acting in a consultant capacity, partially filled the gap at some crucial transition points.) With the recent appointment of an IVS Country Director for Bangladesh, communication should improve. The files seem to indicate there was more communication from Acting Director M.A. Muttalib and his staff to Washington than there was from Washington to Dacca.

More importantly, the content of the IVS staff meeting that brought together field staff with Washington staff reflected the tighter management control and the heightened involvement of the Washington staff in the planning and programming in the field. Chief background paper for the staff meeting was a 27-page "thought piece on program assessment and evaluation." In the sessions I attended there was clearly an effort to arrive at a concensus, not only about

IVS's basic philosophy and operating principles, but on how it goes about decision-making on new programs and how it evaluates on-going programs. Some two years ago there was a turnover of some of the top staff under the level of the executive director; from all accounts it, or what led to it, had a predictable effect at disrupting the smooth management of the organization. But from all current testimony, the Washington staff has stabilized over the past 15 months and changes and shifts have been of field directors. Sixty percent of field directors are new in the last year. IVS's new executive director will inherit an apparently strong and competent middle management staff. Indeed, the current managerial success has itself created IVS's most serious challenge for 1982.

E. Need for Program Expansion

IVS now has the management team and the processes (as well as the attendant overhead) that could field a program that may be half again as large as it now has. As of December 1, 1981, IVS has 25 volunteers serving in 17 different projects in seven countries. They are backed up by seven expatriate field staff. There appears to be a clear consensus on the urgent need for expansion by both field and Washington staff. I am told the IVS board is pressing for such an expansion. I would strongly recommend that if USAID funds IVS for 1982 that it pay close attention to this

expansion. AID's judgment should not be based on a single month or even a single quarter's performance. IVS is now much more careful about criteria for a successful program. I suspect there are some current programs (although none I examined in the field) that would not have passed muster. Therefore, USAID should be prepared for the possibility of an actual retrenchment of programs in some countries while IVS is expanding elsewhere. Unlike some organizations, IVS happily does not seem prone to the "body count" syndrome. IVS will likely stay in Bangladesh, but it is not likely to stay there just to keep up the country or volunteer count. (The new IVS director clearly has the freedom to recommend that IVS pull out.)

But now that IVS's financial house appears to be in order, now that its management has been strengthened and its planning, programming, and evaluation procedures thought through and agreed on, IVS needs to get on with the urgent task of program development and orderly expansion.

F. Program Impact?

This is dealt with in terms of the projects in the two countries visited and where possible is discussed in those sections. Those projects that lend themselves to being quantified (e.g., the number of ducks hatched in Sylhet or the number of water systems installed in Honduras) are

obviously easier to deal with than the assessment of the long-term value of the health and nutrition projects or the credit and literacy programs, or who in fact are the chief beneficiaries of the soybean project. What remains hardest of all to assess is the real object of so much of the community/rural development activity in which IVS engages: the extent to which the villagers themselves have been empowered to take some control of their own destiny.

IVS now seems to realize that it needs to be much more hard-nosed about how it goes about impact analysis and assessment of cost-benefit. One finds little in the way of hard data in the current files. But it is in the attention given to these matters in the substantive "thought piece" prepared for IVS's recent staff conference that seem to prove that IVS is now aware that to expect to receive funds in the future from USAID or any other funders it must be in a position to prove that its work is cost effective and that its projects are indeed having the kind of impact that makes the whole effort worthwhile. (The paper cited above is included in the Supplementary material attached to this report and available in the program office of FVA/PVC. Attention is called in particular to the section of the paper on Impact Analysis, beginning on page 21.)

G. Volunteer Placement, Performance and Success
at Skills Transfer

Again, the sections on the two countries visited address this with the volunteers actually present. I cannot judge the successes in other IVS countries. In the two visited, I was impressed with quality, skill and obvious dedication of the IVS volunteers. In Bangladesh especially, the results of the work of some 45 IVS who had been in Bangladesh over the last nine years were quite obvious. They had clearly succeeded in transferring both skills and a sense of mission to the Bangladeshi staff of FIVDB who had been previously their "co-workers".

The more specifically one looks at individual volunteer tours, the more difficult it is to generalize about the success or failure at "skills transfer." The sections of this report on Honduras and Bangladesh do make some specific comments. Of crucial importance is the assignment early enough of a counterpart ready and able to carry on the work after the departure of the IVS specialist. On that score there would be mixed reviews from both Honduras and Bangladesh.

H. What About the "V" in IVS?

In what sense is IVS a volunteer organization? It was a question I asked frequently. Whatever its volunteer origins, wasn't it now providing international technical specialists? And however low its monthly stipend, (\$150 per month for a

new volunteer) didn't its COLA (cost of living allowance) give the "volunteer" a comfortable income for the rural area of a developing country? In Honduras the respective outlays for the three volunteers (combined stipend and COLA) were respectively \$16,900, \$15,017 and \$15,979. All three are married; all have at least one child. A volunteer in another Latin country with a large family receives almost \$25,000. At least half of IVS's current crop of volunteers are from third-world countries, and some of them, at least, are making as good or better a living than they would in a regular technical job at home.

From most of the respondents, the answer to the "volunteer" question did not come down to money. Most saw the combined stipend and COLA as necessary to recruit the kind of middle level technical specialist required in most IVS projects. No one on the staff of IVS questioned on this would have favored dropping the word "voluntary" from IVS or replacing it with "technical" or some other word.

In one way or another all the respondents said the word "voluntary" reflected something of the spirit and dedication they saw as identified with IVS. Said one: "A technical consultant may do his job for eight hours a day and then go home. An IVS volunteer almost always can be expected to have a commitment to the community in which he or she is working and particularly to the poor." Another said IVS volunteers

try to make themselves part of the community and become involved with their families in activities beyond their own project. Although all applauded the multi-national character of IVS, as exemplified by the number of non-Americans and even third-world volunteers on its roster, there was less agreement whether the American or Canadian or British volunteer saw his role any differently than the volunteer from a developing country. One IVS country director did not see much difference; but another said he was inclined to interview a Third-World candidate more closely to ascertain if he had that special commitment or dedication that he might assume in the American or Canadian. It was not a question I asked of the volunteers themselves. But one 50-year-old volunteer, himself from a developing country, volunteered that (a) his income from IVS was as much as he had received as a technician for CARE; and (b) with his age and experience he found it something of a come-down to be called a "volunteer". In one way or another, all IVS staff expressed pride in what they saw as IVS standing for for a quarter of a century. And to them voluntarism and the spirit it reflected remained an important ingredient.

I. What Then is Special About IVS?

IVS Board Member Uma Lele of the World Bank in a recent program committee report to the Board had this to say:

IVS's uniqueness lies in its independence in striving towards its proclaimed objectives of combating poverty, not just from its patron churches and governments, but from any particular ideology. (her emphasis) The resiliency shown by IVS in the Indochina war and the subsequent period is a testimonial to this independence. It is this which I believe those associated with IVS should be proud about and highlight, in addition to its emphasis on the grassroots approach and skills transfer.

In the time I have spent looking at IVS, I have tried to discover its special character. I have only partially succeeded. I think it has a lot to do with its low-keyed style, its quite disarming self-effacement. It is not alone these days in priding itself on its beautiful smallness. But it has fewer competitors even among PVO's in insisting that it need not and should not tout its own horn. An IVS volunteer in Honduras wondered aloud if IVS should not be getting more public recognition for what it was doing for CEDEN in the water program. But it was clear that no one else in IVS thought it necessary to stamp IVS on every new well or pump.

(One might argue that IVS's profile in Honduras worked one small disadvantage. USAID officials there with whom I talked, although quite familiar with the IVS involvement in

the soybean project, appeared to have little knowledge of IVS's quite remarkable performance on the CEDEN water project.)

As indicated above in the quote from its concept paper, IVS sees as its special challenge to carry out its development work in a way that indigenous groups "come to an ownership of the means to solve their own problems." Hence, as their concept paper explains, IVS uses the word "appropriate" as a verb meaning "to take for one's own use." What IVS seems to realize is that it is easier for an indigenous group to appropriate whatever skill or knowledge IVS has to offer if IVS adopts a style that is quiet, modest, unpretentious. It is IVS's willingness, even desire, to submerge itself and its organizational ego into that of an indigenous institution. And - if my sample is valid - it seems to attract individuals to its staff and its corps of volunteers with similar personal characteristics. It is a style that makes it possible for IVS and its people to recognize what contribution they can make, to make that contribution and then quietly to leave.

The late Barbara Ward once quoted from Lao-Tzo and applied this particular wisdom of Taoism to international development work: "There are three treasures. Guard them well: The first is compassion. The second is frugality. And the third is the desire not to be foremost in all things at all times." IVS shares its compassion with most PVOs. With all but a few it shares its frugality. But to an

uncommon degree it appears among the few that is content "not to be foremost in all things at all times." It is this that seems most special about IVS.

III. IVS IN HONDURAS

IVS's current involvement in Honduras includes the Soybean Development Project and the CEDEN Water Resource Development Project. Formal IVS involvement in the CEDEN Health Project ended when its volunteer public health nurse completed her tour of duty.

A. Soybean Development Project

1. Background: A program sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and initially funded by USAID, it sought to introduce soybeans as a new crop in Honduras and to convince its people to grow soybeans as a cash crop and to consume them for nutritional reasons. Early in the project, the Ministry requested IVS to provide three technicians to work with and to train Ministry personnel. In July, 1977, IVS recruited Wang Chao Chin from the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center in Taiwan. Cheng Ching ("Pedro") Kuei, also from Taiwan, was assigned to the extension component of the project. A third IVS technician, Henry Lee, also Taiwanese, had been working as an IVS volunteer on a horticulture project elsewhere in Honduras, and came to the soybean project to assist with research in July, 1979. Lee's tour ended last January; Wang's will be completed at the end

of 1981 and "Pedro's" in mid-1982. The program was begun in the five areas of the fertile valley of the Comayagua department. The majority of the project areas are asentamientos, which are farmed communally under the aegis of INRA, the national land reform agency.

General project goals are (1) to diversify production of agricultural crops through research and extension of soybeans; (2) to generate new sources of income for subsistence farmers; (3) to encourage the consumption of soybeans to help improve the nutritional status of the population.

2. Evaluation: In general all three of the project goals have been met to some degree but all involved with the project seem to agree that on any one of the three goals the full potential is still long in the future. To comment in ways more specific to IVS and its role in the project:

a. Volunteer placement and performance. I heard nothing but praise for the IVS volunteers assigned to the project. It appears to have been a brilliant move on IVS's part to select skilled technicians from a country -- Taiwan -- whose people had long ago accepted soybeans as an important part of their diet. Geraldo Reyes, director of the research center in Comayagua where Wang and Lee carried

on their soybean investigation, praised the quality of the IVS service as "excellent". He said that thanks especially to Wang the center had more complete information on soybeans than on any other crop grown in Honduras. "The results of the IVS help," he said, "are very clear to see and the data we have will continue to be of value to us."

(The IVS Country Director, Chet Thomas, had elsewhere explained that Wang's testing of more than 400 varieties of soybeans from all over the world and information flow he maintained with soybean investigation centers around the world had given the Honduras soybean program visibility and respect and placed the center in a position to continue to receive quality seeds. He said it was the investigation of Wang, coupled with the field trials of "Pedro" of planting times, intensities, spacing and weed and insect control, that had given the growers and potential growers more technical information than exists even on the most traditional of crops grown in Honduras.)

Ing. Padilla, the national coordinator of the soybean project also praised Wang's work highly. Padilla's involvement with the extension side of the project made him knowledgeable of "Pedro's" work which Padilla saw as particularly valuable because of "Pedro's" previous work in Honduras with the Chinese Agricultural Mission. Padilla said it had made him sensitive to and effective with the environment in which he had to work. "One of Pedro's most

important and longest lasting contributions had been in the area of consumption," he said. "Probably only someone from a country whose people had already been consuming soybeans could have been as effective."

There emerged a more subtle accolade to these IVS Taiwanese volunteers. Over a four-year period they had by all accounts maintained their own work ethic, characterized by hard, conscientious effort and cheerful perseverance. It was not until 4:00 p.m. last Christmas eve that they finished sowing the last experiment, according to one of the volunteer's reports. "I think we showed the local people the way we handle our work and responsibilities," he said, and added that "attitude" was an important part of what they were demonstrating.

b. Skill transfer and institutionalization. Among those closest to the project there was less agreement on the ability of Wang's long-term counterpart to take over from Wang. The Director of the Research Center thought he could resist any attempt to move the counterpart to another position. The national coordinator of the soybean project appeared less optimistic. He said the man was "good in the field but not in the lab work." The extra-ordinary competence of Kwan probably made it impossible to recruit a Honduran counterpart who would be fully prepared to take over the investigative work on his departure. As USAID's Ray Baum put it, "Wang's

competence is way above that of a mid-level technician."

The "end of our report" of IVS volunteer Henry Lee reflected a confidence on the IVS volunteers' part of the quality of the technical assistance they were bringing to the project. But he added that when the IVS people got together in staff meetings they frequently raised the issue over whether the same quality of work would continue after their departure. He added: "It seems to me the answer is still somewhat unknown."

The two remaining volunteers seem to agree with the IVS country director that over a four-year period IVS has set the project on course and that IVS should now withdraw.

c. Program impact. The success of the research program -- largely due to IVS volunteers -- has already been remarked. The majority of farmers now participating in the soybean growing program are communal members of the asentamientos, the land reform communities. The argument is made that the soybean project is helping to make these "new" farmers to better their income and productivity. However, no hard data to prove the point seemed available. The extension component is reportedly working with 12 campesino groups, approximately 240 families sponsored by CARITAS. It is here that the consumption/nutrition aspects are emphasized. I was informed that the demand was increasing for both soymilk and soyflour for tortillas and that there was marked increase in soya

consumption in over 40 asentamientos in the Comayagua valley.

d. A USAID view. Ray Baum of USAID, who had initially been involved with the soybean project, expressed satisfaction with the IVS contribution to the project. He explained that it was part of the agreement with the Government of Honduras that AID would fund staff, including IVS volunteers, for only the first two and one half years of the project. He stressed that in no way did AID's discontinuance of that part of the funding reflect any displeasure with the project or with the IVS performance in it. Because USAID funded is as a nutrition program, he expressed disappointment that the Government ministries involved had not placed greater emphasis on the nutrition aspects.

e. Program constraints. The chief constraints on the project have been governmental and political. Earlier elections to the National Assembly -- a first step in a democratic transfer of power from military to civilian rule -- left some of the ministries and agencies of the government in control of the Liberal Party and others under the National Party. Government operations such as the soybean project are affected since funds from the central government were often withheld if the particular ministry or agency had identified with the opposing political affiliation. The Agricultural Research Center had apparently been caught in such a political bind. After going for five months without

pay, many of the staff members of the research center left their jobs and three of the six extensionists working on the project quit. At the time of my visit, the laborers working on the experimental plots were again on strike for lack of wages. In the preceding months, several of the key figures in the soybean program were replaced. In the current year, not enough funds were appropriated for the purchase of the seed crop that would have guaranteed sufficient hybrid seed for the spring and fall plantings.

In recent days the long awaited election was held. With the government now clearly in the hands of one party (the Liberals) there is at least the opportunity for a clear policy decision on such programs as the soybean project. The long-term success of the project is dependent on a renewed commitment of the Government of Honduras to it.

Before I left Honduras the IVS Country Director joined with the national coordinator of the soybean project and the director of the research center in a meeting with the Minister of Agriculture to solve some of the short-term financial problems of the projects. They left the meeting hopeful that the back wages would be paid.

B. CEDEN Water Project:

1. Background. IVS became involved with CEDEN in the spring of 1979. CEDEN is the National Evangelical Committee

for Development and Emergency, a Honduran non-profit organization under the sponsorship of Protestant denominations and institutions operating in Honduras. Church World Services was instrumental in bringing it into existence after a hurricane in 1974. IVS through two personnel, a program design advisor and a volunteer engineer/topographer, have played a critical role in the project.

I spent most of three days visiting village water projects in both northern and southern Honduras. At each of the sites there was opportunity to talk with villagers, usually including the president of the patronata, the community organization which the villagers formed to administer the new water system.

2. Program impact. CEDEN set out to install 60 water projects in very poor rural communities that are out of reach of the government's program for potable water. Thanks in no small part to IVS, CEDEN's three-year goal is being surpassed with 55 systems installed in a little more than two years and prospects for as many as 70 installed and functioning by the end of the three-year period.

Most of the villages served -- and the 11 specifically visited -- are far off the hard roads and approachable only on foot or by a four-wheel drive vehicle in dry weather. After visiting a number of the villages served, I have no doubt that the beneficiaries are among the country's poorest people. In the discussion with villagers there came through

pride in a water system in which the villagers themselves had worked in installing. In development work where so many benefits are intangible, there is something very real and satisfying about a tap with clean water flowing outside a simple house of mud and sticks. There were stories of earlier days with long walks for water and the uncertainty of even that water in the dry seasons. Less obvious and therefore much harder to judge is the effectiveness of CEDEN's overall community development effort. In some of the villages visited there was a health worker trained by CEDEN. But the existence of one CEDEN program, such as water, did not necessarily coincide in a given village with other CEDEN initiated programs such as health, housing improvement, agricultural assistance or rural credit. (If one were evaluating CEDEN rather than an IVS contribution to one CEDEN program, one might speculate that CEDEN had spread itself too thin and that its programs were not fully enough integrated and coordinated.)

3. Skill transfer and institutionalization. Chet Thomas, the IVS Field Director for Honduras, has worn a second hat in the position described above as program design and advisor technician. A recent field report from Thomas describes his current role in the project as giving "orientation and planning to the national coordinator of the project, Jacobo Nuñez, in streamlining the program to make it more efficient and cost

benefitting." Such a modest description is testimony to how successfully Thomas has transferred his skill over to Nuñez. It was not always so. In the early months Thomas was not only advisor but chief supervisor and decision-maker. Attesting to this were Naomi de Espinoza, Executive Director of CEDEN and Daniel Medina, National Coordinator of CEDEN. Both expressed satisfaction that over the last few months, Thomas' counterpart, Jacobo Nuñez, had clearly begun to take over and that Thomas was more clearly cast in the advisory role. Thomas himself is confident that CEDEN should be able to operate the water program on its own by the end of 1982.

There has been no comparable success in CEDEN finding an adequate counterpart for Fausto Reyna, the topographical engineer and IVS volunteer from Guatemala. The case for the recent extension of Reyna for a third year was largely based on the need to finish training CEDEN water personnel in the collection of data. CEDEN has not made a commitment to assign a permanent person to work alongside Reyna and to learn the necessary technical design for the installation of a water system. Thomas' written justification for Reyna's extension for a third year says, "this is the year Fausto will work himself out of a job."

4. An evaluation session. My visit to Choluteca

coincided with an evaluation session which brought together 25 participants from 12 communities that had CEDEN installed water systems. It seemed an excellent example of participatory evaluation in which the communities, represented by officers of their elected patronata, tell the CEDEN staff what is right or wrong with the water and health projects. At the session I attended, most of the communities expressed satisfaction. Some complained about the 20% up-front contribution that the community had to make at the beginning of the project, although most agreed that some initial contribution was needed to show a community was serious about repaying the project costs. What emerged clearly was that the community organizational work that had gone on over the water project had spawned other community endeavors. At a similar session a few days later I am informed that one community, Exitos de Anach, near San Pedro Sula, reported that not only was it paying off CEDEN very punctually for its water system, but it had money left over for land for a new community center. Such participatory evaluation sessions obviously had the effect of encouraging other communities to take similar initiatives. The CEDEN staff, on its part, learned that it needed to devote more up-front time to community organization and to hire "promoters" to do the necessary follow-up work with the community organizations.

C. IVS Involvement in a CEDEN Health Project

An IVS volunteer, Carol Castillo, a public health nurse, ended a two-year tour last June as coordinator of the CEDEN health program in the San Pedro Sula Region. All of the reports and correspondence I had seen in the files indicated she had done an excellent job of training health workers for 20 villages. From all observations, she did a prodigious amount of work and revamped the health program for CEDEN in that region. But it was not until her final months on the projects that CEDEN granted her repeated request and assigned a counterpart to work with her. Because I was interested in the "after-life" of such an IVS involvement, I met with her former counterpart, now her successor, and talked with health workers in a number of the villages. It would seem that her successor tended to spend more time on paper-work and less time in village work. She appeared afraid of driving on the mountain roads. All in all, the program seemed to lack the vigor it apparently had under Castillo. In the view of the IVS field director, the program had not become sufficiently established. He said he failed to convince CEDEN's health director that Castillo should be replaced with another IVS volunteer. One speculation was Castillo's very success posed a threat to her supervisor at CEDEN headquarters. It does reflect

the subtle problems of an expatriate development organization that can only push as far as the host institution for whatever reason allows.

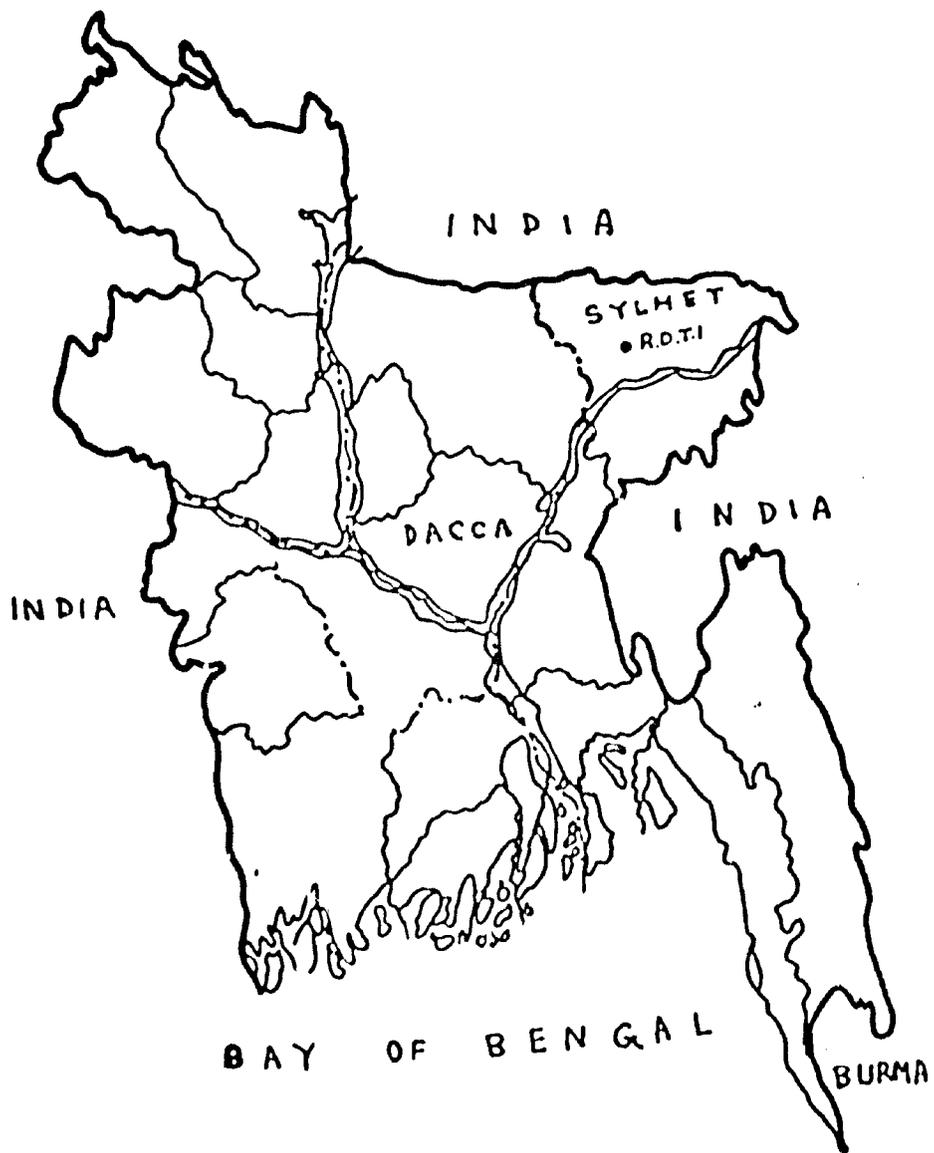
IV. IVS IN BANGLADESH: A CASE STUDY IN INSTITUTION BUILDING

A. Background

IVS has operated in Bangladesh since 1972. In its first three years it placed its volunteers in a number of programs -- chiefly under government ministries, including the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development and the Bangladesh Agricultural University. From the viewpoint of IVS and its volunteers the assignments proved less than satisfactory. In 1975 a deliberate move was made to concentrate the volunteers in the Sylhet area in the north-east part of the country in a program designed in collaboration with the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) of the government. The program included such rural development activities as agriculture, health, sanitation, duck-raising and had as an overall purpose the strengthening of the government-sponsored village cooperatives, the KSSes (for Krishi Samaboya Samity). Within a year, the seven IVS volunteers were integrated into what became known briefly as the IVS Package Program with a concentration on 11 villages. By that time the IVS team had recruited a number of young Bangladeshi professionals who came to be called their "co-workers".

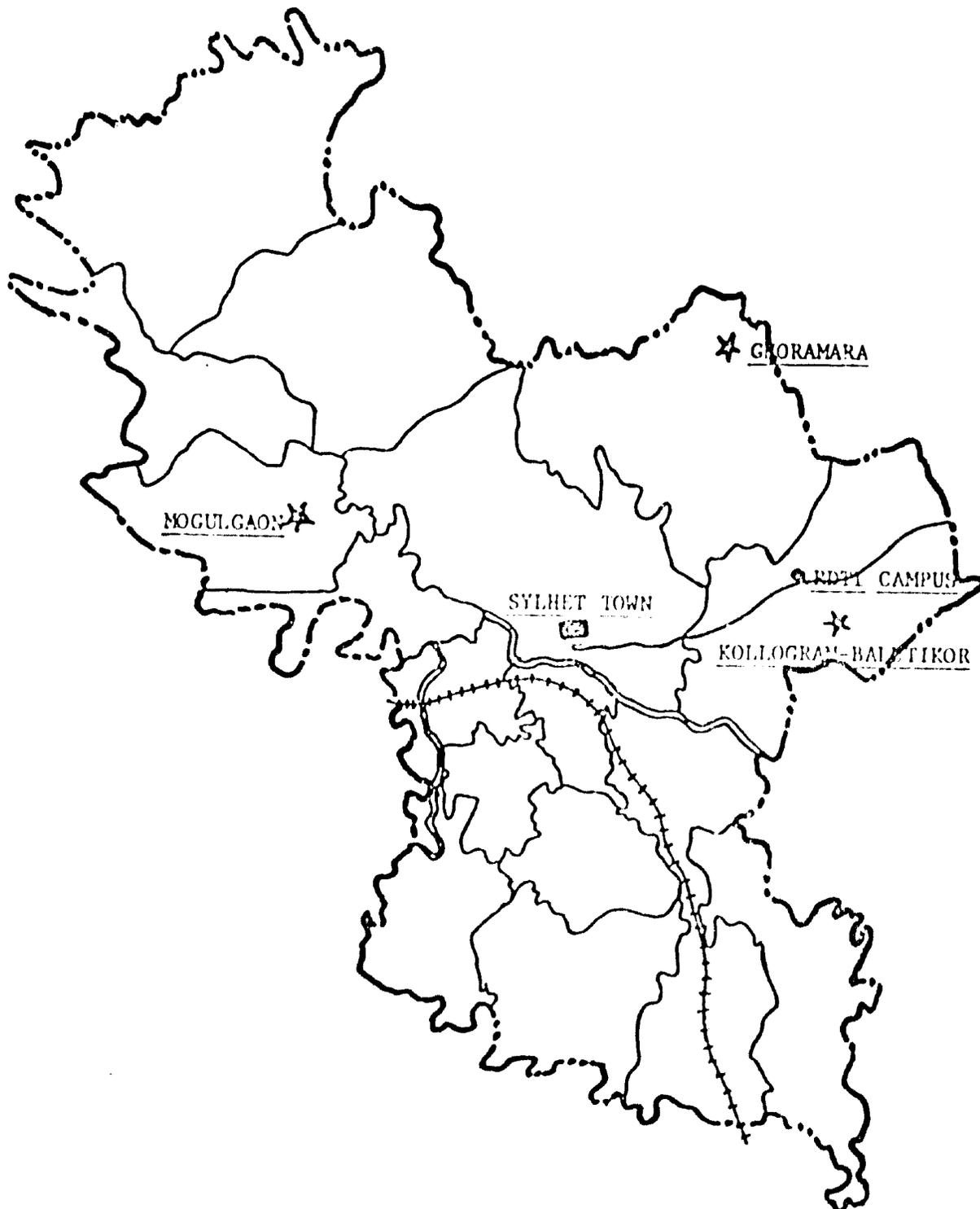
MAP OF BANGLADESH

Showing location of
VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAM
Kotwali Thana, Sylhet District



KOTWALI THANA, SYLHET DISTRICT
VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

Showing location of three clusters of villages which make up
project area (*), and location of VDTP Headquarters,
RDTI Campus, Khadimnagar, Sylhet (●)



B. Creation of the Village Development Training Program

The year 1978 brought a major change when IVS in collaboration chiefly with the director of the Rural Development Training Institute (RDTI) in Sylhet, shifted to make training a primary focus. The number of villages were expanded and three village cluster centers were planned to serve as the focal point for the practical experience institute trainees would receive in doing village extension work. The new program was called the Village Development Training Program (VDTP) and included as collaborators not only RDTI (the Rural Development Training Institute), but two other government-sponsored Sylhet based training institutes under different ministries, the AETI (the Agricultural Extension Training Institute) and the FWVTI (the Family Welfare Visitors Training Institute). USAID-Dacca made a two-year grant with the possibility of third year support for the program.

C. Shift of Control to Bangladeshi

Within a year, David G. French, who served as director of the VDTP as well as IVS Country Director in Bangladesh made a significant move toward transferring responsibility and control of the Sylhet program from the expatriate IVS to deshi hands. In a September, 1979 memorandum to IVS-Washington, French urged the immediate appointment of one

of the deshi co-workers, Zahin Amed, to become the director of VDTP. "The most important resource in the Sylhet program," argued French, "is the capability and self-confidence of the deshi staff, which is the end product of four years of team work with expatriate volunteers..." "That resource," he wrote, "should be used while the momentum is strong."* IVS-Washington agreed. One evidence of the "momentum" to which French referred was the fact that the Bangladeshi co-workers had formed an organization of themselves which came to be called Friends of Village Development-Bangladesh (FIVDB). The newly-named VDTP director, Zahin Amed, as one of the prime movers in the creation of FIVDB, was seen as a leader by the other deshi co-workers and was clearly their choice to be director.

(My last formal interview before leaving Bangladesh was in Dacca with Mr. A. K. M. Ahsan, Chairman of the Board of FIVDB. Now in his early sixties, Mr. Ahsan had been previously Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture almost a decade ago and was later a member of the National Planning Commission. He spoke of how rare it was that an expatriate organization could succeed in establishing what he termed the "internal dynamism" that would enable the indigenous group to assume responsibility. It is to the

*Because of the significance of that memorandum in signifying a turning point in institution building and transference, it is included in its entirety as Appendix A to this report.

credit of IVS that it responded favorably to French's contention that the "internal dynamism" had occurred and that it was time to take the first major step in transferring responsibility.

By mid-1980, on a visit to Sylhet, IVS Board Member Uma Lele referred to the project even then as a "Bangladeshi program in which IVS is playing a role, as distinct from its being an IVS program in which there are a lot of Bangladeshi on the payroll." She said, "this is a Bangladeshi program in which IVS has been playing a facilitating role."

On the same occasion the IVS Executive Director traced the evolution of IVS's role in Bangladesh. He stressed the importance in the Sylhet program of the growth of a "separate identity" among the co-workers and employees into a new institution, The Friends of Village Development-Bangladesh. He said he could not claim that it was initially a conscious effort on IVS's part but he was glad that IVS served as a catalyst for them to come together. Noting that the Bangladeshi had been hired individually and not as a group, he continued:

"It was when you came together that you worked out collectively this sense that you wished yourselves to be doing, controlling the kind of work that IVS was involved in. So I think it has been a natural evolution, even though

it wasn't a totally conscious one. I think both you and we have reacted to it and taken advantage of it." He went on to describe IVS in mid-1980 as being in a period of devolvement, of deciding how to get uninvolved in a constructive, affirmative way.

The next step in IVS's "devolvement" occurred by the beginning of 1981 when effective operational control and management of the program passed from IVS to FIVDB. Although IVS remains listed in documents as "joint executing agency" or co-sponsor (this more for certain legal or yet unresolved property issues), there is no question but that the baton had been passed. An expatriate organization has effectively relinquished its control in favor of local control of a staff it trained and an institution it largely created.

D. The Issue Over Training as the Primary Goal

One major issue overlaps the transfer of power and responsibility from IVS to FIVDB -- which is to say that it did not become an issue with FIVDB but to some degree was an issue from the beginning of the VDTP. USAID-Dacca's decision not to fund the project beyond June 1980 hinged largely on that issue. Because these many months later it remains something of an organizational identity problem for the successor organization it would seem relevant to examine the USAID-Dacca review of April, 1979 and an evaluation by another source a year later.

1. USAID-Dacca, April, 1979. Conclusions and recommendations for a four-member project evaluation team were set out in an "issues paper" prepared for an April 13, 1979 meeting of AID-Dacca. (This paper and summary of discussion on it and on a subsequent meeting on April 16 are included in the supplements of this report.)

The issue paper noted that from 1975-78, USAID supported IVS in what was, in practice, a village development project, but the project then being evaluated was for IVS to transform the earlier effort into essentially a field training program for the three government training institutes in Sylhet. The issues paper would seem to have reflected a thoughtful approach by the four-member evaluation team. (As explained to me by present AID-Dacca staff, AID's priorities for Bangladesh did not include the kind of community development efforts reflected in the earlier grants to IVS but were concentrated on increased agricultural production and the lowering of the country's very high fertility rate.)

To quote from the issues paper:

All the written material submitted to USAID ... and the discussions with the IVS Country Director show the mental shift has been made, at least in principle, from village development to training....

The expatriate staff is now ready to go along with the training concept if they can also do development. Both IVS volunteers and co-workers find difficulties in prioritizing between and trying to do both

village development and training with the Institutes. The day-to-day focus is on the villages and not on the Institutes. A training plan has not been thought through. How much village development for this is necessary also has not been thought out. (emphasis added in original document)

The Project Evaluation Team recommended that IVS be funded through the end of FY1979 to carry through in completing the 'mental flip flop' from village development to focusing primarily on training. The Team specifically recommended that "the project focal point must become primarily training and all project resources, plans and activities have to be adjusted to that end. A moratorium must be placed on all nontraining related activities."

A final internal USAID review meeting revealed a split among the officers attending. Below the Deputy Director level, three supported extension of the IVS grant for three years; three favored a phase out at the end of the second year. The minutes of that meeting indicate why the decision was ultimately made to fund only until June, 1980. The first reason was that "IVS staff is still ambivalent about the most critical design component, i.e., training." The second reason elicited is something of a "Catch-22" proposition for IVS: "the range of constraints facing the Training Institutes are such that even if the IVS staff were fully committed to the training component as the prime project purpose, chances of success are very doubtful." Such "constraints" were not

highlighted in the original issues paper. There has been no explicit evaluation from any source of the three institutes, reporting as they do to three separate ministries of the government. It is therefore uncertain whether it is indeed possible for IVS, FIVDB or any other institution to work successfully with them using village development as primarily a training laboratory and testing arena. Given the program priorities of USAID-Dacca in 1979 and its very real need to decide which PVO projects "are likely to be most responsive to [AID's] PVO strategy in the future, this 1981 evaluator is not inclined to argue against that 1979 decision.

But before leaving that bit of 1979 history, one further comment might be made. The same AID discussant at that final meeting who pointed out how "very shakey" the institutions themselves were suggested that if the co-workers could be shed there might be a chance IVS could work things out. One is left to speculate that if the co-workers had been "shed" the whole nature of what emerged as a significant effort at institution-building and the creation of an "internal dynamism" that made possible the turnover to an indigenous institution might never have taken place. With the inevitable end of AID funding, whether at the end of 1980 or later, the development and/or training effort would most likely have also ended. The irony is that it was the threat

of the demise of AID funding that prompted an earlier rather than a later move to transfer responsibility from IVS to FIVDB in part because as an indigenous institution, the Friends of Village Development-Bangladesh might be eligible for the kind of expatriate funding that the U.S.-based IVS was not. (At present two European institutions, ICCO and EZE, provide the bulk of the funding for FIVDB.) An additional year of funding by AID to IVS might, ironically, have affected the "internal dynamism".

2. Evaluation by Staff of Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development.* The USAID officials who opted in April, 1979 to end IVS support for the Sylhet at the end of 1979, would have felt strengthened in their conviction had they read a September, 1980 evaluation by two staff of the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development. It is not likely that AID-Dacca saw the evaluation. Until I learned of it in an interview with Mr. K. Rahman, Director of Training for the IRDP (the Integrated Rural Development Program) and requested a copy from BARD, Comilla, no one in IVS, in FIVDB or at the Rural Development Training Institute at Sylhet

*M. Ghulam Sattar and M. Solaiman, Village Development Training Program: A Study of the IVS Project in Sylhet, Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, Kotbari, Comilla, September, 1980 (A Preliminary Report). Included in the Supplemental Material provided PCV with this report.

had seen a copy. Still marked "preliminary report," it had never been officially released or circulated. (The fact that this somewhat critical evaluation was not officially approved and circulated would seem to give some substance to the oft-heard contention that senior staff of the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives [the key ministry which originally approved the IVS-sponsored Village Development Training Program and which is over the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development and the Rural Development Training Institute in Sylhet] are not of one mind regarding the past or the present operation of the VDTP. K. Rahman, Director of Training for the Rural Development Training Program, also under the same ministry, and formerly head of the consultative committee for the VDTP when he was Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, evidenced strong support for the VDTP as it had evolved under FIVDB.)

To highlight some of the BARD criticism:

- too much of the expenditures are going for personnel and equipment costs; not enough for "real economic development";
- no provision for development of village infrastructure of roads, culverts, embankments, irrigation and drainage canals "which are very much needed for development in the project area";

- human resources used by VDTP for working in only 23 villages is quite big; same skilled manpower could be used to serve larger number of villages;
- emphasis seems to have shifted from strengthening the KSSes (the government sponsored village cooperatives) to promotion of other organizations (for women, youth, etc.);
- complain that in the latest proposal to the Ministry the roles and joint sponsorship of the IRDP and the three training institutes, the RDTI, the AETI and the FWVTI are played down as joint executing agencies;
- accepts the qualitative contribution, VDTP makes in its limited village area but contends its "quantitative impact" is very limited and sees its wider application and replication as difficulties.

3. Training vs. Development Remains an Issue. It was discussion of the BARD report, apparently seen for the first time during my visit by the Director of the Rural Development Training Institute, Mr. Ashrafuddin Amed, that provided the occasion for his criticism of the VDTP as currently

administered by FIVDB. He complained that the "initial thrust" (i.e., training) had been lost sight of. "With FIVDB, the thrust had been changed from training to promotional activities." (No similar complaints were heard from the principals of the other two training institutes. Trainees of the Agricultural Extension Training Institute had been on strike (for the second time) for the past five months. The Family Welfare Visitor Training Institute was preparing to place eight of their trainees in the village cluster centers with the incoming class in January.) Nonetheless, the current complaints of the RDTI director assume significance because RDTI continued support of VDTP is important if not crucial. FIVDB offices are in a building on the RDTI campus. In the early days there was closer collaboration with RDTI than with the other two training institutes.

The fact is that the shift of emphasis of which the RDTI director complains was apparent as early as mid-1980. The Project Description submitted that month to the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (included as a supplement to this report and labeled IVS-S:412) reflected the shift. It is also explicit in the proposal FIVDB made in October, 1980 to the German organization, EZE, in which it describes its "main aim" as strengthening the rural self-help capacity and assisting it through an adequate

village-centered service structure. It lists was one of the "secondary aims" the practical training of government personnel in a village based counseling center. (The proposal was funded by EZE and by the Dutch organization, ICCO; it is also included in the supplementary material.)* Prior to May, 1980, VDTP was translated Village Development Training Program. But in all subsequent documents, including current FIVDB stationery, it stands for Village Development and Training Program.

The shift of emphasis may have started under IVS but under FIVDB a clear consensus seems to have emerged that the use of the villagers as a training laboratory for the three institutes is secondary and even ancillary to the chief purpose of developing the villagers themselves. In the manner of most community developers, the staff became primarily advocates for the villagers. There was general support for the extension and health workers who actually

*The third document included in this Supplement folder is the minutes of the June 19, 1980 meeting of the VDTP's consultative committee. That committee was chaired by the Deputy Commissioner for Sylhet and included the principals of the three training institutes and various other government officials in the area. Most of the discussion centered on the transfer of operational responsibility from IVS to FIVDB and plans to replace USAID funds then expiring with funds from other expatriate sources. Because of the transfer of Mr. Rahman, the chairman, from Sylhet and for other reasons that probably had to do with the growing ambiguity of the relationship between the project and the three training institutes, no further meetings of the consultative committee have been held. At this writing, there are plans to hold by the end of 1981 a joint meeting between the committee and the FIVDB Board of Directors.

resided in the cluster centers for weeks at a time and were helpful to the staff and the villagers. There was less sympathy for RDTI trainees who in large numbers were sent to "observe" the villages for one or two days. The VDTP staff came to resent what Zahin Amed described as "turning the villagers into animals in a zoo."

All this said there appears to be considerable interaction between VDTP and the institutes. Presumably if the strike at AETI ends, the trainees will again be placed in small numbers at the cluster centers. As previously noted, eight trainees of the FWVTI are slated to be placed in the cluster centers. The IVS volunteer under FIVDB agricultural specialist lecture as much as three times weekly at RDTI. Another IVS volunteer who coordinates the literacy program also lectures at RDTI. And the newly assigned third IVS volunteer, a health specialist, will presumably follow the example of her predecessor and give lectures both at RDTI and FWVTI.

E. Some Unfinished Institution Building

The newly appointed IVS Country Director for Bangladesh has a particular piece of unfinished institution building cut out for him. (Since the departure of David French in August, 1980, a Bangladeshi, Mr. M. A. Muttalib, long-time associate director of IVS in Bangladesh, has been serving

very capably in an acting capacity.) The fact that the original negotiations between the Ministries and the training institutes was with IVS, the fact that IVS still plays an important supportive role and appears to enjoy the good will of the key actors places the new IVS country director in a position to play a very necessary and useful role as negotiator and catalyst in bridging the communications gap that has grown between the indigenous FIVDB and some of the key officials, both local and national. In his role as go-between he can expect to have a powerful ally in the Dacca-based chairman of FIVDB's Board of Directors, Mr. A. K. M. Ahsan. The chairman made it clear in my interview with him that the more open and vocal support of himself and his colleagues on the FIVDB Board (most of them, like himself, former government officials of high rank) is necessary and important to the continued health and well being of FIVDB's efforts in Sylhet. Freshly stated goals and objectives and new terms of reference appear necessary. It is clear that a certain degree of political and bureaucratic support from key government agencies is necessary for an institution even if its funding is from foreign sources.

F. How is FIVDB Faring?

In general, FIVDB is faring very well.* IVS has every right to take pride in the institution it helped bring into

*An 11-page report on the activities for the first six months of 1981 is included as Appendix B.

existence. FIVDB obviously wants the continued advice and support it receives from IVS (including the three current IVS volunteers), but it could -- even 10 months after the formal transfer -- survive without IVS. If the present Village Development and Training Center is judged for what it is in fact -- an organization doing a good job of community development in some 30 villages -- it can be judged a success. After a week living with the Bangladeshi workers from the three cluster centers and accompanying them on their village visits to meetings of the credit organizations they had formed, the literacy classes they had established, and the various innovations they had introduced in agriculture, in horticulture and duck raising, what came through most strongly was the pride they took in the work. They regarded VDTP as their own institution. Time after time I asked the Bangladeshi how it was different now as contrasted to the IVS days. I usually heard a variation of the same answer: "Before we thought of ourselves as employees of IVS, with the IVS volunteers acting as our supervisors. Now it is our responsibility, our organization."

The role of the IVS volunteers changed significantly. IVS Volunteer James Jennings who concentrates on literacy programs had come only a year before and after the directorship had passed to a Bangladeshi, Zahin Amed. He had to make no mental switch. He was serving an indiginous

organization in much the same way that IVS volunteers in other countries serve. The newest IVS volunteer, Patricia Travaline, had been in Sylhet less than two weeks. A Medical Mission Sister with long experience in Bangladesh, she anticipated no difficulties. For the IVS volunteer agricultural specialist, now beginning his fourth year in Sylhet, the adjustment was clearly more difficult. A Filipino, he had gone from being the chief supervisor of most of the agricultural projects to being supervisor only to his own counterpart and simply advisor to all the other workers. But he appeared to be universally respected by the Bangladeshi staff for his knowledge and accomplishments. He may request extension for yet a fifth year.

IVS (and for that matter USAID and IVS' other funders in recent years) should find reason for satisfaction in the fact that the present Bangladeshi institution, FIVDB, appears to be making effort to reach the poorest and most deprived of the people in the villages it is serving. It is doing this particularly in its credit, literacy, health and horticulture programs. There is some validity to the FIVDB staff contention that the government-sponsored village cooperatives, the KSSes, were not adequately reaching the poorest, usually the landless or at best marginal farmers. Nonetheless, FIVDB has continued to work with the KSSes; in the newest of the three cluster centers, Ghoramara, the

FIVDB workers are responsible for adding seven KSSes to the two that existed before they arrived. One of the senior FIVDB staff, a Goan who came to Bangladesh in the mid-fifties under a Portuguese passport and who served one stint in Sylhet as an IVS volunteer, spends most of his time in nurturing the KSSes and assuring FIVDB cooperation with them. It is the credit programs and the like that go beyond the present KSS scope and come closer to serving the poorest of the villagers.

To comment very briefly on some specific programmatic areas:

1. Credit programs. One of the newest activities was the credit programs that had been established for landless and marginal farmers and for women. There are now 23 such groups among females and nine among males, most of them established in the past year. Target is to have at least 10 in each of the three clusters. The FIVDB workers seemed to take particular pride in these because they were helping the poorest of the people in the villages, people who could not get credit from the government-sponsored cooperatives, the KSSes, whose credit programs were restricted to people who owned land. A group of six men in one cluster had borrowed money to buy two boats to haul rocks (a very scarce resource in this delta country). Had they been forced to go to a money-lender, they might have paid interest in excess

of 200%. Some of the projects were small: material for weaving or basket making or vegetable seedlings.

2. Literacy Programs. In the first six months of 1981, there were 26 men's classes and 21 women's classes. Of the 583 enrolled in the men's classes, 54% had successfully completed the six-month course. Of 405 women, 66% had successfully completed the course. In almost all cases when small business credit groups had been created among women, they had grown out of the comraderie created in the literacy classes. The literacy classes were likewise seen as having a similar payoff for health and nutrition programs.

3. Duck raising. The duck project goes back to IVS's earliest days in Sylhet. IVS volunteers managed the program for six years. In 1978 500 fertile Khaki Campbell duck eggs were imported from England. The program, now completely under Bangladeshi management, produced an average of 2,000 ducklings a month which are sold to duck farmers within and outside the project. Many ducklings have been supplied to development organizations such as CCDB, Caritaz, CARE, UNICEF and World Luthern Church Service. Trainees come from throughout Bangladesh to take the Duck Farming Training Course. Of all the activities at VDTP, the duck project has received the most national attention. In judging IVS, it is a success story of the transfer of a specific skill to an indiginous organization and beyond them to a whole country.

4. Agronomy. The VDTP has successfully promoted the adoption of the BR-3 high yield variety developed at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute for farmers in the project area. This evaluator found it very difficult to obtain accurate data on how the work of the VDTP extension workers had increased agricultural production.

5. Horticulture. The work -- if not the yield -- in the horticulture projects was more obvious. Outside of every village in the three clusters were scores of small vegetable plots, introduced both to improve nutrition and to provide income. Many of the plots had started through the VDTP women's program.

6. Health. The health program seemed to be the one that had suffered with the departure of the last IVS volunteer almost a year ago. The six-month report referred to earlier lists 105 clinics held, 256 home visits, 845 children under 5 attended, the treatment of 423 nursing mothers and 94 pregnant women, even the number of IUD cases (64), birth control pills accepters (44), but it was nonetheless difficult to obtain an adequate grasp of the health program. In this case, the newly-assigned IVS volunteer will presumably provide the direction and coordination that now appears lacking. She has wisely already won agreement from FIVDB for the recruitment immediately for a qualified counterpart who will be able to take over at the end of her tour two years hence.

Other programs served by VDTP in the 30 villages comprising a population of some 20,000 are detailed in the six-month report referred to above.

G. Viewpoint of a Current Funder

Less than a month before my visit to Sylhet, Mr. Abels of the Dutch organization, ICCO (Inter-church Coordination Committee for Development Projects) had spent a few days visiting VDTP. ICCO is one of the current funders of the project. Interested in how another outside observer judged the activities in Sylhet, I arranged to see him in Zeist, Holland on my return through Europe. I found that in large part, my own generally favorable reactions coincided with his own. He thought the quality of the work going on there was good, that the staff appeared to be very competent and dedicated. He had yet to write his report but was intending to recommend to ICCO and its co-funder EZE that it refund FIVDB for a second and third year. A concern he had -- similar to my own -- was that the intensive kind of community development work in which they were engaged required a large number of personnel. He wondered if FIVDB could continue to make such an investment of professional manpower in but 30 villages over a very long period of time.

H. Some Final Thoughts

Mr. Abels poses the dilemma of such development activity. With more than 60,000 such rural villages in this country of almost 90 million, how much effort can be put on but a few in a given area. But as the history of the IVS-FIVDB activity in Sylhet proves, it takes time and patience to gain the trust of the villagers and to make significant inroads in improving their condition.

In February, 1980, IVS health volunteer Caroline Carbould wrote her end-of-tour report after her two-year tour in Sylhet. In the following paragraphs she summed up very well the dilemma faced by development institutions -- whether expatriate ones such as IVS or indigenous ones such as FIVDB:

One very important point to remember is to do things at the villagers' pace even though this may take longer, perhaps much longer. If a group of people come into a village from outside, be they foreigners or nationals, and start trying to set up a program without first consulting the local people and even if they do, still going ahead at their own pace without waiting for real participation by the village people, then once the outside group goes away, the work will stop.

This has happened in many development projects as the people who are giving money or directing the project or even working at the village level want results fast to show their bosses, or donors, or Governments, or whomever. In cases I have seen such as this it would have been better for the village if the work had never started as finally the villagers become disappointed or frustrated or even hostile. I think people now realize that we cannot always say in the planning stages what will be the outcome

of a development project. We can presume and hope that there may be a certain outcome, but I think we need to remain very open to a change in direction as the project moves along and we see how people react.

* * * * *

In a final comment on the future of IVS in Bangladesh, I cannot do better than to include as an Appendix (C) to this evaluation the statement that Jan Paul Emmert, the newly-appointed IVS director in Bangladesh, submitted to his IVS-Washington superiors in mid-October. His mandate, as he sees it, is to consider whether and how IVS should be involved in Bangladesh over the next few years. His outline of how he will go about that exploration reflects well on him. But it also reflects favorably on IVS. Earlier in this report it was pointed out how both the board and staff of IVS regard as crucially important that the organization expand programmatically. It is nonetheless heartening that a particular IVS country director -- and a newly-appointed one at that -- feels free to examine such an expansion in the context of his particular country of responsibility and leaves open at least the remote possibility that Bangladesh may not be the proper place at this time for IVS expansion.

APPENDIX A



ইন্টারন্যাশনাল ভলান্টিয়ারি সার্ভিসেস

International Voluntary Services, Inc.

পত্র : পো: অ: বক্স ৩৪৪
ঘাটা : ৩১০, সড়ক ২৭
ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা
টেলি : ০১ ২৮ ০০

MAIL-P. O. Box 344
HOUSE-353, Road 27
Dhanmandi, Dacca
Tel : 31 23 30
Cable : VOLSERV

29 September 1979

To : John Rigby, Dwight Swartzendruber & Rick Scott
IVS/Washington

From : David G. French

Re : Appointment of Program Director, Sylhet Project

We have been back ten days (now two weeks) during which a surprising consensus seems to have emerged for the transition to deshi direction of the Sylhet program. Herewith the major points and rationale.

1. The Alauddins are not going to be able to negotiate a two year leave from the University, so they are out of the running.
2. The only person I proposed as "Acting Director" was Akber Kabir, former Adviser (Minister), Ministry of Information & Broadcasting. I discussed this possibility before I left in July with Muttalib and the senior deshi workers and there was general agreement that he would be uniquely suited for this interim post if he were available. However, in a meeting yesterday noon with Muttalib and the volunteers and senior deshi staff (except for Sultana Kamal, who was in Dacca, and Zahin and Roni who were delayed and did not arrive until the close of the meeting) several questions were raised about the idea of an interim acting director. Faced with the uncertainties connected with a new person who would only be temporary, sentiment had moved towards the other option which I had posed, namely moving up one of our senior workers such as Sebastian Rodrigues or Zahin Ahmed or Samik Jahan to the post of Acting Director. Caroline kept some minutes of the discussion and I will attach them if they are ready.

The discussion was sober and frank and resulted in a genuine consensus which has been confirmed in individual conferences I have had since the meeting. Zahin was the unanimous choice of the deshi workers to serve as Director. A strong reason put forward for pursuing this course was his position as the Secretary of Friends in Village Development and its principal spokesman in Sylhet. The basic reason, I am sure, is the high regard, and indeed affection, for him among all the deshi and bideshi staff, and the leadership he has provided in the Mogulgaon cluster and in the wider program.

This afternoon (Sunday) I had a long conference with Zahin (who was not present at the noontime discussion) to explore his willingness to respond to what amounts to a draft from his colleagues. At the outset he urged that I continue to direct the Sylhet program for the next nine months and work out a delegation of responsibilities to Sebastian, himself, Joel, etc., at the end of which time a transfer of responsibility could take place. As we discussed the pros and cons the advantages of a transfer now became apparent, and he is ready to accept the appointment.

We talked about using a different term than "Acting Director" for the new post. Among the terms that came up were "chairman", "team leader", "coordinator", and "program director". One feature of these terms is that "acting" does not appear, with the implied uncertainty about continuity. I am leaning in favour of the term Program Director, but I have not had a chance to discuss it with Zahin. A carefully worked out responsibility distribution chart will make clear that responsibility for decision and action as well as external representation in Sylhet is not just being delegated, but transferred.

Below are some of the reasons for a "transfer now" strategy that have emerged in formal and informal dialogue during these past few days:

1. The ultimate goal of transferring responsibility and control in the Sylhet program to deshi hands is accepted on all sides - by IVS, the Government, and the volunteer and co-worker group. Any questions revolve around timing and method of transfer.
2. The personal resources in the deshi group are probably better now than they will be nine months hence. By present plans, Sebastian (who is regarded as deshi in spite of his international volunteer status), Samik, and Sultana will be on leave for further training a year from now. Their availability this year to help with the transition to deshi responsibility is an important reason for moving now.
3. Funding is in place for the present program year, and there remain nine months in which to secure further funding. One of the reasons for a transfer now rather than later is to free me to work with the deshi group and IVS/W on long term funding.
4. The most important resource in the Sylhet program is the capability and self confidence of the deshi staff, which is the end-product of four years of team work with expatriate volunteers for senior workers, one year for the newer workers. That resource should be used while the momentum is strong.
5. The administrative and physical infrastructure of the Sylhet program is in good shape to absorb a new level of responsibility. Joel's handling of accounts, procurement, personnel administration, etc. has the confidence of IVS and donor agencies and of the deshi workers. The operation of support functions, such as transportation, office and hostel operations, agricultural equipment, etc is excellent. Housing and basic facilities for the central office are complete, two cluster centers are

built and operating, and the third center will be completed during the coming dry season.

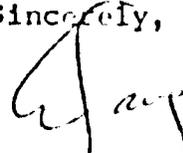
6. There has developed a problem solving capability in the deshi group which I believe can cope with the changing requirements of organization and program as they come along, and this will increase with use.

There remain a lot of details to be worked out, but this will happen more quickly and realistically if the transfer is put into effect now. Zahin will come to Dacca next week for three or four days and with Muttalib's participation we can plan the timing and procedure for turn-over of responsibility, the announcement to our cooperating institutions, etc.

Actions

A shift of this kind needs concurrence from IVS/Washington. I would like to receive a cable indicating agreement on the plan to appoint Zahin as Program Director, Village Development Training Program, Sylhet for a two year term, the details of the contract to be worked out in Bangladesh. The sooner we receive this, the easier to carry through the transfer.

Sincerely,



David G. French
Country Director

APPENDIX B

Narrative Report of
Activities from 1st January'81 to 30th June 1981

Project name : Village Development and Training Program (VDTP)
Kotwali, Sylhet

Executing Organization : Friend in Village Development Bangladesh (FIVDB)
in cooperation with
International Voluntary Services, Inc.(IVS)

Address: Dacca : House No. 15, Road No.16, Dhanmondi
G.P.O. Box 344, Cable "VOLSERV", Dacca.
Telephone 312830

Sylhet : Project Office: Khadimnagar
P.O. Khadimnagar, P.O. Box 70, Sylhet
Telephone : 6983.

INTRODUCTORY NOTES

The VDTP is being carried out in three clusters of villages in Kotwali Thana, Sylhet District. The total population of the thirtyfive villages within the project area is approximately twenty thousand only.

The Village Development and Training Program has two broad objectives. The first is to facilitate the improvement of the standard of living of the villagers in the project area. The second is to provide trainees from the three Training Institutes with field experience at the village level. A long term underlying goal of the project is institution building. The VDTP attempts to develop and strengthen village institutions which can undertake collective self-help development efforts in the rural sector.

The project has five major components - Agricultural Development, Rural Institutions and Functional Literacy, Health, Central Programme operation and supervised Field Training for Trainees from the cooperating Institutes.

Agricultural Development

The target groups for agricultural development are small, marginal and landless farmers. The goals and objectives are:-

1. to increase the farmers' capabilities to deal effectively with agricultural problems, both individually and collectively.
2. to increase the use of more appropriate production inputs and practices, resulting in increased production and enhanced farmers' income.
3. to improve the standard of living in the village, especially in the areas of family health and nutrition
4. to establish better linkages between the village and available services outside the village
5. to enable farmers to make "optimum" use of the ecological system.

Report of Activities:

Agronomy: To improve Boro season rice production, the VDTP promoted the adoption of the BR-3 variety developed at the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute, as well as other high yield varieties. About 253 farmers were contacted during Boro season and about 20 maunds of BR-3 Rice seeds were sold. The average yield of rice in farmers land for Boro season was 50 maunds per acre. This yield was substantially increased over last year's Boro season because of good management of farmers and also good extension services provided by VDTP field workers. The yield in the VDTP demonstration plots was 60-70 mds per acre. (One maund is equal to 82 lbs.)

Prior to the Aus season planting in March and April, another 176 farmers were contacted by our extension workers. In each cluster, simple agricultural implements were made available to the farmers on a rental basis.

Irrigation: VDTP supported 5 cooperative groups in irrigating with low lift pumps. About 250 acres of land in Mogulgaon area were brought under irrigation by these groups during the last Boro season.

These irrigation groups encountered some problems mostly of a technical nature, because the pumps they borrowed from Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation were old and were not in good working order. There were also occasional misunderstandings between irrigation groups and the other farmers buying water about the fair distribution of water.

The cost of diesel fuel and the unit cost of electricity for operating pumps substantially increased during this season. Therefore, there was reluctance on the part of some groups to irrigate with power pumps. The average income of the irrigation groups was Tk.11,000/- from water charges.

In Ghoramara Cluster VDTP also helped two cooperatives, Chandai and Ghoramara, to construct a cross bund over a local canal on a self-help basis. This enabled them to irrigate 150 acres of land. In Kollogram cluster another small bund was constructed by the Noagaon Cooperative Society which helped irrigate 50 acres of land during the dry season.

Horticulture: The VDTP continued to promote growing vegetables and fruits to improve nutrition and income. Summer vegetable seeds of Okra, Data, Lal Shak, Indian Spinach and Sweet Pumpkin were sold to 120 farmers and to 90 women through the Women's Programme. Most of those who purchased seeds were new farmers. Others who purchased seed earlier now have their own supply of seeds. Follow up visits were made, and it was found out that the 'Data' seeds were of poor quality. Saplings of fruit trees and seedlings of papaya were also sold from the three cluster centres. Most of the vegetables were used for household consumption, but some women and farmers also sold the vegetables for increasing cash income.

Duck Program: Our Chinese Rice Husk Incubation plant resumed its hatching operation from March and produced an average of 2,000 ducklings a month. These ducklings were sold to duck farmers both within and outside the project area. Many ducklings have been supplied to development organization in other districts such as CCDB, Caritas, Care, UNICEF, Kumudini Welfare Project and World Lutheran Church Services.

This year the mortality rate of ducklings was low. It was about 10% only.

The duck training program is conducted for nine months of the year. The three week long training program started from April '81. There were nine trainees in April, five in May and eight in the June session.

Extension services were provided to the cooperative duck farmers in the project area. The duck training Unit Head also paid follow up visits to some of his trainees in different parts of the country. He found most of them were quite successfully raising ducks. However, some of them were facing problems in controlling diseases due to unavailability of vaccine and medicine in their area.

Vaccination services through trainees were provided for cattle, poultry and ducks in the project area. Vaccine was obtained from Disease Control Laboratory, Comilla; recently the VDTP has been the largest consumer of their vaccine in the country. About 1000 cattle were vaccinated against several diseases; 5000 chickens were vaccinated against Ranikhot disease; and 6000 ducks were vaccinated against Cholera.

Rural Institutions

The rural institutions, or the community development, component of the VDTP focuses on the development and improvement of village organizations. The emphasis is on identifying and solving village problems through group action.

During the last six months, the VDTP continued their efforts to improve the functioning of the farmers Cooperative Societies (KSS), Youth Associations, Women's Cooperatives and other village level organizations. With the help of VDTP, one new KSS was formed in the Ghoramara cluster area. They also aided landless villagers in the formation of six new rural credit cooperatives. In addition, VDTP started investigating the possibility of forming landless irrigation cooperatives. Under this scheme, landless farmers would obtain an irrigation pump on credit and sell water to cultivators in the area. They would be able to own the pumps within five years. A number of landless groups have already shown interest in this concept.

The VDTP staff attended weekly meetings of the KSSs and the Youth Associations, provided information, technical and organizational expertise and helped in building up leadership. VDTP workers provided information regarding organization of cooperatives, cultivation of rice, use of credit, health, sanitation and family planning. The information has been presented primarily through weekly meetings and informal group discussions. Some staff members have suggested a more formal instructional approach including an expanded use of visual aid materials. The suggestions are being examined.

The VDTP continued to provide support and training to Women's Cooperatives which are generating income through different activities such as sewing, weaving, tailoring and preparing food products like jams, jellies, pickles etc. Seventeen womens' cooperatives of this type are now operating in the project area.

During the last six months, FIVDB provided very nominal credit to a few village organizations on trial basis. The credit program will be closely evaluated, and if found successful, it will be expanded to other villages in the project area.

Functional Literacy

This is one of the most important components of the VDTP. Its aims are to remove illiteracy by teaching the three 'R's, that is, reading, writing and simple arithmetic and to provide functional education on various matters like agriculture and food production, health and sanitation, culture and tradition, community development, cooperative institutions, etc.

The literacy courses are open to all male and female adults in the project area. Special attempts are made to involve those villagers who are marginal or landless farmers with little or no formal schooling.

Since the beginning of the year 26 men's classes and 21 women's classes have completed. In the men's program, of the 583 students who enrolled in the classes, 314 (54%) successfully completed a course. In the women's program of the 405 students who have enrolled in the classes thus far, 269 (66%) have successfully completed the course. In all, 582 students have completed courses as of July, 1981. In the last six months, approximately 153 participants, 45 men and 104 women, successfully completed the literacy course. At present, there are 16 men's classes and 16 women's classes in the project area. The men's classes presently in operation, initially had an enrollment of 353. The present enrollment is 269. The initial enrollment of the women's classes now in operation was 236 and the present enrollment is 188.

Box libraries were distributed in villages where literacy classes had previously been held. Each contained booklets in simple Bangla on rice growing, child care, health and nutrition, Islam, and other practical rural topics.

Different methods and different primers of BRIC, Comilla and Masjid Samaj were used in the literacy classes. The VDTP staff are, however, working hard to develop a specific method of teaching with new primers and instruction materials of their own using more effective techniques. By the end of June, 27 lessons of the new primer had been developed and tested in class situations. The new method will be styled as FIVDB method.

The staff is also working to improve the training given to the teachers of the literacy classes for the next literacy session. The training this year may have been too short. Many teachers were found to still use the traditional teaching methods based on individual letters and teaching only one student at a time, rather than more effective group methods using teaching whole words or key sentences. Better supervision of the work of teachers is also needed to ensure better results.

Overall, the functional literacy program is improving.

Health

The VDTP attempts to improve the overall level of health of villagers in the three cluster areas. Regular clinics are held in each of the clusters. The clinics focus on mother and under-five child health care and provide relatively simple treatment for the common diseases found in the area. They provide an opportunity not only for curing and treatment but also for preventing common diseases by giving health education on hygiene, nutrition, and sanitation.

There seems to be a growing awareness of health and hygiene within the project area. However, there are some common problems which tend to retard the improvement of health in the project area: namely (1) a high rate of illiteracy (2) a high rate of malnutrition, and (3) an often times discouraging attitude of some villagers toward the necessity of improved health care.

Activities

Illiteracy seems to be a major obstacle to imparting new health information and knowledge. Our literacy program is helping in this regard. VDTP staff have been designing booklets in elementary language with lessons that simultaneously teach health care practices.

In an attempt to provide children under twelve years of age with a balanced diet, and their mothers with an increased knowledge of nutrition, a feeding center was started in Bohor Colony. It operated twice a week for two months and fed fifteen children during each day of operation. The center worked as a demonstration of how to prepare a low priced, but balanced diet for children which meets their minimum nutrition requirements. Monthly

weight records for these children indicated a definite improvement in their health. The Feeding Center Program will be duplicated in other villages within the project area.

The family planning program has encountered some problems. Our female health workers find that much of the reluctance to adopt family planning practices lies not necessarily with women, but often times with their husbands. Reluctance of males to use contraceptives and other birth control measures is reported to be a major hindrance to the adoption of effective family planning. Therefore, instruction and motivation of the males as well as the females in the project area may be needed.

Some derelict tube wells in the project area were repaired. There is an increased demand for more tube wells which indicates a developing sense of sanitation in the project area. However, it has not been possible to continue sinking new tubewells, as the UNICEF tubewells previously used are no longer available to VDTP and the market price is prohibitive.

Thirteen local dais or midwives (T.B.A., Traditional Birth Attendants) were given additional training by the VDTP during a six week period in the Kollogram cluster center. In addition to midwifery the dais under training were given instructions in nutrition, vitamins and other related health matters. At the end of the training, each dai was provided with a delivery kit.

Nine village health workers (VHWs) were trained in November, 1980, by our health workers. Out of these four began working in two villages in the project area. The VHWs are expected to continue providing village health services after VDTP support and supervision is withdrawn. However this will need to be monitored further; though some VHWs are frequently consulted, others do not seem to be.

Health, Sanitation and family planning activities continued as per program. The VDTP health workers made home visits, held clinics and took follow up action as and when necessary. Numerical details of their activities are given below:

<u>Work description</u>	<u>January-June 1981</u>
	<u>Total</u>
No. of clinics held	105
No. of home visits made	256
No. of U/5 children attended	845
No. of pregnant mother attended	94
No. of nursing mothers attended	423
No. of other adults	1978
No. of IUD cases	64
No. of oral pill acceptors	44
No. of Condom acceptors	7
No. of Tubectomy cases	7
No. of MR cases	4

It may be said that the health activities during the last six months had a positive effect in improving the general health conditions of the local people.

It may be added that continued attempts were made by IVS to recruit a volunteer to work as Health Planner and Trainer. No suitable candidate was available by the end of June 1981. However, as this report was being finished, Sister Patricia Travaline was appointed to the post. She has long experience in Bangladesh and is expected to begin work in Sylhet in November 1981.

Central Program Operation

Evaluation and Report Section.

During the last six months, VDTP has been taking steps toward improving its Evaluation and Reporting Section. VDTP is now in the process of developing an improved information and documentation (evaluation) "system" for the Village Development and Training Program. In this regard they got some help and suggestions from Mr. Richard H. Fuller who began his affiliation with VDTP, Sylhet in May 1981 as a doctoral candidate in education from Florida State University. They also got some help and suggestions from Miss. Fauzia Ahmed, a Master's Degree student in Public Health from Harvard University, who arrived in June 1981 to do her summer internship with the VDTP, Sylhet.

VDTP was in the process of recruiting a regular staff member to work in the Evaluation and Reporting Section. Initially the new staff member's major responsibility will be to continue to work towards the development of an

effective information gathering system which can facilitate program improvement and can enhance the capacity of VDTP to assess project impact. They interviewed many candidates and subsequently recruited one.

Communication and Document Center: This unit provides support with audio-visual materials to different programs of the project. Every fortnight it publishes a newspaper called "Gram Bandhab" or "The Village Friend" for new literates and for members of different groups. This newspaper contains news on different development activities of the project. This unit also printed literacy primers and follow up materials and developed slides on nutrition during last six months.

Staff Development: Two staff members namely Panna Chowdhury and Dipti Rozario from the Women's Program visited a total of 11 health, adult education, cooperative and income generating projects in India. The coordinator of the Communication Unit Mr. Gupta attended a 4 week long course in CENDIT, New Delhi, India on low cost media production. Both of these staff development activities were supported by a grant from the Ford Foundation. Hebibur Rahman, a Co-worker in the adult education program attended a training course on functional literacy organised by BRAC. Surja from the Kollogram cluster center and Dinar from the agricultural unit attended a week long training course on the Solar Dryer, its use and utility, at Kamalganj, organised by the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). Apart from these, some of the staff members went for study tours to other projects and attended workshops and seminars on project related subjects.

Service Center: The mechanic of the central service center helped the irrigation groups with training and support on operation and maintenance of pumps. He also did the regular repair and maintenance works of motorbikes, tubewells, water pumps and other installations.

Supervised field practice for the trainees
from Cooperating Training Institutes

The supervised field practice will hopefully result in effective extension workers in the field of village organisation, agriculture and health and family planning.

Agriculture Extension Training Institute: This Institute trains Union level agricultural extensionists. Fifteen trainees from the Institute accomplished their one year long field training with VDTP in May, 1981. In order to expose them to real village life they were housed with farmers in the project villages. They practically learned rice and vegetable cultivation, preparation of production plans, and operation and maintenance of pumps and other simple agricultural implements. Every one of them had been assigned one small demonstration plots in their respective villages. They worked closely with the farmers' groups, and conducted agricultural surveys in the project villages to find out existing agricultural practices, cropping pattern and the problems farmers generally encounter. They also participated in livestock vaccination programs.

Rural Development Training Institute: This Institute usually trains village and thana level extensionists for the Integrated Rural Development Program. Thirtyone trainees in three batches came to VDTP for field training in last six months. They were Village Inspectors and Village Accountants. Each group spent 2-3 days with VDTP. They attended meetings of farmers cooperative, observed their management of different cooperative projects and their book keeping. They learned how to lead discussions and helped two cooperatives in organizing and conducting their annual general meetings.

Family Welfare Visitor's Training Institute: This Institute trains Union level health and family planning extensionists. Thirtyone trainees in three batches accomplished their phase III field training in last six months. Each group spent about 2 months with VDTP. They worked with VDTP health workers in conducting M.C.H. clinics, motivating for family planning and following up acceptors. They attended deliveries, visited antenatal and post-natal patients, learned insertion of IUDs etc. They also did surveys and case studies in order to better understand community health problems and needs.

Building Measure

A compound wall was constructed in Mogulgaon cluster center. FIVDB is negotiating to purchase some acres of land for demonstration farm and central support centre, etc. There is a plan for constructing a mini clinic in Mogulgaon in near future.

Audit

The accounts of FIVDB for its Village Development and Training Program, Sylhet for the period of six months from January 1981 to June 1981 have been audited by Rahman Rahman Huq & Co. and they have submitted their audit report.

Project Director
Village Development & Training
Program

APPENDIX C

A PLAN FOR DEVELOPING AN IVS COUNTRY PLAN IN BANGLADESH

A Statement in lieu of the Narrative Section
of the Annual Plan for IVS/
BangladeshBackground

As a part of the annual IVS budget and planning process, each IVS field office is preparing a narrative report. This report defines program emphases for that country, their relation to the development needs of the country and to the overall IVS program criteria. Each ongoing project is to be briefly evaluated for the previous year and plans for ongoing and new projects are to be assessed in relation to the program statement.

At the time of this planning exercise, I am not in a position to answer most of the program definition and specific project questions for the coming year. The IVS program in Bangladesh is in a major transition. The new mandate for IVS/Bangladesh field office is to actively consider whether and how IVS should be involved in Bangladesh over the next few years, before making specific project proposals. As I have only been in Bangladesh two months, this questioning process has barely begun.

Therefore, as I understand it, I have been given a dispensation from following the prescribed outline for the 1982 Annual Budget narrative report. Instead, a statement is being presented proposing how I intend to prepare an IVS "Country Program" for Bangladesh. Parts of this statement are obviously influenced by Martin deGraaf's similar statement of how he would work toward a "Country Policy" for IVS in Papua New Guinea. (See Memo to Cathy Dunston, May 12, 1981.) As did Martin, I am proposing to prepare a series of reports setting out the context of development activity and discussing issues IVS must consider for any future program planning.

Objective

These reports are intended to lead to a final concise statement recommending a "Country Program" for IVS in Bangladesh. At the one extreme, this statement could recommend against further IVS program involvement, other than our collaboration with FIVDB in the Village Development and Training Program in Sylhet.

However, it is more likely that some new expansion of development work will be recommended. In that case, the country program should present a framework for future project development and/or placement of volunteers. It should suggest areas of future program concentration and possibly of geographic concentration. It should suggest that criteria by which basic project decisions should be made in the Bangladesh context. And it should relate the Bangladesh "country program" to the broader IVS program criteria spelled out in "Attachment E" (Paper on IVS Planning, Reporting, and Evaluation, dated September 1979).

Part I: Development Issues in Bangladesh

The first report (that is, the first conceptually, whether or not it is prepared first) will be a report sketching in the broad development issues and problems which development projects might address, as well as those which a single project probably cannot address (the land distribution problem, for example). Thus, it will move from the broad national problems to the specific problems with which IVS programs and volunteers often deal, i.e., agriculture, small business and cooperative development, nutrition and health care, and rural infrastructure.

This report should also sketch in the context within which these problems must be understood and addressed. This would include the administrative organization of central government agencies and development programs, the organization of the rural society and economy (for example the weakness of local government and other forms of rural horizontal organization, the ability of a small power elite to broker benefits intended for others) and the role of religion in rural society. This section should identify the relatively disadvantaged groups e.g., rural landless with which we ideally would prefer to work, but suggest the problems in doing so.

Part II: Development Strategies and Institutions

This part will have two foci: (1) What are the main development agencies and programs now in Bangladesh, including the Bangladesh government and various private and foreign development agencies? and (2) What are the main alternative strategies now being used to address the development programs identified in Part I?

These reports will have several underlying objectives. In the case of government programs, we should have a good idea of what they are, how they are intended to function, and how they actually do function locally. With respect to government development programs, we must decide (1) which ones we can support or work with productively, and (2) which ones, if any, might be difficult to work with. We should be informed about what resources these programs have, what resources or skills they are lacking, and at what point our own resources or skills could make a difference.

In the case of both government programs and those of private organizations, we should have a general idea of "who is doing what and where?" In some cases this may be to avoid duplication of services or programs, in other cases it may be to make the most effective use of our own resources by the linkages with others.

With respect to the question on alternative strategies, we must recognize that almost any development problem we decide to attack has also been considered by some other group. Where possible we should learn both from the successes and failures of other groups. Take for example, the problem of income generating activities for the rural landless population in the absence of any real redistribution of basic resources. Many government and foreign agencies identify this group as their most important target group, but concrete programs have been slow in coming. Who has tried what? Unfortunately there is often very little communication about failures among the development organizations.

The questions suggested in this part might be approached several different ways. They could be divided into two reports based on the first two questions above: i.e., (1) the main development agencies and programs, and (2) alternative development strategies. They could be divided into two parts based instead on government and non-government programs. Or they could be discussed in a number of small topical reports, focused on different development problems or target groups; for each problem or group the questions would be asked, "Who is doing what?" and "What are the alternate strategies being tried?"

Part II: The IVS Involvement in Bangladesh

The objective of the reports in Part III will be to focus on whether further IVS involvement in Bangladesh is feasible and desirable. Specific problems and possibilities for IVS, and weaknesses and strengths should be discussed. Alternative strategies for IVS as well as criteria to apply in project development should be specified.

There are three separate papers which probably should be prepared, with a few remaining other miscellaneous issues not covered by any of them: (1) A Review of Prior IVS Involvement in Bangladesh; (2) Issues facing Private Voluntary Organization in Bangladesh (3) Alternative strategies for development work in Bangladesh.

(1) A Review of Prior IVS Involvement in Bangladesh:

Several periods and many issues should be considered. IVS's strengths and weaknesses should be evaluated. And IVS's experience should be examined to extract any lessons for our future involvement.

The period from the War of Liberation (1971) to about 1976 can be examined primarily relying on Jim Gingerich's review of that period. During this period, the traditional IVS approach was followed of seconding technical volunteers to various government (and later private) agencies and institutions. The problems that strategy faced then will be reviewed. But also consideration may be given to whether or not changing conditions would make that strategy viable now.

In the next period, several previously independent IVS volunteer activities in Sylhet were transformed into the coherent Village Development and Training Program, the focus of IVS involvement ever since. Subsequently one of the major program consequence was the creation of the Bangladeshi organization, Friends in Village Development Bangladesh, which became the joint sponsor of the VDTP, and which recently has taken over day-to-day management of the VDTP.

There are many questions which need to be asked about the past and future IVS involvement in the VDTP and with FIVDB. Is the whole program one which could or should be replicated elsewhere? Or were there inherently unique factors which would make it difficult to set up the same type of project elsewhere? Are there particular elements of the program which could be replicated elsewhere on a larger scale using our experience in Sylhet even in the absence of all the other elements of an integrated program? (For example, the cluster approach for organizing community development activities; the duck project; providing practical field training for trainees of government training institutes; the strategies for working with local organization

the communications unit and the fortnightly local newspaper, Gram Bandhab; the functional literacy program, or the women's health program.) which component of the program have worked out the best, and which are the least developed?

Our sponsoring agency has been the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (LGRD), with some special relationship to IRDP (the Integrated Rural Development Program). However the integrated nature of the VDTP has involved extensive field level contact and cooperation with a number of different government programs and project interaction with the training institutes for field workers of three different ministries or agencies (IRDP, Agriculture, and Health and Family Planning). With which of these programs has cooperation been most productive, and with which has it been most difficult? Why?

Our present agreement with FIVDB calls for joint sponsorship of the VDTP for three years. What will be the requirements of our continued joint sponsorship of the VDTP over this period? As new clusters are planned and established, should IVS have any involvement other than the IVS volunteers? At what point should the joint sponsorship end and IVS withdraw its resources from this project and redirect them to other projects in Bangladesh?

Should IVS and FIVDB collaborate in developing new projects other than the present VDTP? Or would doing so undermine the carefully cultivated independence and credibility of FIVDB? If we do collaborate, would it be best to do so only in other parts of Sylhet district, since the FIVDB staff is almost completely Sylhet based? And similarly, if we develop separate projects not in collaboration with FIVDB, would it be better to do so in a completely different area?

Some view IVS as having created its own "local organization" in Sylhet which could ultimately take over and continue the project. Though this may not have been one of the original aims of the IVS project in Sylhet, it is an outcome in which IVS takes pride. Should this be an objective and future strategy of IVS projects in other parts of the country? That is, should IVS develop a project, encourage the growth of a local organization which can take it over, then withdraw in phases leaving the activity in the hands of the new organization?

(2) Issues facing Private Voluntary Organizations in Bangladesh.

First, there is the question of the relation to and attitude of the Bangladesh government to Private Voluntary Organizations. From time to time within the Bangladesh government there is suspicion of the many foreign voluntary organizations involved in development work in Bangladesh. Different opinions exist about how the Bangladesh government should treat them. At one extreme, some believe most PVOs should be asked to leave. A more benign view is that the coordination of their activities should be more centralized and their programs more closely supervised. A cynical view is that only those should be permitted to remain which make substantial foreign currency remittances to Bangladesh, irrespective of their performance.

To the extent possible this climate should be assessed. If, at the extreme, the Bangladesh government no longer wants foreign PVOs to work in Bangladesh, it would obviously not make sense to begin developing any new program. Though such extreme action is unlikely, strong discouragement could come from a number of points in the government other than the ministry with which our program is concerned. Many permits, approvals, and clearance are required of different ministries of the organization's continued existence in Bangladesh, for its program to be allowed, and for each individual staff or volunteer to be permitted to stay (or to come and go). Consistent delay or opposition from one or several sources, even in the absence of an overall government policy or in the face of the support of our sponsoring ministry, can raise administrative time and costs or delay the implementation of programs. Even a new administrative coordinating mechanism established by the government, if added to the present controls, could substantially increase our administrative time and costs. Probably these government controls must simply be accepted as part of the working environment. But there may also be a point at which a small agency such as IVS must decide the costs are too high - regardless of the need.

Second, are the costs of placing a foreign volunteer with local organizations or PVOs such a disproportionate part of their budget that it should be questioned. The issue particularly arises if the foreign volunteer is funded through the local host organization, as is the case now in our arrangement with FIVDB. Even though external (foreign) funds have been obtained expressly to support the foreign volunteer, and even though the volunteer may be nearly penniless when he/she returns home, five or more local field staff could be hired for the cost of one foreign volunteer (particularly if the volunteer has dependents). How are other voluntary agencies dealing with this issue in Bangladesh?

Third, what should be the criteria for using and evaluating foreign volunteers in IVS projects? When should foreign volunteers be used, rather than local staff?

Fourth, what are the options for collaboration with Bangladeshi government or private organizations? Should a foreign PVO have its own project, or should it attempt to work completely within the framework of a program organized locally, or are there intermediate options.

Fifth, what is the climate for funding foreign PVO work among the donors on which IVS has usually relied? Does the growing preference to support Bangladeshi PVOs mean that funds for foreign PVOs will no longer be available here? Also, for what specific development activities are funds available and not available?

(3) Alternative Strategies for Working in Bangladesh.

Here a number of options for organizing development projects may be explored, possibly overlapping with some of the above discussions. Some choices should be identified which must be made for all projects. For example, how should a project itself be defined, in terms of the area covered, whether multipurpose or single focus, and in terms of the time within which it is accomplished, and what should be left after completion. When working with government programs or local organizations promoted by government programs (for example, agricultural cooperatives under the Integrated Rural Development Program), at what organizational and administrative level should

an IVS project focus? Should a program be "integrated" or a multipurpose community development program in a very limited area? or should it have more limited purposes over a wider area? To what extent should a project rely on foreign volunteers, rather than a Bangladeshi staff? Should a Bangladeshi "volunteer" cadre be built up also with fixed terms, rather than a project staff.

Finally, criteria might be spelled out for making decisions within a defined project area? Assuming "target populations" are defined, what criteria are used for working with one group or individual rather than another; with one village, union, or thana rather than another; with one cooperative or other local organization, rather than another? How can realizable goals be identified for the project and progress (or lack of it) regularly measured?

Conclusion

If all the above issues were fully discussed, the result could easily be a book length assessment of IVS's potential contribution in Bangladesh. That extreme is not necessary, desirable, or achievable within a reasonable period of time. So some of the above issues will be more fully considered than others.

What are the strategies for gathering this information? There are several. First, I think it desirable to spend a more concentrated period of time in the Sylhet project than I have been able to do thus far. Several supportive tasks have been suggested by the VDIP Project Director, Zahir Ahmed, and in an earlier trip report of Marshal Bear (March 11, 1981). These could help improve my familiarity with the project without interfering in the project management. Second, though Marshal Bear's report suggests that IVS has already passed beyond that stage, I feel the need for some fairly wide consultation with other PVOs and government officials, as well as visits to a number of projects. The questions and issues posed in this paper suggest the line of inquiry to be followed.

JE/lq.

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