



RLEP
Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership

Agricultural Services Innovation Reform Project (ASIRP)

**End of Project Review Report
4th – 17th October 2003**

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RLEP has been established by the Department For International Development (DFID) to: i) manage the project review process for all its rural livelihood projects in Bangladesh, ii) develop a RLEP communications strategy, to identify and facilitate the improvement of systems for lesson-learning and provision of information to decision-makers, iii) facilitate improvements in project monitoring with particular focus on developing project teams' capacity in livelihood outcome monitoring and evaluation and, iv) build up national consultancy capacity.

The Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership is represented by a consortium of three international and two national companies led by the UK based ITAD (Information Training and Development):-



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACR	Annual Confidential Report
ADP	Annual Development Plan
AID-Comilla	Association for Integrated Development - Comilla
AIS	Agricultural Information Services
ASIRP	Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project
ASSP	Agricultural Support Services Project
ATC	Agricultural Technical Committee
ATI	Agricultural Training Institute (DAE)
BARI	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BRDB	Bangladesh Rural Development Board
BRRRI	Bangladesh Rice Research Institute
BS	Block Supervisor
CAP	Country Assistance Plan (of DFID)
CERDI	Central Extension Resources Development Institute (DAE)
CIMMYT	<i>Centro Internacional de Mejoramiento de Maiz y Trigo</i> (International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre)
DAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
DAECC	District Agricultural Extension Co-ordinating Committee
DAEO	District Agricultural Extension Officer
DEMS	District Extension Monitoring System
DFID	Department for International Development
DFID-B	Department for International Development - Bangladesh
DLS	Department of Livestock Services
DoF	Department of Fisheries
DPIF	District Partnership Initiative Fund
ECS	Extension Coverage Survey
EoP	End of Project
EPICC	Extension Policy Implementation Co-ordination Committee
ESP	extension service provider
ESS	Extension Services Survey
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FARS	Farmer Advice Record Sheet
FIVDB	Friends in Village Development, Bangladesh
FLE	Farmer Led Extension model
GO	Government Organisation
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
IADP	Integrated Agricultural Development Plan

IDA	International Development Agency
IEA	Integrated Extension Approach
IR	Inception Report
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
JSM	Joint Supervision Mission
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MIS	Management Information Systems

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS (continued)

MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NAEP	New Agricultural Extension Policy
NAP	National Agricultural Policy
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NPIF	National Partnership Initiative Fund
OPR	Output to Purpose Review
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PIF	Partnership Initiative Fund
PoA	Plan of Action (for the National Agricultural Policy)
PPSU	Policy and Planning Support Unit
RDRS	Rangpur and Dinajpur Rural Services
REA	Revised Extension Approach
RLEP	Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership
SEMS	Seasonal Extension Monitoring System
SP 2002-06	Strategic Plan 2002-2006 (DAE)
SWAP	Sector-wide Approach
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
T&V	Training and Visit
TA	Technical Assistance
UAECC	Upazila Agricultural Extension Co-ordinating Committee
UAEO	Upazila Agricultural Extension Officer
UAO	Upazila Agricultural Office/Officer
UDCC	Upazila Development Co-ordination Committee
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNO	Upazila Nirbahi Officer
UPIF	Upazila Partnership Initiative Fund
WB	World Bank
WID	women in development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following table summarises the key findings and lessons learned from the Project Completion Review on the Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project (ASIRP), which was undertaken from 4th to 17th October 2003.

Key Findings	Lessons Learned
Although DAE's current Strategic Plan acknowledges the need for deep-seated reform, the measures proposed for this are insufficiently robust	In an organisational culture that is resistant to deep-rooted reform, the Project has probably achieved all that could reasonably have been expected. Nevertheless progress has been fairly marginal in comparison with the level of change that is needed.
DAE has several monitoring systems, but none of them measure outcomes or impact	<i>Lesson: DAE's lack of effective outcome or impact monitoring makes it very difficult to link activities and inputs on the one hand, with outcomes and impact on the other; this is symptomatic of problems with organisational capital</i>
ASIRP efforts to introduce improved monitoring systems have failed, as did much of its effort to improve DAE's MIS	It is very difficult for institutions to change from within, and there is little point in trying to reform them without strong backing from a higher level in the system. Had there been pressure from above, DAE would probably have welcomed ASSP and ASIRP inputs. Without it, attempts at change management were viewed virtually as interference
DAE accepts it is over-projectised and plans to be more programmatic, but measures introduced so far lack bite.	While a full sectoral approach is inappropriate for an institution with DAE's mandate and must await action at higher government levels, major progress towards a more programmatic approach is still possible, but the issue needs to be prioritised.
The proposed IADP process is costly and lengthy; important decisions cannot await its completion	There seems little justification for DFID-B to buy into the IADP process until a convincing case has been made for the envisaged cost and time budgets
Both GOB and the donors have been focussing on technologies and organisations, when what appears to have been driving agricultural change are economic opportunities.	If a more holistic approach were to be taken, whether it is through programmes, SWAP, or the IADP, this should lead to more attention being given to the processes that have made the greatest difference over the last 25 years: improvements in the regulatory environment, access to inputs, farm equipment and credit and improved functioning of the market system.

Key Findings	Lessons Learned
Local NGO efforts have not built significant social capital; even when the hardcore poor are targeted, they tend later to be replaced by small and medium farmers	With the exception of some large national NGOs, NGO capacity for providing extension services is generally weak and all NGOs tend sooner or later to exclude the hardcore poor from agricultural initiatives.
The UPIF achieved some degree of success on several counts, while the DPIF and NPIF basically failed	This supports the view that the local level may be the most appropriate entry point for extension; this is bolstered by widespread field reports that willingness to collaborate across organisational and disciplinary lines is high on the periphery and decreases towards the centre
Few of the PIFs were rooted in the partners' complementary comparative advantage. Most if not all were formed purely to access PIF financing	In facilitating partnership formation is it crucial to avoid creating marriages of convenience cemented by money; the practice could actually counter sustainability, as it could get in the way of genuine partnerships based on perceived mutual complementarities
In PIFs farmers were not partners; best practice was not always followed, (especially in monitoring); activities were not strongly market-driven	The DPIF and NPIF used the competitive funding model, but failings in application make it difficult to ascribe its failure to intrinsic features of the model
Training activities were on a semi-commercial basis and responded to the needs of projects, rather than DAE priorities	The DAE Training Policy cannot be implemented if training activities are project driven. Consequently the Training Wing has a very limited role to play.
The ASSP and ASIRP projects have learnt that staff development involves more than training. There has been a gradual shift from a narrow focus on training to a broader appreciation of human resource management	Human Resource interventions have not produced an overall improvement in performance; but a service has been maintained while staff numbers have fallen and the farming population has grown
The list of HRM problems includes everything from the operational budget and salary scales, to the system of Annual Confidential Reports and the way projects by-pass regular procedures.	Many factors affecting performance are outside DAE control and could not be addressed by the project.

Key Findings	Lessons Learned
The ATIs within DAE are now functioning as a subsidised business that has no direct link with the provision of extension services to farmers.	Earlier projects have left DAE with the problem of what to do with so many buildings and field staff; there are no good reasons for DAE to retain ATIs and increase staff numbers back to the T&V level
Project-supported courses have left BS with sharpened social skills (e.g. extension methodology) at the expense of allowing their core technical competencies to deteriorate	Creation and maintenance of adequate technical skills among field staff is a problem that the DAE has been unable to solve
Block Supervisors are now older (and possibly a little wiser) than they were at the start of ASSP-ASIRP. There is little evidence, however, of a widespread improvement in their capability and capacity of the field staff to deliver up to date and relevant technologies	Large numbers of field staff may be a constraint to reforming the extension service, not an asset
Adding up past assistance from UNDP, World Bank and DFID, the process of reforming DAE has taken 30 years, and has cost donors at least \$125 million.	Institutional development and reform projects can take a lot longer, cost a lot more, and have much less effect than the donors may have expected
Projectisation of donor support to DAE has resulted in a focus on short-term goals, undermining of management structures, lack of consistency in strategy and methodology, and poor ownership of the reform process.	The goal of creating an efficient public service that provides a wide range of agricultural extension advice to a wide range of farmers appears to be unattainable, at least while donor-funded projects dominate the scene
The UAECC Strengthening model involved Committee members in jointly analysing the services currently available for farmers, assessing and prioritising farmers' needs, and designing and implementing extension strategies to address them.	This model had a positive impact in terms of local planning of extension, but it is too early to say if this will lead to better services for farmers
On average, one third of all visits and enquiries to Resource Centres were made by women, which is far higher than the contact rate for regular DAE extension activities. In two locations, more women than men were using the centres.	The 'Resource Centre' model had a positive impact in terms of farmer contact. The high level of enquiries made by women farmers is particularly significant, and makes it a strong candidate for mainstreaming.

Key Findings	Lessons Learned
<p>The pilots have shown that it is possible to plan, fund and implement extension activities at the Upazilla level. There are no fundamental organisational or procedural reasons why this cannot be done. The pilots have also shown that DAE can increase the number of farmers that are being contacted.</p>	<p>Decentralisation can be achieved on a small scale in the short term. What is not clear is the extent to which it can be scaled-up and sustained</p>
<p>At the local level, the results of the FLE approach are impressive: groups of men and women farmers are managing their own development activities, saving money to try new technologies, and appear to be very satisfied with both process and the outcome. The dynamism of these groups is very different from the apparent relationship between most Block Supervisors and their client farmers.</p>	<p>Given enough resources it is feasible to implement activities that make a significant improvement in the livelihoods of a small numbers of people. The real question is what can DAE do with this knowledge?</p>
<p>The idea of 'integrated extension' appears to make very good sense. But this was never going to be easy in practice, for reasons such as lack of ownership by the departments of livestock and fisheries and ASIRP's bold and 'trend-bucking' policy of not paying for co-operation</p>	<p>Efforts to promote collaboration among organisations should give serious attention to the reasons why people collaborate. Incentives and rewards must be considered, but this does not necessarily mean that people need to be paid to work together</p>
<p>FARS are a simple innovation that provides farmers with a tangible and durable product of interaction with the BS, encourages the BS to provide relevant and consistent advice, and makes it easier for supervisory staff to monitor and assess the BS's work</p>	<p>Farmer Advice Record Sheets are an example of an ASIRP innovation that could be 'mainstreamed'</p>
<p>Preliminary findings from the latest ASIRP Extension Coverage Study show that female members of 6.2% of all households have received service advice from GO extension, 6.8% from an NGO in the past 12 months. The figure for the informal private sector (eg. private vet or fertiliser shop) is 23%.</p>	<p>The option of channelling extension advice to women farmers through private sector input and service providers deserves serious consideration, as in terms of contact with these farmers the private sector outperforms the government and NGO extension services combined</p>

Key Findings	Lessons Learned
DFID is perceived as a 'hands off' agency and this could be detrimental to relations and lesson-learning	DFID-B staff need to do more re-engage with project TA teams and their executing agencies, partly in terms of explaining to the national partners any changes that have taken place in management style and partly in terms of providing feedback to TA teams regarding issues that substantively affect project outcomes .
Improved co-ordination with other donors is an aim of DFID's new CAP; the ASIRP project was co-funded by DFID and the World Bank and there were areas where lack of co-ordination was detrimental to the project.	Meaningful co-ordination would require line agencies to move beyond the policy and consultation level towards increasing content and intensity. However the necessary decisions do not lie at the level of the two country missions

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Terms of Reference

1. The Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project (ASIRP) started on 1st July 1999¹, immediately following the completion of the Agricultural Support Services Project (ASSP). It was designed to build on reforms and improvements in the country's agricultural extension system that had been achieved under the ASSP, in particular, that project's facilitation of the introduction of the New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP) (adopted by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1996) and the Department of Agricultural Extension's (DAE) Strategic Plan, 1999-2002.

2. The goal of ASIRP is 'To improve the capacity of all categories of farmers, especially landless, marginal and small farmers, to optimize their use of resources on a sustainable basis. This will be achieved by the enhanced use of improved, cost effective, needs based extension services'. ASIRP's purpose is 'Effective structures and processes in place for implementing the NAEP and exploring sectoral approaches'.

3. ASIRP was originally scheduled to run for three years, but on the recommendation of the 2001 Joint Supervision Mission (JSM), it was extended by 18 months to December 31st 2003. The total project cost is £18.76m, 49% financed by a DFID grant (£9.24m), 18% by the World Bank (WB) through a *Learning and Innovations Loan*, and 33% by the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) which also financed staff and other general costs. The FAO provided US\$0.3m to co-finance specific research activities.

4. The Inception Period of the project was July to October 1999, after which full implementation of the DFID-funded TA components began. Project design was radically altered during the inception phase, so that the Inception Report (IR) for the DFID-supported components (finalised in February 2000) was quite different from the project memorandum. It included, among other changes, a revised logframe.

5. The first Joint Supervision Mission (JSM), with representatives from WB and DFID, was held in April 2000 and highlighted key issues and recommendations. The second JSM was held in September 2000; a separate output-to-purpose (OPR) review of the DFID-funded components was held simultaneously. DFID subsequently decided to carry out future independent reviews distinct from, but designed to feed into, the JSM process.

6. Major areas of concern were identified in the next OPR, held at the end of 2000. The 3rd Joint Supervision Mission (18th March to 4th April 2001) addressed each of these in detail in order to assess key strategic, institutional and management aspects of the Project. The objective was to review the logical framework as a management tool, and for the Project, DAE and DFID to agree a set of milestones and an action plan for resolving identified difficulties. Four key milestones were agreed against which progress could be

¹ The DFID-funded component of ASIRP started on 1st July 1999. The World Bank funded component of ASIRP-Credit was effective on 21st December 1999 and a launching workshop held on 9th February 2000.

measured, and upon whose achievement any project extension would depend. These were:

- Partnerships objectives, structure and process redefined and agreed and new structures operational
- Project management structures and processes redefined, formalised and in operation
- Expansion of IEA pilots planned and preparation for implementation under way
- Establishment of a formal 'life of project' implementation plan.
- Any decision to extend funding of the project would depend on achievement of these

7. Over the first part of 2001 the original TA team gradually left and were replaced by the present team. Despite this change (or perhaps because of it?), the 4th JSM in November 2001 concluded that substantial progress had been made on the DFID component. The new TA team had successfully clarified project strategies and expected outputs, restructured the technical assistance team and developed improved implementation plans. Overall, the Mission was satisfied that the key milestones, agreed by the last JSM, had been largely achieved, and thus recommended the 18 month extension. Following this review a new revised logframe was agreed by all parties. This is the logframe currently in use and is included as Annexe 1 of this report.

8. During September 2002 a GoB/IDA/DFID/FAO team carried out a further IR of the Project and noted that scaling up of pilot activities were yielding significant benefits and that DFID should continue its support to develop and formulate/implement the Strategic Plan (2002 – 2005) under the New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP). Annexe 2 lists the recommendations of the 2002 IR and the actions that have been taken by the Project to implement them. **In the judgment of the Review mission these recommendations have been implemented satisfactorily, except where compliance was beyond Project control.**

1.2 Methods

9. The terms of reference for this sixth and final review, conducted by DFID and Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership (RLEP) team, focus on assessment of operational experience, achievement of component objectives, factors affecting implementation, outcomes, lessons learnt and sustainability of project activities (see Annexe 3). The team was in Bangladesh from 4th to 17th October 2003, where it worked closely with the ASIRP TA team. Discussions were held with individual TA team members, three of whom accompanied the review mission on field trips. The mission interviewed a number of stakeholders both in Dhaka and during their brief programme of field visits to Chapai Nawabganj, Rangpur, Lalmonirhat and Comilla districts. Discussions were held with beneficiary farmers (individually and in groups), local officials of DAE, agricultural research institutes, local government, and stakeholder NGOs. A full list of persons consulted appears in Annexe 4. The team also reviewed a large volume of documentation, which is listed in Annexe 5. A presentation of preliminary findings was made to the Director General and senior management of DAE plus the TA team on 15th October.

10. A series of meetings was held with members of other review missions under Cluster 1² in order to explore cross-cutting issues and identify generic lessons learnt across the three projects for presentation in 'Key Findings' Forum on 20th October 2003.

1.3 The New Agricultural Extension Policy

11. The main plank in the project purpose is to assist implementation of the NAEP.³ The key features of this policy are:

- Extension support to all categories of farmers (women farmers; young people; large, medium small and marginal farmers and the landless who have only homestead land)
- Efficient extension services (to be achieved through training, skill development, institutional strengthening and logistical support)
- Pluralism (implicit in a recognition that three sectors – government, NGOs and the private sector – have a role to play in an effectively co-ordinated system)
- Decentralisation (in the shape of devolution of responsibility for range of activities such as need identification, information collection, programme planning, training and dissemination)
- Demand-led extension (all extension and research to be based on needs, problems and potentials identified through a participatory approach at the farm level)
- Working with groups of all kinds
- Strengthened research-extension linkages (through a National Technical Co-ordination Committee, a system of Agricultural Technical Committees at the level of the agro-ecological zone, research-extension review workshops, a system of contract research and a recognition that farmers themselves are also researchers)
- Training of research personnel (to work in a new environment that needs skills in working with women farmers and co-ordination with other extension service providers)
- Adoption of appropriate extension methodology
- Integrated extension support to farmers (entailing block supervisors working with the departments of livestock, fisheries and forest to enable them to assist farmers in these areas)
- Co-ordinated extension activities (on the basis of complementary expertise of GOs, NGOs and local government)
- Integrated environmental support

12. Adoption of this policy represented a very significant shift in the mandate of the Department. It entailed:

- Radically expanding the client-base,
- Changing the focus from a centralised public sector extension service to a decentralised pluralistic extension system,

² Community Based Fisheries Management – Phase 2, WorldFish and Department of Fisheries and Fourth Fisheries Project, Department of Fisheries.

³ *New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP)*; Ministry of Agriculture, Government of Bangladesh, Dhaka.

- Integrating the elements of this system,
- Encouraging partnerships between system elements on the basis of comparative advantage, and
- Replacing a prescriptive approach with one that was participatory and demand-led.

13. Implementing the policy represents a daunting challenge, particularly for a public sector agency. ASIRP's title admirably captures its intent. It was intended to innovate by piloting new extension approaches based on NAEP principles, and facilitate reform of the institutions (particularly the DAE) on the basis of a combination of best practice and the outcomes of these pilots.

1.4 Strategic planning for NAEP implementation

14. DAE has produced two strategic plans since NAEP adoption in 1996, covering the periods 1999-2002 (SP 1999-2002) and 2002-2006 (SP 2002-06), in each case with support from ASSP and later ASIRP.⁴ Under the second plan several new extension development approaches were launched, partnership arrangements were made with government organisations (GOs), NGOs, research institutes and the private sector, efforts were made to mainstream gender and environmental issues, a new human resource management approach was devised and information systems developed. After describing the strengths of its predecessor, SP 2002-6 presented an appraisal of the weaknesses of the first plan. These were:

- Lack of co-ordination among extension providers
- Lack of ownership because of heavy ASSP/ASIRP involvement
- Inadequate co-ordination within DAE and with outside stakeholders
- A plethora of projects, many of which did not reflect NAEP objectives
- Lack of DAE ability to follow the decentralised planning system
- Inadequate monitoring of implementation progress by EPICC
- Insufficient support from top managers
- Insufficient visionary leadership within DAE to make the cultural move towards a partnership approach
- Insufficient commitment and accountability among stakeholders
- Insufficient commitment to the NAEP strategy
- Inadequate extension M&E
- Partnerships that have been funding-driven and contractual
- Avoidance of number of key issues, such as structural reorganisation of DAE, staff motivation and logistic support

15. This list is very detailed and frank, and many of the findings of the present review support these conclusions. In order to address these shortcomings the second Plan keeps its strategic planning objectives 'short, simple and clearly focused on DAE's goal and mission'. Five specific objectives have been laid out for achievement by 2006:

- Increased agricultural productivity,
- Provision of pro-poor services,
- Strengthening of partnerships and links with Local Government,

⁴ *Strategic Plan 2002-2006*, Department of Agricultural Extension, Dhaka, 2002

- Development of DAE as an effective institution for providing quality and quantity services, and
- Developing performance measurement.

There is also a brief discussion of the merits of moving from a project-driven approach to a more programmatic management style, and a statement that the DAE has already begun to implement this approach by grouping projects with similar objectives under wing directors.

16. Since the 2002-6 Plan was not launched until March 2003, it is clearly too early to assess whether the reforms it champions will actually be followed through. However it has to be said that the structural and organisational changes proposed under the heading *Development of DAE as an effective institution for providing quality and quantity services*, although perhaps quite radical coming from a public sector agency in Bangladesh, are also fairly unambitious compared with the deep-seated organisational reform the Department requires (see Section 2.3 below). If fundamental changes are not made, it is difficult to see how performance in delivering on NAEP policies is going to improve significantly compared with the first Strategic Plan.

17. On the part of ASIRP, however, one significant change has already been made in response to the point in SP 2002-06 about lack of DAE ownership of the strategic planning process. ASIRP has adopted a much more 'hands off' and facilitative approach when assisting the DAE's efforts in developing the second Strategic Plan, with two results. First there is now a much stronger sense of ownership on the part of the Department – or at least on the part of key players within its structure. Second, the ASIRP TA team is not in full agreement with SP 2002-06. In particular, the team does not agree with the strategy of returning to full Block Supervisor establishment. The second outcome is, of course, an almost inevitable consequence of the first, but the decision to adopt a 'hands-off' approach was nevertheless fully justified.

2 SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE WITHIN DAE

18. ASIRP's project purpose – and indeed the Project's title – implies that NAEP implementation requires serious institutional development and reform at DAE. Institutions rely on four types of capital. *Tangible capital* refers to land, buildings and equipment, but also to financial resources. *Human capital* relates to the staff members' skills and attitudes. *Organisational capital* is the extent to which the institution's rules, procedures and culture are aligned to deliver on its mandate. *Social or political capital* is the prestige of the organisation in the eyes of decision makers – in this case the government, the development partners, civil society and ultimately the public at large. The last is largely the product of the other three.

2.1 Tangible capital

19. Donor-funded projects have always found it relatively easy to enhance tangible capital. ASIRP was never meant to be a major provider in this area, but has made a contribution. The only aspect of this that raises some concern is the supply of computers (backed up by the necessary training and systems

development) to district extension offices as part of the Project's support to computerisation of DAE activities. This gives rise to concerns regarding post-project sustainability. To the extent that processes become computer-oriented, they become computer-dependent, yet there may be no post-ASIRP budget for supplies, maintenance, repair and eventual replacement.

2.2 Human Capital

20. Human capital is discussed in more detail later (Section 4). A general point that emerges from this assessment is that over the period of ASSP and ASIRP too little attention has been paid (not just by these projects, but by virtually all DAE-based projects) to maintaining and upgrading the basic technical competencies of departmental staff, particularly in respect of the staple crops that farmers grow. The situation is compounded by the fact that (a) much of the technical literature on which Block Supervisors rely is woefully dated, and (b) more than 10 years of moratorium on recruitment have resulted in a situation where the Department has to rely on a diminishing and aging staff whose professional skills are in many cases both rusty and out-of-date.

21. As implied by the 'weaknesses' section of SP 2002-06, the more difficult part of HRD is attitudinal change, which is inextricably linked to organisational capital. The current Strategic Plan acknowledges that staff motivation is an area of concern. The Department's incentive structure has not really changed since NAEP adoption, and is not aligned to motivating extension agents to take on the tasks implicit in the NAEP, which are much more demanding than those of the T&V system for which they were recruited. While it is true that some extension staff continue to display a heartening enthusiasm for their work and to express frustration with the various barriers that prevent them from doing it, various reviews over the years have indicated that the great majority seem not to have undergone any real attitudinal change towards their clients and partners.

2.3 Organisational capital

22. As noted above, this connects (a) an institution's mandate with (b) its rules, procedures and culture. The NAEP has radically altered the former, particularly in the shape of a commitment for DAE to work with all categories of farmers, to espouse a demand-driven system, and to adopt a decentralised, pluralistic, partnership approach. (In the terminology of the new institutional economics, the 'rules of the game' have changed.) The Department deserves great credit for its role in this mandate change. It coordinated a wide range of consultations among government, civil society and the donor community and followed up the policy change with a series of implementation plans. However, as SP 2002-06 acknowledges, it is still struggling to change the organisational culture that must deliver on this new mandate.

23. As the Purpose of ASIRP implicitly recognises, the big issue post-NAEP approval was, and remains, how to change DAE's organisational capital in line with its mandate change. One area in which meaningful change has to take place is the incentive structure for field staff. Another is in the DAE organogram, which has remained essentially unchanged since NAEP adoption. It is heartening that the SP 2002-06 recognises this.

24. It is disappointing that the DAE commitment in principle to change its organisational capital did not happen until the second strategic plan was adopted in March 2003, nine months before ASIRP's completion date. Prior to this commitment ASIRP's attempts to develop DAE's organisation capital were not particularly successful. The Project's 10-year review of organisational development at the Department charts the breakdown in ASIRP attempts to achieve this, noting that 'The prevailing issue for ASIRP was that the culture of the organisation (DAE) needed to change and ... (be) focussed on clear objectives'. However 'the 1999-2002 Strategic Plan was notable for its lack of clear objectives and targets ... In the absence of a shared vision and a common understanding it is hardly surprising that the rules of the game were never agreed.' Progress at the managerial and administrative (as well as technical) levels was slow and in the end ASIRP's early work on change management was abandoned.⁵

25. The same review provides a subjective assessment of where DAE presently stands with respect to factors that influence its performance, nine of these relate to organisational capital.⁶

Mission and strategy. Although DAE has produced strategic plans, the policy-strategy continuum has been essentially project-driven, a flaw that was not explicitly accepted until the publication of SP 2002-06.

Vision. The major issue here is the lack of a vision as to the future of public sector extension in general and DAE in particular, and no clear decision on the core functions of the Department.

Leadership. A basic question is whether the system provides senior management with a strong incentive to make fundamental changes in service delivery. The frequent leadership changes that are such a feature of the government system certainly do not encourage senior staff to take a long-term view.

Culture. Both ASSP and ASIRP in its early stages tried to change the organisational culture of the Department, largely by importing tenets that were not understood in a GoB technocracy and line agency'. These attempts were almost inevitably unsuccessful.

Structure. As noted earlier, despite the change in mandate, the organogram has not changed since T&V times, and there are still irrelevant wings and a culture of project-domination.

Management practices. There has been some improvement in management behaviour and practices in using resources to serve the mandate, but this has not been sufficient to improve service delivery or increase public accountability.

Systems. The multi donor nature of support to DAE combined with GoB reporting requirements has resulted in a system that is complex, unwieldy, bureaucratic and lacking standardisation.

⁵ *Organisational Development with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Bangladesh: A Ten Year Review*, ASIRP, Dhaka, 2003.

⁶ *ibid* pp.12-15

Task requirements, individual skills and abilities. Many projects have written and re-written job descriptions – as has SP 2002-06 – but the lack of clarity on roles makes it difficult to relate skills to job requirements. Importantly there is no link between the job description and the Annual Confidential Report that is produced for each staff member by his/her superior. Apart from the inherent unfairness of such a system and the obvious potential for abuse, there are two problems. The first is that because the report is confidential, the staff member receives no feedback on his/her performance, and a staff development opportunity is therefore foregone. The second is that the fact that a staff member's performance tends to be judged, not in terms of beneficiary-impact, but in terms of behavioural issues such as punctuality and attitude towards superiors.

Individual needs, values and motivation. There remains the basic problem of low GoB salary scales, which act as a disincentive across the public sector. However other incentive structures within the Department do not motivate staff to perform well in terms of their job descriptions, and there are doubts as to the sustainability of such incentive structures as do exist, since they are project-funded.

Lesson: Some progress has been made towards improving DAE's organisational capital, but even the current strategic plan is relatively weak on actions. In an organisational culture that is resistant to deep-rooted reform, the Project has probably achieved all that could reasonably have been expected. Nevertheless progress has been fairly marginal in comparison with the level of change that is needed.

2.4 Impact and sustainability of new management systems

26. DAE's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is quite diffuse and complex. At least three sections are responsible for M&E within the Department. The Field Services Wing has a monitoring section which collects basic statistics on field activities such as number of field demonstrations held. The Planning and Evaluation Wing has a Management Information Systems (MIS) section, which requires Block Supervisors to complete fortnightly returns on variables such as area under various crops, fertiliser use and (at the end of the season) yields and production. The MIS section is also responsible for co-ordinating planning activities in the field and for providing information in an emergency situation (such as a flood) in order to guide relief efforts. The third element is an informal monitoring system operated by DAE's Control Room, which requires data from the field level on an ad hoc basis, often to answer occasional urgent information demands from the MoA.

27. As SP2002-06 points out, the DAE's M&E efforts are clearly inadequate. Inputs such as demonstrations are monitored, but not outcomes or impact. The system cannot be used to monitor staff performance, first because the information that is being collected is not geared to that purpose, and second because those who are being monitored also provide the information. Where information is collected on outcomes (as in the case of crop production) it would be next to impossible to separate out the impact of extension activities from the host of other factors that influence crop areas, yields, etc. The DAE Extension Manual contains provision for the introduction of a system of KAP (Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices) surveys to be

conducted by District AEOs, but these have never been implemented. The end result of all of this is the absence of a basic management tool that is needed regularly to assess progress, update knowledge, identify problems and indicate solutions.

28. It has been argued that the fact that land productivity has been rising in recent years, to the point that Bangladesh is now self-sufficient in basic cereals,⁷ is itself an indication that the DAE must have operated an effective extension service. However it is not possible to substantiate this viewpoint with available information, as a number of changes have taken place over the same period. These changes include: (a) the introduction of new wheat varieties by BARI and new rice varieties by BRRI (which themselves have benefited from technologies emanating from CIMMYT and IRRI respectively), (b) the liberalisation of agricultural input supply, particularly fertiliser and seed, (c) deregulation of the irrigation sector, (d) reduction in tariffs on farm machinery, particularly power tillers, and (e) improvements in transport links and other elements of market infrastructure. In the absence of effective impact monitoring this creates major attribution problems. Clearly technologies and the knowledge needed to use them have been reaching farmers, but these could have spread along a number of pathways in addition to DAE, including outreach work by agricultural research stations, extension by NGOs and informal farmer-to-farmer contact.

Lesson: DAE's lack of effective outcome or impact monitoring makes it very difficult to link activities and inputs on the one hand, with outcomes and impact on the other; this is symptomatic of problems with organisational capital

29. Both ASSP and ASIRP tried to address this issue, but, with one exception (see below), have basically failed. However, these projects' efforts must be seen in the context of a multi-donor, project-driven institution, where, in addition to their DAE data collection responsibilities, staff from Block Supervisors upwards are responsible for completing monitoring forms for projects that operate within their areas, using project-supplied forms. Since a district may have several projects funded by different donors, this can be burdensome and can eat into the time required for extension work. Balancing this, projects do tend to analyse the findings of their M&E activities and convey them to the Department. Financial information from projects is routinely compiled by the Planning and Evaluation Wing and passed on to the relevant GoB authorities, but there is little indication as to whether the more substantive information in these reports is assimilated into DAE's institutional memory. As noted in the 2001 Implementation Review of ASIRP, 'There are

⁷ "Self-sufficiency" is defined here in the sense that national cereal production (net of seed, feed and wastage) is equal to or greater than population multiplied by estimated per capita requirements. This does not equate to food security, as it takes only the "food availability" aspect of food security into account and not the "food access" and "food utilisation" aspects. Moreover cereal self-sufficiency has been achieved partly at the cost of reduction in production of other staple foodstuffs, particularly pulses and oilseeds. For further discussion of this issue, please refer to the Plan of Action for the National Agricultural Policy.

serious obstacles to the establishment of a sustainable and comprehensive M&E system at DAE'.⁸

30. The above-noted exception is to be found in the Specialist Co-operation Model, where a basic monitoring tool is the *Farmer Advice Record Sheet* (see section 5.2.3 below). Copies are submitted for scrutiny by technical specialists to check the validity of the advice provided. The technical experts later produce technical briefings to deal with commonly-recurring problems and these are distributed among extension agents. This builds on the Block Supervisor Diary system, introduced in 1993, and is one of the few examples of activity monitoring to be found in the extension system. However, it still does not address the problem of lack of impact monitoring.

31. Other than this, ASSP, and to a lesser extent ASIRP, efforts to assist in addressing the problem of lack of effective M&E systems, seem to have simply added to the burden of reporting requirements. Under ASSP a District Extension Monitoring System (DEMS) was formed under DAE's MIS section. Forms were to be completed by extension staff and used to review progress and plan future activities: they did not cover farmers' opinions or assess outcomes or impact, so that their utility as management tools was limited. From DAE's perspective this was yet another project-driven unsustainable monitoring system imposing further reporting requirements, and there was little or no sense of ownership, and no official letter was issued to require its adoption. The ASSP later simplified the DEMS into a seasonal extension management system (SEMS), but this still failed to solve the problem. ASIRP tried to resurrect the SEMS, but DAE still did not accept this system. SP 2002-06 notes that this systems 'Was too complex and did not work properly because of too many variables'. Again the problem of lack of ownership was highlighted (*ibid* p.26). The system continues now only in the districts where there are ASIRP-supported extension activities, and it is not expected to survive the project.

32. ASIRP's assistance to developing wider aspects of MIS at the Department have also been troubled. The 2001 Implementation Review noted that, although DAE's master plan for MIS had been scaled back in accordance with the Mid-Term Review's recommendations, the remaining tasks remained 'diffuse and ambitious'. Arguing that ASIRP attempts to develop MIS systems were acting as a disincentive to DAE ownership, the Review recommended that the Project should cease work on the various databases and transfer them to the Department by the end of 2001. The elements that were incorporated within the DAE system were district extension planning, the personnel data base and training information systems, but the main plank of the MIS structure, SEMS, was dropped.

Lesson: it is very difficult for institutions to change from within, and there is little point in trying to reform them without strong backing from a higher level in the system. Had there been such pressure from above, DAE would probably have welcomed ASSP and ASIRP inputs. Without it, attempts at change management were viewed virtually as interference

⁸ Bangladesh: Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project (ASIRP) Implementation Review; November 4-December 1, 2001: Aide Memoire

33. ASIRP's other monitoring activities are now largely restricted to the extension models the Project supports. This is far from unimportant, particularly important in a learning and innovations project, if key lessons are to be learned. Models under the Integrated Extension Approach are the most intensively monitored Project activities, and this is based around the ASIRP logframe indicators. In the quarterly monitoring exercise a series of hypotheses is developed and tested for each extension model. However, the Partnership Initiative Funds have been less intensively monitored than best practice dictates (see section 3.4).

34. Each project component has been evaluated close to completion, and the results documented and published. In addition, at the beginning of October 2003 the ASIRP Technical Assistance team completed a very useful review of ten years of ODA/DFID support to the reform and development of agricultural extension in Bangladesh through both ASIRP and ASSP. There are four volumes:

1. *Organisational Development with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Bangladesh*
2. *Agricultural Extension with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Bangladesh*
3. *Human Resource Interventions with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Bangladesh, and*
4. *Working with NGOs in Bangladesh.*

These and other ASIRP documents were extremely helpful to the review mission in completing its task.

2.5 Progress towards a sectoral approach

35. The Project purpose requires the TA team to explore sectoral approaches,⁹ and it has sponsored a three phase process that commissioned studies and held workshops to examine the issues. This type of activity continued until early 2002, by which time the Danida-supported Policy and Planning Support Unit (PPSU) under the Ministry of Agriculture had begun investigating sectoral co-ordination at the Ministerial level. DFID-B therefore instructed the TA team to give this issue low priority in future, and there have been no further activities.

36. The Sector-wide Approach (SWAP) has had a chequered history in Bangladesh. It has been introduced in Health and Education, which are generally recognised as the two sectors in which this approach has the greatest prospect of success, yet even here the record has been mixed. In agricultural extension, the necessary preconditions for a full SWAP are not fulfilled. As a recent ASIRP study noted, the NAEP satisfies only two out of three criteria: it is holistic in both the activity and institutional senses, but not in a functional sense, because extension is limited to the supply of just one service to farmers.¹⁰ If the SWAP is to be applied in agriculture, it will have to be at a higher level than the DAE, presumably as part of the Plan of Action for

⁹ See Section 7.1 below for a discussion of this in logframe terms.

¹⁰ *Third Phase Report: SWAP Readiness Assessment of NAEP and the Feasibility of Moving from Projects to Programmes in DAE.* Md. Osman Ali, Ray Purcell and Keith Fisher, ASIRP 2002

the National Agricultural Policy or within the proposed Integrated Agricultural Development Plan (both of which are discussed in Section 2.6).

37. Indeed some of the actions required to mount a fully programmatic and needs-based approach would have to be taken at an even higher level than the MoA, because broader GoB rules influence much of what can be done. For instance, the traditional breakdown of agriculture in the Annual Development Plan (ADP) is infrastructure-based. If other, non-infrastructure, activities were to be included in the ADP (by whatever route) this would require a change the GoB rules of business. Otherwise, regardless of need or demand, the Auditor General's audit works to clear budget guidelines and descriptions, and an audit objection would be inevitable.

38. The DAE perhaps needs to find a pragmatic 'middle way' between the fragmentary efforts that currently exist and a full sectoral approach, one that brings more complementarity between projects and greater consistency with respect to policy goals. The Department already recognises this need. Noting that the projectised approach within the Department has caused huge problems, a more programmatic approach is advocated in SP 2002-06. However the language used is disappointingly tentative: 'It is *expected* that henceforth DAE *should* develop programmes based on its Strategic Plan, REA and NEAP principles and all future projects *should* follow it. The existing projects *should* also adjust their activities based on NAEP and REA principles *where possible*' (emphasis added). No timetable is given for implementing these changes. One concrete move in a programmatic direction has been to group projects with similar objectives under wing directors. This is an important first step, but more is needed.

39. There are important lessons that DAE could perhaps learn from models developed in other sectors and other countries in this respect. In these models programmes are not simply a cluster of projects, and they are not designed or led by a single donor. They are institution-driven efforts to use a combination of measures to achieve policy goals. Implementation measures can include economic incentives, institutional reform, research and service delivery. The implementation of these measures might involve a number of public and private sector organisations. Under such arrangements special attention is given to creating mechanisms that will improve co-ordination among the programme partners and provide feedback from clients and beneficiaries.

Lesson: while a full sectoral approach is inappropriate for an institution with DAE's mandate and must await action at higher government levels, major progress towards a more programmatic approach is still possible, but the issue needs to be prioritised.

2.6 The Integrated Agricultural Development Plan (IADP)

40. This nascent plan has its roots in the National Agricultural Policy (NAP) of 1999. (Nothing could better illustrate the need for integrated agricultural development planning than the fact that the NAP was issued three years after the NAEP!) In September 2001 the Ministry of Agriculture, with FAO assistance, launched an exercise to draft a Plan of Action (PoA) for NAP

implementation. A draft PoA was presented to the Ministry, but disagreements within the drafting team had resulted in a document that was internally inconsistent. The first five chapters presented the approach of the PoA, based around the policy document's central focus on food security and outlining a pluralistic, decentralised, market-based implementation strategy. This part of the document ended with a set of principles for prioritisation of investments. However, the final chapter presented an unprioritised list of 329 public sector investment proposals through which the NAP was to be implemented. After fairly protracted negotiations and a number of re-drafts, the PoA was finally adopted as GoB policy in 2003 without the document's serious internal inconsistencies ever having been fully addressed.

41. In the face of lack of donor support for the PoA, the Ministry of Agriculture's PPSU has launched an initiative to try to correct the shortcomings in the PoA and bring it within the framework of a new Integrated Agricultural Development Plan. The IADP's goal is 'The implementation of the national policies via the establishment and maintenance of an enabling environment for all stakeholders'. Its specific objectives are to:

- Ensure consistency between national policy goals, regulations and intervention activities,
- Establish and maintain an enabling environment,
- Ensure adequate public sector management capacity, and
- Ensure efficient resource utilisation.

42. A working group has been established to carry this process forward, but at the request of the GoB its non-national membership is drawn only from the PPSU and its counterpart in the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, both of which are Danida-supported. The PPSU facilitated a Development Partner Workshop in May 2003 to discuss the issues. Here it was explained that the IADP envisages four interlinked strategic frameworks, covering policy & planning, institutional management, information systems management and programme/project implementation. The budget for this exercise is an estimated \$7.5 million and

A simple policy reform to boost the enabling environment

ASIRP's District Partnership Initiative Fund is supporting a partnership in Chapai Nawabganj between the Bangladesh Islamic Youth Society, the DAE and BARI's Lac Research Station to generate income for poor farmers. The economic activities are based around homestead raising of lac insects on jujube trees. This produces two valuable products, jujube plums and lac. Lac, however, is classified by GoB as a high value product, and sellers must obtain a licence from the district administration, involving a registration fee of Tk.50/-. The amount of money is not great, but the hassle involved in registration is such that sellers prefer to cross the nearby Indian border to sell their crop. Lac is a raw material for a range of manufactured products, and processing it within Bangladesh would ensure that the any value addition took place in-country. It is difficult to believe that the

the timescale is four to five years.¹¹

43. This is clearly a costly initiative. A basic question is that, given the fact that a one-donor approach has apparently been adopted by the GoB for the design exercise, will other donors be prepared to buy into it?

44. Perhaps more seriously, the timeframe is exceptionally long. What is to happen to agricultural planning in the meantime? Will the IADP formulation exercise serve as a justification for delaying implementation of essential and urgent reforms as identified in the PoA? In particular will it delay the reforms needed to create a more enabling environment that would allow the agricultural sector to meet such challenges as globalisation, urbanisation, mounting inequality, and a growing number (as distinct from percentage) of food-insecure people? Some of the reforms that are needed are relatively simple and non-controversial. A simple example, uncovered by the review mission on its brief field trip to Chapai Nawabganj, is given in the attached box. Many similar examples could probably be uncovered relatively quickly. If a policy analysis unit were to adopt a strategy of identifying such easy wins, it could begin a process of dialogue and confidence-building between policy makers and the policy analysis unit. This could lead to a process of identifying a steadily increasing number of areas in which more complex reforms are needed, followed by the design of the necessary policy instruments. The effect on the enabling environment could be positive, cumulative and mutually-reinforcing. As things stand there is a danger that the IADP formulation process will tie up resources (and qualified and experienced policy analysts are an exceptionally scarce resource in Bangladesh) to the exclusion of a simpler, but perhaps more viable strategy.

45. As the IADP process moves forward, what is to happen to agricultural investment by the development partners? Are current efforts to promote a more programmatic approach to sectoral development to be put on hold while the IADP is formulated? Is it a viable option to continue with projects while trying to influence the inchoate IADP towards adopting a more sectoral approach?

Lesson: There seems little justification for DFID-B to buy into the IADP process until a convincing case has been made for the envisaged cost and time budgets.

46. A strong case can be made for an approach that is more focussed on opportunities than problems. Both GoB and the donors have been focussing on technologies and organisations, when what appears to have been driving agricultural change are economic opportunities – as exemplified by expansion of irrigation following de-regulation, the growth in culture fisheries, the increasing levels of horticultural production in the Northwest following completion of the Jamuna Bridge, and the rapid expansion of the rural non-farm economy. Annexe 6 provides some notes on the concept of an opportunities-based approach.

¹¹ *PRSP and Plan of Action (PoA) for Agriculture: Framework for Progress*; presented at the Development Partner Workshop, 19th May 2003, Dhaka

Lesson: If a more holistic approach were to be taken, whether it is through Programmes, SWAP, or the IADP, this should lead to more attention being given to the processes that have made the greatest difference over the last 25 years: (a) improvements in the regulatory environment, (b) access to inputs, farm equipment and credit and (c) improved functioning of the market system.

3 PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES

3.1 Working with the non-government sector

47. Of 170 civil society partners of DAE/ASIRP, 166 have been NGOs. This marks a radical departure, because traditionally GO-NGO relations in Bangladesh had been mutually distrustful. However the NAEP's policy of pluralistic extension began a process of bringing the parties together, so that by the start of ASIRP in 1999 there was already a history of GO-NGO collaboration. There is an important success in this area in that a DAE-NGO Liaison Committee has now been created as part of DAE's organisational structure. Moreover this committee has recently been extended to cover the commercial private sector in the form of a DAE-NGO- Private Sector Partners Liaison Committee. This signals and increasing recognition within DAE of the role, initially of NGOs and later of the private sector in agricultural technology transfer and information systems. This process of encouraging the emergence of an officially-accepted pluralistic extension system was supported by ASSP and ASIRP. ASIRP introduced a complex process aimed at strengthening partnership collaboration whose principal elements were Partnership Initiative Funds and the piloting of the Integrated Extension approach. These are reviewed in sections 3.2 to 3.4 and 5.2.3 respectively.

48. How effective have such partnerships been? An ASIRP-supported series of studies completed in 2002 conducted six case studies (two GO, four NGO) in some detail and found that:

- The programmes contributed modestly to the beneficiaries' physical and financial capital, but there was little evidence of contributions to social capital
- Groups were formed for the specific purpose of project implementation and had little prospect of post-project sustainability
- Large national NGOs were the most likely to target the poorest, but even here there was a clear tendency for the target group to drift up the social scale towards small and medium farmers, to the exclusion of the hard core poor.

Lesson: With the exception of some large national NGOs, NGO capacity for providing extension services is generally weak and all NGOs tend sooner or later to exclude the hardcore poor from agricultural initiatives.

3.2 The Partnership Initiative Funds (PIFs)

49. One of the main vehicles for promoting partnerships under ASIRP has been the Partnership Initiative Funds. (Another is the partnership extension model reviewed in section 5.2.1.) PIFs were established at three levels.

- The National Partnership Initiative Fund (NPIF), which ‘supports strategic activities at the national level to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of agricultural extension service providers (ESPs) and other agricultural extension system participants’
- The District Partnership Initiative Fund (DPIF), which ‘is concerned with the practical applications of integrated agricultural extension service delivery in innovative ways at the District level’, and
- The Upazila Partnership Initiative Fund (UPIF), which ‘facilitates field level extension service delivery that is localised and low cost’.¹²

50. The purpose of the DPIF and UPIF was to facilitate implementation of the partnership approach of the NAEP by placing resources at the command of the DAEC and UAEC respectively so that an integrated agricultural extension service could be provided in their mandated areas. The rationale for the NPIF is that even in a system that is supporting decentralisation, there will be issues of national importance which have to be considered at the macro level. The 2001 Joint Supervision Mission (Blackwell *et al* 2001) noted that some progress had been made in addressing concerns of the previous JSM in addressing problems of over-flexibility in programme guidelines and inappropriate allocation of responsibilities. The 2001 JSM made further recommendations for strengthening PIF administration by putting ‘robust and competitive’ structures in place with formal supervisory responsibility given to a subcommittee of the EPIC with separate provision for peer review. It was also recommended that scheme frameworks and guidelines be prepared for the re-launch of the two funds in January 2002. These recommendations were followed, and the funds were re-launched in 2002. Both the NPIF and the DPIF adopted the competitive funding model.¹³

51. A total of 482 grants have been made, 414 under the UPIF, 58 under the DPIF and 10 under the NPIF. The three funds were evaluated in 2003, but the findings of the second round DPIF and NPIF are not available at time of writing. The findings to date may be summarised as follows.

- The objectives of the UPIF were less prescribed than those of the other two funds and it represented local interests to some extent; generally speaking it gave better value for money than the other two funds.
- The creation of the UAEC has resulted in parallel structures that may not be sustainable, particularly since it has been primed with UPIF funds.
- Grantees under DPIF and NPIF adopted a mix of approaches, resulting in an unfocused approach that showed little concern for either cost or effectiveness. By comparison, it was possible to identify costs in the UPIF grants and therefore to draw conclusions on cost-effectiveness.
- In the UPIF grants no correlation was found between extension method and adoption, and DAE’s Revised Extension Approach (REA) was found to be low-cost and just as effective as the others.

¹² ASIRP 2002. *National Partnership Initiative Fund: Guidelines for Submission of Concept Notes and Proposals*; Kamarbari, Dhaka, page v.

¹³ The NPIF was funded exclusively by the DFID component, DPIF jointly by DFID and World Bank (75:25) and UPIF jointly by the World Bank and GoB (50:50).

- None of the funded activities seem to have targeted the most disadvantaged groups
- With DPIF and NPIF NGO-GO partnerships were held together by the cement of funds and the partnerships were financing contracts
- In some NGO-GO partnerships the GO was given a very limited role; in other cases the partnership seems to have replaced routine extension activities
- The concept of a national NGO providing support and mentoring for a local NGO seems to have been lost
- Income generation approaches dominated the partnerships, and these have the potential to be self-sustaining, but the availability of free funds from the PIF eliminated this need, reducing sustainability potential
- Free funding (instead of credit) can be justified where the target beneficiaries are hardcore poor and therefore high-risk clients for credit, but the PIF target beneficiaries were not hardcore poor.
- There are numerous examples of effective partnership programmes in micro credit delivery, but these may not work in service delivery. The PIFs do not provide much insight into issues such as credit market failure.
- The objectives of DPIF have not been met; mid-term reforms to the system addressed concerns of transparency and governance, rather than the objectives of the fund.
- Competitive funding of agricultural extension partnerships was a high-risk strategy, but the DPIF/NPIF experience provides no clear test of the concept.
- The UPIF has provided lessons on institutional frameworks, structures, methods and budget support, and therefore has served the project purpose better than the other two funds. This advantage is in addition to its being a lower cost approach.

Lesson: the fact that the UPIF outperformed the other two funds supports the view that the local level may be the most appropriate entry point for agricultural extension; this view is bolstered by widespread reports from the field that willingness to collaborate across organisational and disciplinary lines is high on the periphery and decreases rapidly towards the centre.

3.3 Partnership Initiative Funds and the NAEP

52. Has the PIF promoted NAEP principles? The ASIRP evaluation¹⁴ suggests otherwise.

- **Extension to all categories of farmers.** None of the funds tended to work with the poorest farmers (marginal and landless). All of them worked with women farmers to some extent. Pre-supported groups tended to be the main beneficiaries, and since these are generally micro credit groups, the hardcore poor were largely excluded.
- **Efficient extension services.** It is difficult to compare the three funds – and indeed in some cases to compare the three evaluations, given different methodologies and reporting formats – but the UPIF is

¹⁴ This section draws extensively on the ASIRP review of PIFs

undoubtedly the lowest cost option with an average cost per beneficiary of Tk.165. The comparable figures for the DPIF was around Tk.2,698 and for the NPIF Tk.1,112.

- **Pluralism.** The fact that the PIFs accept applications only if there is partnership arrangement, means that the system is necessarily pluralistic. However the range of partners was small in all three funds: some combination of different government organisations (Department of Agriculture, Department of Fisheries, Department of Livestock), national NGOs and local NGOs. Neither the commercial private sector nor the agricultural universities appear as partners.
- **Decentralisation.** There was no decentralisation of either the NPIF or the DPIF. Insofar as there was a degree of local involvement, it can be said that the UPIF was decentralised to a certain extent.
- **Demand-led extension services.** The UPIF relied on the UAECC to select beneficiaries and they tended to be from pre-selected groups. Any degree of demand-led extension in the UPIF was minimal. In the other two funds there was no evidence of this at all.
- **Working with groups of all kinds.** All of the funds worked with groups of beneficiaries they had been supporting in the past, and these are not inclusive. Particularly in the case of the hardcore poor, experience in Bangladesh indicates that they have so little social capital that they tend not to belong to groups at all. Perhaps they also self-exclude, as their labour productivity tends to be low and the opportunity cost of their time is correspondingly high.
- **Strengthened research-extension linkages.** There were elements of linkages in the UPIFs, but no evidence these links had been strengthened in the other two funds.
- **Training of extension personnel.** In the UPIF non-government partners learned the extension methods followed by DOA.
- **Use of appropriate extension methodology.** In all three funds a prescriptive approach was used and the extension methods followed were largely those of the DAE/REA.
- **Integrated extension support to farmers.** Where there was GO-GO partnership (found only in UPIF), each partner tended to work in its own single discipline, so that the approach was multi-disciplinary, rather than inter-disciplinary.
- **Co-ordinated extension activities.** The evidence suggest that, at least in the cases of DPIF and NPIF, the basic motivation for the partnership was the availability of funding, and there is little evidence that any of them will outlast grant completion. In the case of UPIF the UAECC was supportive in getting increased co-ordination.
- **Integrated environment support.** In few cases grantees' activities were attuned to environmental issues. One of the exceptions was a NPIF grant, where an environmentally-friendly, low-external-input approach was adopted (Proshika-Zagaroni, Comilla.)

Lesson: In facilitating partnership formation is it crucial to avoid creating marriages of convenience cemented by money; the practice could actually counter sustainability, as it could get in the way of genuine partnerships based on perceived mutual complementarities

3.4 The bigger picture

53. The above analysis raises some fundamental issues. The first is, what is meant by 'partnership'? In particular, in such an exercise is the farmer to be regarded as a partner or client? PIF guidelines (like those of so many other competitive funds) require evidence that the proposal is 'demand driven', which is normally taken (as in the NAEP) to mean that it is farmer-driven. The evaluations indicate that, whatever arguments may have been presented in the grant application, there was little evidence to suggest that farmers were subsequently driving the process through participatory approaches.

54. A second set of issues revolves around the rationale of partnerships. The strongest partnerships are rooted in the differential and complementary comparative advantage of the partners, from which synergies can result. Traditionally in Bangladesh the DAE's comparative advantage has been seen in terms of technical know-how, while that of the NGO sector is perceived to lie in social processes, especially group formation, mobilisation and motivation. However the fact that the basic technical skills of agricultural extension agents have not been seriously upgraded for more than a decade means that the Department's comparative advantage continues to erode.

55. A third set of issues relates to the competitive funding model as used in the PIFs. This model has become something of a development fashion in the recent years, and a number of donor agencies have strongly promoted it. Enough experience has been accumulated with competitive funding over the years for a code of best practice to begin to emerge. Generally speaking the PIFs adhered to this code, but there are four areas in which it did not, or was unable to.

The location of the Funds. Best practice indicates that fund management should be divorced from its applicants. However in this case the location of the PIFs was within the DAE structure, while the Department was an applicant for funding.

Composition of the governing body. Best practice is that this should represent a broad range of stakeholders with none in the majority. However the EPICC Partnership Sub-committee, which fills this role has a government majority

Monitoring. This is based on the submission of quarterly reports, which are used primarily for financial monitoring, backed up by field visits. Any financial irregularities that emerge are checked and in some cases followed up by an audit. Until the second round there was no structured methodology for monitoring. In the second round management of process- and output- based monitoring improved, at least for the NPIF. As a result of this monitoring some projects were stopped. However the reporting format was largely intended to monitor physical and financial progress against the log frame. Technical backstopping was assumed to be present on the basis of the original proposals. The ASIRP TA team maintains that projects that failed did so mainly due to social factors and the nature of the partnership arrangements and that few of them failed technically. However, the TA team members responsible for the PIFs (originally two, now only one) lacked technical expertise, so it is difficult fully to substantiate this view, particularly when the Review Team's brief programme of field visits uncovered at least one instance of inappropriate technical advice having been given out. In the case of the

DPIF grants, it was the TA team's understanding that that the DAECC would monitor these, but there is no evidence that this actually happened. The final evaluation of these funds draws a disappointing picture and uncovered problems that could have been identified earlier had an adequate monitoring system been in place.

56. As with all donor-funded projects the issues of sustainability inevitably also arises. A particular issue with the PIFs arose from its governance structure. Given the problems of the first round of PIFs, DAE/MoA granted considerable leeway in that it allowed an expatriate adviser to be the Member Secretary of a GoB committee. This was a precedent. The problem was that there was then no logical pathway to sustainability, given that counterparts were frequently changed. Having said that, given the shortcomings of the contracted partnership approach, there is no clear evidence that GoB need an MoA-EPSC that decides allocations of project resources in future.

57. Another set of issues concerns the orientation of the Funds. Some were based on market opportunities, but none could be said to have been based on serious market research. Generally speaking activities had a production focus and were problem-, rather than opportunity-, oriented. The danger of a production focus is that by ignoring the level of demand it could result in over-supply to a thin market, causing prices to fall. An opportunity-based approach might have done more to attract the interest of the private sector, which would have brought the necessary marketing expertise to the partnerships and could have boosted sustainability prospects. In such a situation problem-orientation would still have a role, but this would revolve more around finding ways to ensure that disadvantaged farmers could seize opportunities as they emerged.

58. The PIFs, particularly the competitive funding element, were in existence for such a short period of time that they could not have been expected fully to test the competitive model and incorporate lessons learned as part of an ongoing process of reform and improvement. In addition the maximum period of award was just one year (dictated by the remaining life of project once the competitive element was introduced), and this effectively prevented the partners themselves from learning lessons and incorporating them in improved implementation.

Lesson: The DPIF and NPIF used the competitive funding model, but failings in the way it was applied make it difficult to ascribe its failure to intrinsic features of the model as such

4 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

59. The DAE Training Policy published in February 2002 is a clear statement of what the Department wants to do and how it wants to do it. The Policy covers two types of training:

Extension training: courses for farmers, women and youth, local leaders, and input dealers, etc.

Staff training: pre-service and in-service courses for Block Supervisors, short courses for officers.

60. As part of this policy, training needs assessment is supposed to take place at three levels: field staff will identify the training needs of farmers, ATIs and District Training Officers will identify needs of field staff, and the Training Wing and CERDI will identify needs of officers. In practice, this system does not function due to lack of funds for routine training activities. The reality is that training activities for both farmers and DAE staff are driven by projects, some of which are funded by GoB (e.g. mushroom cultivation, seed production) and some of which are funded by the donor (crop diversification, IPM, horticulture and nutrition etc). Consequently, the Training Wing does not have a significant role in the planning of DAE training. This situation has not changed for at least 12 years.

61. Given the project-driven nature of training and extension activities, there are two other roles that the Training Wing could usefully perform. Firstly, it could act as a service unit that provides projects with trainers and facilities. This does not appear to be happening; most projects prefer to create their own cadre of master trainers or subject matter specialists, and they frequently hire outside facilities rather than use those that come under the Training Wing. Secondly, the Training Wing could act as a monitoring unit that provides DAE Directors and Project Managers with information about available human resources and training interventions. The Training Wing has been more successful in this role; the Training Plan for 2002-03 is a useful catalogue of the courses that are being conducted under various projects, and the computerised Training Information System will, if it is maintained, help DAE to keep track of which staff participated in which events.

Lesson: The DAE Training Policy cannot be implemented if training activities are project driven. Consequently the Training Wing has a very limited role to play.

4.1 Project contributions to HRM

62. The ASSP and ASIRP projects have learnt that staff development involves more than just training. The gradual shift from a narrow focus on training to a broader appreciation of human resource management (HRM) has been described in 'A Ten Year Review of Human Resource Interventions', completed by the TA Team in October 2003. An important turning point was the publication of the NAEP and the Revised Extension Approach (REA). These documents provided a basis for examining *staff performance*, and led to the testing of new HRM measures such as a work programming scheme and staff appreciation events.

63. The impact of these human resource interventions is hard to judge. While it is clear that the extension service has not been transformed over the past decade, the DAE has managed to maintain some kind of service during a period when the demands on it have increased, not least because of the mandate shift implicit in NAEP adoption. Since 1990, the ratio between BS and farmer families has changed from 1:900 to 1:2000. In the same period, the portion of farm families who were contacted by the DAE has remained about the same, at 10%. If this information is accurate, it means that number of people receiving advice from each BS has increased in line with population growth.

Lesson: Human Resource interventions have not produced an overall improvement in performance; but a service has been maintained while staff numbers have fallen and the farming population has grown.

64. Many of the constraints to further improvements in performance lie outside the control of DAE or the scope of DFID-funded projects. The relevant 10-Year Review has identified 13 HRM problems. The list includes everything from the operational budget and salary scales, to the system of Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) and the way projects bypass regular procedures. The conclusion is that 'the complexity of HRM in the Bangladeshi public sector does not lend itself to a single donor project based solution'. This suggests that ASIRP has exhausted the options for improving staff performance within DAE. The next step for GoB and the donors, if there is one, needs to be taken at a higher level.

Lesson: Many factors affecting performance are outside of the control of DAE and could not be addressed by the project.

65. Meanwhile, there are two immediate problems that the DAE must attend to, both of which are outcomes of earlier donor support. Firstly, what should the Government do with the 11 Agricultural Training Institutes (ATI's) that are managed by the Training Wing? and secondly how many Block Supervisors are needed?

4.2 The Role of the ATIs

66. The ATIs were originally built to provide (a) basic training for Block Supervisors and (b) short courses for both field staff and farmers. The freeze on recruitment means that they have not had the opportunity to do the first of these jobs for some years; a shortage of operational funds means that they have only been able to do the second job when projects have paid them to do it. Currently most ATIs are conducting Agriculture Diploma courses. The participants pay to attend and after graduation they are qualified to apply for jobs as school teachers, NGO workers, and so on. Private ATIs are also conducting these courses, but the fees are higher than at the DAE Institutes.

67. It is clear that the ATIs within DAE are now functioning as a subsidised business that has no direct link with the provision of extension services to farmers. A recent study carried out by ASIRP has examined the options for the future of the ATIs.¹⁵ It concluded that 'The recommended option is to divest ATIs that are not fully subscribed for diplomas, and move the remainder out of the DAE structure to become an autonomous unit under MoA directly'. The review team has not been presented with any convincing argument in favour of a different option.

68. A related problem is what to do with the Central Extension Resources Development Institute (CERDI), which was established as the apex training institute in DAE. It is many years since the Institute has played a significant role in the development of training and extension capability. As far back as 1991, an evaluation team could 'find no justification for it [CERDI] to remain

¹⁵ Study on Human Resource Planning and Agricultural Training and Education, ASIRP October 2003

under DAE'. The latest study, in October 2003, recommended that CERDI should be retained 'as a venue' that would generate revenue for the Department. Either way, there is no reason for the donors to invest any more money into the Institute.

69. The review team were informed by a number of officers that the freeze on recruitment would soon be lifted; it is expected that between 400 and 500 new staff will be hired each year to replace retirees. The only argument that has been offered in favour of this change in policy is that 'some posts are vacant' and therefore need to be filled. It is worth mentioning that these posts were created as part of the T&V system, which is no longer operational. The review team is in agreement with the ASIRP TA team in being unconvinced that increasing the numbers of field staff is the best way of achieving the goal of the NAEP.

Lesson: Earlier projects have left DAE with the problem of what to do with so many buildings and field staff; there are no good reasons for DAE to retain ATIs and increase staff numbers back to the 'T&V' level

4.3 Block Supervisors

70. A major factor affecting the quality of service currently provided by DAE is the capability of the frontline extension worker, the Block Supervisor. The typical BS has been in Government service for 20 years. As a result of the recruitment freeze, their number has declined from 12,640 in 1991 to 10,253 at the present time. The peak number was achieved at the end of the T&V era, and it was immediately seen as being unsustainable. Numbers could be reduced only through gradual retirement. As a result, there has been no 'fresh blood' in the period covered by ASSP and ASIRP, and the age profile of frontline workers has increased. This has undoubtedly been a constraint to the development of a innovative and responsive extension service.

71. Most BSs started service by attending a 2-year diploma course at an ATI. In the early 1990s, GoB and the donors decided that foundation training should be increased to a 3-year diploma (later increased to 4 years). Because of the recruitment freeze, this change was limited to a 1-year upgrade for existing BSs, carried out with support from ASSP. It appears that the main purpose of the upgrade was to place the BS at a higher point in the relevant Civil Service salary scale, thereby increasing their earnings, rather than to provide new skills. BSs who were interviewed during this review said that the 1-year upgrading course took the form of 20-day residential training followed by 'distance learning' for the rest of the year.

72. In the past 10 years, BSs have attended a number of short technical courses, organised under one project or another. They have learnt things like soil testing, mushroom cultivation, and homestead vegetable raising. But the total amount of technical training has been very limited. Among a group of Block Supervisors interviewed in Chapai Nawbganj, the male BS had each received between 16 and 19 days over the last 10 years; the females had received a few extra days training on subjects like homestead horticulture and nutrition.

73. During the same 10 years, most BS have accumulated a pile of printed materials from various sources, which appears to be a major source of the

advice they give to farmers. These materials include promotional leaflets from agro-chemical companies, booklets from NGOs, and the newsletter produced by Agricultural Information Services. Printed materials are a cheap way of updating the knowledge of BS, but this channel has not been used systematically. For example, it seems that many BS depend on a crop protection book produced under a Japanese funded project in 1985; consequently, some of the pesticide recommendations that find their way onto the Farmer Advice Record Sheets are highly questionable.

74. The 10-Year Review of Human Resource Interventions describes the steps that have been taken to try and improve the abilities of Block Supervisors. Under ASSP, 10,500 BS attended six workshops in subjects such as 'training skills' and 'extension methods'. Under ASIRP, all 10,500 BS attended a 5-day course on facilitation skills. The result, according to a study conducted by Bangladesh Agricultural University in 2000-2001, is that 17% of the BS have adequate technical knowledge and 32% have adequate knowledge of extension approaches.

Lesson: Creation and maintenance of adequate technical skills among field staff is a problem that the DAE has been unable to solve

75. The bias towards methodological training under ASSP and ASIRP has been criticised by some members of the current TA team, who have pointed out that no amount of PRA is going to improve the work of the BS if he or she does not know what to recommend. This is a most valid concern.

76. The strategy that appears to have been adopted by DAE is that *other projects* would take care of the technical aspects of extension. Consequently there are pockets of field staff scattered around the country who are capable of delivering good advice on crop diversification, or organising IPM Field Schools, or helping farmers with irrigation management.

77. The only IEA model that has tackled this issue of technical competence is the Specialist Co-operation Model. This involved fortnightly briefings for the BS, that were delivered by DOF and DLS officers at the Upazilla level. The result is that DAE now has small pockets of field staff who can deliver limited advice about fisheries and livestock.

78. In summary, Block Supervisors are now older (and possibly a little wiser) than they were at the start of ASSP-ASIRP. There is little evidence, however, of a widespread improvement in the capability and capacity of the field staff to deliver up-to-date and relevant technologies. The review team met BS who exhibited an enthusiasm for their work and a thirst for new knowledge that was remarkable given the length and conditions of their service, but DAE and the DFID-funded projects have been unable to turn this army of poorly-paid and badly-trained 'message carriers' into a legion of creative and dynamic 'knowledge workers'.

Lesson: Large numbers of field staff may be a constraint to reforming the extension service, not an asset.

5 EXTENSION APPROACHES

5.1 The role of agricultural extension in Bangladesh

79. The TA team's Ten-Year Review of Agricultural Extension (October 2003) looks at the results of both ASSP (1992-99) and ASIRP (1999-2003). This review usefully examines the changes in extension methodology that have taken place over the period. The document also identifies the eight goals and purposes that were given to the two projects at different times, and assesses progress towards each. It concludes that improvements in national production and farm productivity in the period covered by ASSP-ASIRP cannot be attributed to these projects. The review also looks at farmer access to extension, cost-effectiveness of the service and relevance to the needs of women and smaller farmers, concluding that none of these has improved.

80. It is useful to look at these conclusions in combination with the outcome of an evaluation carried out in 1991. The earlier evaluation examined the results of the previous 15 years of support to agricultural extension in Bangladesh. When DFID started funding ASSP it was picking up a baton that had been carried by UNDP since the mid 1970s and eventually dropped at the end of the 1980s. The conclusion of the 1991 UNDP Review was that '.. an organisation has been created which, on the one hand, does not produce the required outputs and, on the other hand, has not secured the flow of input required to maintain its operations'.

81. If we add together the assistance from UNDP, World Bank and DFID, the process of reforming DAE has taken 30 years, and has cost the donors at least \$125 million. During these decades, almost every possible approach to improving coverage, relevance and effectiveness has been tried at least once. Although there are difficulties in measuring the broad impact of the extension service, we can confidently claim that the general level of service has not been getting any better over the last decade. Part of this can be ascribed to the steadily increasing ratio of farmers to Block Supervisors, but many of the weaknesses that were observed in 1991 continue to exist in 2003.

Lessons: Institutional development and reform projects can take a lot longer, cost a lot more, and have much less effect than the donors may expect

82. Clearly, there are some fundamental constraints that have not been overcome during the period of DFID assistance. The current TA team has examined these constraints and gives prominence to the 'projectisation' of donor support to DAE, which results in: a focus on short-term goals, the undermining of management structures, a lack of consistency in strategy and methodology, and poor ownership of the reform process.

83. This issue was identified as a major problem by the review that took place in 1991. At that time, it was recommended that DAE should produce a medium-term development plan, including a policy, strategy and staff development plan. Ten years later, these things appear to have been put in place, but the difficulties have not gone away. The 'projectisation' of donor support can no longer be seen as a problem that is soluble by yet another project. Instead it appears to be an inescapable fact of life. Perhaps it is time

to accept the reality that DAE has been – and will continue to be - a giant implementing unit for development projects funded by GoB and the donors. The idea that the Department can maintain an effective and efficient routine service above and beyond the work of these projects is one that was introduced by the World Bank 30 years ago and has yet to be achieved. The evidence, not just from Bangladesh but from other countries too, is that the World Bank may have misjudged both what was needed and what was possible.

Lesson: The goal of creating an efficient public service that provides a wide range of agricultural extension advice to a wide range of farmers appears to be unattainable, at least while donor-funded projects dominate the scene

84. The pilot extension activities that were tested under ASIRP have been examined by the review team and our observations are recorded below. There is a need, however, for a wider examination of the role of extension services in Bangladesh. The ASIRP pilots addressed the issue of ‘how to do it better’, while the broader issues of ‘what are we trying to do and why’ have been neglected. The current DAE strategy does not effectively address these broader issues. The strategic objectives that have been adopted by DAE are all-encompassing, thus allowing the Department to do almost anything that the donors and GoB are willing to pay for.

85. What is required is a frank assessment by GoB of the contribution the Department can make to the achievement of policy goals relating to food production, rural livelihoods and the elimination of poverty. The observations made by the review team lead to the following conclusion: it is *by no means certain* that a massive network of field staff, who deliver recommendations but not inputs, is an essential ingredient in the promotion of technological change in the agricultural sector. What *is certain* is that this network has been unable to make a direct contribution to improving the lives of the poorest people in Bangladesh, or to providing a useful service for women. The positive news is that targeted interventions, which give attention to a combination of technological, economic and social factors, can bring about significant benefits for the communities that are involved. The question is, can DAE make those kind of interventions at a scale that will justify the costs of maintaining the organisation?

5.2 Extension approaches tested under ASIRP

5.2.1 Extension partnerships at the local government level

86. Two of the extension approaches piloted under ASIRP in the last two years have attempted to promote partnership at the Upazilla level. This work was carried out as an addition or alternative to the UPIF mechanism, and has been documented by the TA team in a series of evaluations reports and discussion papers.

87. Both of the pilots - the ‘UA ECC Strengthening’ model and the ‘Resource Centre’ model - grew out of earlier efforts to promote an Integrated Extension Approach that was launched by the Government in August 2000. The DFID assessment carried out in April 2001 examined these efforts in

some detail, and recommended a revised implementation plan. One outcome of the DFID assessment was a fragmentation of pilot activities, with different models testing different hypotheses. Another was that the TA team has gone to great lengths to document and evaluate each of these pilots. The challenge that the TA Team and DAE now faces is to put the pieces back together again. This review can highlight some of the lessons that are being learned, but it cannot provide a thorough assessment of this important work; that is something which remains to be done.

88. The UAECCE Strengthening model involved the UAECCE members (DAE, DOF, DLS, BRAC, BRDB, etc) in jointly analysing the services currently available for farmers in the upazila, assessing and prioritizing farmers' needs, and then designing and implementing extension strategies to address them. The model was almost entirely dependent on the voluntary co-operation of Upazila and District Officers, and the TA team adopted a 'light touch' in facilitating the process.

89. From an organizational point of view, the results of the UAECCE strengthening model are encouraging. Collaborative studies were carried out in the pilot upazilas, working groups were formed, strategies were agreed, and proposals were prepared for future funding. From an impact point of view, however, it is too early to say if farmers will benefit from this approach. Collaboration between Government agencies requires a lot of time, and the pilot came to an end before there had been an opportunity to evaluate the outcomes in terms of improved services to rural people.

Lesson: the 'UAECCE strengthening' model had a positive impact in terms of local planning of extension, but it is too early to say if this will lead to better services for farmers.

90. The Resource Centre model involved the establishment of 'Farmer Information and Advice Centres' at the Union or Upazilla level. These are places where farmers, NGO workers, and other rural people can obtain information, advice and training materials. The centres are managed by a sub-committee under the UAECCE and staffed on a part-time basis by Block Supervisors. ASIRP did not fund the construction of any centres under this model; instead the UNOs or District Councils allocated buildings or rooms, and used the ADP budget to pay for renovations.

91. In the pilot areas, the Resource Centres appear to have succeeded in increasing the level of contact between DAE field staff and farmers. This was even the case in Rangamati, where population density is far lower than in most of Bangladesh. In all locations, a surprisingly large number of female farmers have been using the centres: on average, one third of all visits and enquiries were made by women, which is far higher than their contact rate for regular DAE extension activities. In two locations, more women than men were using the centres. The implications of these results are potentially very important.

Lesson: the 'Resource Centre' model had a positive impact in terms of farmer contact. The high level of enquiries made by women farmers is particularly significant, and it is a strong candidate for mainstreaming.

92. Establishing and maintaining a flow of relevant materials to the Centres has been a problem. An interesting recommendation made by the TA team is that the Agricultural Information Service (AIS) should play a greater role in solving this problem. The AIS is presently located in the MoA, outside of DAE's organizational structure, although physically it is located within the same building complex. It would appear that the institutional location of AIS has prevented it from playing a more strategic role in supporting extension activities, and efforts are needed to correct this. The Resource Centre model might be a mechanism for connecting the top and bottom of the 'agricultural knowledge system', thereby bypassing three layers of extension bureaucracy. DAE's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan does recommend such a move, and this is an idea that deserves more attention. However this would require action at a higher level than the Department.

93. In the small geographical areas covered by the pilots, both models appear to have made a significant contribution to the creation or strengthening of linkages between Government ESPs and the local administration. Both models appear to have contributed to a shared sense ownership of the extension service by local government officials. It is important to note that neither model involved any financial incentive for the participating staff.

94. The pilots have shown that it is possible to plan, fund and implement extension activities at the Upazilla level. There are no fundamental organizational or procedural reasons why this cannot be done. The pilots have also shown that DAE can increase the number of farmers that are being contacted. The TA team have noted that there are constraints to replicating and sustaining these activities, and the review team concurs that there are doubts about the extent to which these models can be implemented on a larger scale. Ownership and collaboration at the Upazilla level have not been matched by a shared vision and commitment at higher levels of the system.

Lesson: Decentralisation can be achieved on a small scale in the short term. What is not clear is the extent to which it can be scaled-up and sustained

95. In conclusion, the results of these pilots deserves closer examination than can be provided by this review. DFID and MoA should be taking a closer look at what ASIRP has achieved in terms of the decentralized delivery of services to rural people. The ASIRP experience should be seen in conjunction with the experience of other implementing agencies (e.g. CARE and BRAC) and other sectors (e.g. health and education). It may be also be useful to examine experience from other parts of the Developing World. In a number of countries (e.g. Philippines, Uganda), agricultural field workers have been transferred to local government units following the collapse of the T&V extension system. The review team is not suggesting that Block Supervisors should be transferred to the Upazilla administration, but there is clearly scope for further experimentation – and possible scaling up – with respect to the decentralization of agricultural extension.

5.2.2 The Farmer Led Extension Model

96. The Technical Assistance Team have produced a set of 'End of Project Discussion Documents' on each of the pilots that were carried out under

ASIRP. Each of these provide a chronological summary of how a particular approach developed, with an analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

97. The Discussion Document on the Farmer Led Extension (FLE) pilot notes that its goals of the pilot were not clearly stated at the outset, with the result that it is difficult to assess what was achieved. The FLE 'model' consisted of a group approach to extension, facilitated by an NGO, that combined technology demonstrations with savings and credit activities. This model did not really need to be tested since there was already plenty of evidence in Bangladesh that this approach could work on a small scale.

98. At the local level, the results of the FLE approach are impressive: groups of men and women farmers are managing their own development activities, saving money in order to try new technologies, and appear to be very satisfied with both the process and the outcome. The dynamism of these groups is very different from the relationship that seems to exist between most Block Supervisors and their client farmers.

99. The FLE model is also noteworthy as the only extension approach examined under ASIRP that is making an impact on **broader livelihoods issues**. There is clear evidence of the formation of human and social capital. The groups are developing analytical and managerial ability, and gaining access to resources and services that were previously unavailable. Members of the groups are also acquiring new technical skills. While most activities have focused on livestock and crops, there have also been efforts to improve health and nutrition. Women are playing a significant role in all of these activities. Financial capital has been improved through a saving scheme and the creation of a revolving fund. Physical capital is also being developed to some extent: the construction of low-cost Extension Service Centres, partly paid for, and fully owned by, the members, provides each group with a space in which to operate, something that is particularly important for women.

100. In the case of the FLE model in Rangpur, the available information suggests that the pilot groups will continue to function as part of a Federation supported by RDRS. Systems have already been developed and tested by RDRS that will allow them to continue providing support. The situation in Sylhet is not so encouraging. It appears that FIVDB has been effective in supporting farmer groups during the pilot period, but it is unlikely that this support will continue in the future. It is not clear how long the groups will survive on their own.

101. In addition to the issue of sustainability, there are two other limitations to the model:

- This is a group approach, not a community approach. There is little or no spread of benefits from the group members to the rest of the community, and the members are certainly not the poorest farmers in it. In total, less than 1,000 households have been reached.
- The results have been achieved through a concentration of support that cannot be replicated on a larger scale. While no honoraria were paid to DAE staff or the partner NGOs, the regular presence of the ASIRP staff, project training activities, and the provision of start-up loans to participating farmers undoubtedly played an important role in getting the groups

running. There is no indication that DAE can or will attempt to replicate the model without similar support from another project.

Lesson: given enough resources it is feasible to implement activities that make a significant improvement in the livelihoods of a small numbers of people. This was already known. The real question is what the DAE can do with this knowledge.

5.2.3 Integrated Extension Approaches

102. Other pilots carried out under ASIRP have attempted to develop and test models that are cheaper and more easily replicable. As an outcome of an earlier DFID review, a lot of emphasis has been placed on increasing co-operation among different ESPs. In theory, the idea of 'integrated extension' appears to make very good sense: farmers certainly want advice on a wide range of issues, and many Block Supervisors are keen to meet this need. But integration was never going to be easy to achieve in practice, for a number of reasons, including:

- The initiative to promote integration came from within DAE, with the result that this would never be considered a real partnership by DLS and DOF.
- The initiative actually came from one project within DAE, and there has been little or no success in achieving integration among the various projects implemented within the Department.
- ASIRP adopted a policy of not paying for co-operation. This was a bold attempt to ensure sustainability, but it was contrary to the normal way of doing business.

103. It is also worth pointing out that across Asia there are few, if any, examples of large-scale integrated rural extension services. It may be a good idea, but Government bureaucracies just do not work like that.

104. With these points in mind, it is surprising that the pilots achieved as much as they did. DLS and DOF officers at the Upazilla level have conducted regular briefing sessions for DAE Block Supervisors under the 'Specialist Co-operation Model'. A larger number of ESPs have cooperated in planning exercises carried out under the 'UAECC Strengthening Model'. It is too early to say much about the impact of this collaboration, but there is evidence that some farmers in the pilot areas have been receiving a wider range of advice and services.

105. It appears that the Upazilla staff of various ESPs - who usually know each other - found IEA activities professionally stimulating. There was an opportunity to meet, discuss new ideas, and try something new. But it is hard to believe that this collaboration will be sustained in the absence of one or more of the following: (a) financial incentives, (b) changes in job descriptions, or (c) consistent support from the national level.

106. There are already signs of a decline in interest among the staff of DoF and DLS that were involved in Specialist Co-operation pilot. DAE staff, from block supervisors up to Directors, have also stated that there was a lack of commitment to integration at the national level.

107. It is important to note that what has been happening in the pilots is *collaboration*, not integration. With this in mind, it is not surprising to find that

ESPs are protective of their mandate and the income-generating opportunities that go with it. Collaboration is most likely to occur when it helps to increase business for one or more of the agencies that are involved, but is unlikely to succeed if ESPs are taking business away from each other. The involvement of DLS in the Specialist Co-operation model provides a useful example of this. DLS staff at the Upazilla level are happy if Block Supervisor tell farmers to take sick animals to the livestock hospital, but they do not want to train BS to provide any treatment. Any future attempts to encourage collaboration need to start with a WIIFM analysis for each of the agencies: i.e. what's in it for me?

Lesson: efforts to promote collaboration among organisations should give serious attention to the reasons why people collaborate. Incentives and rewards must be considered, but this does not necessarily mean that people need to be paid in order to work together.

108. Something that the TA team should explore in discussion with DAE before the end of the Project, is the extent to which elements of the different models could be combined. Within any Upazilla it should be possible to have an active UAEC making proposals to the UDCC, *and* DOF/DLS briefings for Block Supervisors, *and* a number of resource centres in key locations. This was the original vision of integration, promoted in 2000, and the pilots show that it is achievable on a small scale. It will also be useful to explore how some of the details of pilots can be extracted from the models and mainstreamed in DAE. Examples are the Situation Analysis (from the UAEC Strengthening model) and the Farmer Advice Record Sheets (from the Specialist Co-operation model). These are low-cost, or no-cost, innovations that could lead to a modest improvement in the relevance and impact of advice provided to farmers without adopting an entirely new model.

109. The Farmer Advice Record Sheets (FARS) deserve a special mention. This simple innovation has a number of useful features: it provides farmers with a tangible and durable product of interaction with Block Supervisors, it encourages the BS to provide relevant and consistent advice, and it makes it easier for supervisory staff to monitor and assess the work that is being done. It also facilitates the process of feedback as a means of improving extension agents' performance, as was indicated earlier (section 2.4). The danger, perhaps, is that FARS encourages Block Supervisors to provide input-oriented advice. The advice sheets are already being called 'prescriptions' and many of them contain pesticide recommendations; the idea, it seems, is that farmers should take the FARS to an agro-chemical shop, in the same way that a doctors' prescription is taken to a pharmacy. Perhaps the FARS can be modified in a way that would encourage greater attention to husbandry practices, with chemical prescriptions being the exception rather than the rule. If this problem can be overcome, the FARS is a good candidate for mainstreaming in DAE. The system is already in use with one partner NGO under the DPIF, AID-Comilla.

Lesson: Farmer Advice Record Sheets are an example of an ASIRP innovation that could be 'mainstreamed'.

110. In conclusion: while the members of the TA team are quite enthusiastic about some of the details of the pilots, there is nobody who believes that a significant change in the overall quality of service provided by DAE is just

around the corner. There are too many unanswered questions about DAE's willingness and ability to replicate and sustain the improvements that were demonstrated in the pilots. The review team would like to encourage DAE to try and find its own answers to those questions.

6 GENDER ASPECTS

111. The role of women has been given serious attention in the policies of both the Government and DFID. In 1998, the GoB approved a National Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women, whose goal was to make women's development an integral part of the national development programme. DFID has carried out various studies and prepared a number of documents on this issue. The DFID Gender Strategy was published in March 2000, and the latest draft of the Country Assistance Plan give prominence to the needs of women and girls.

112. These policies have been reflected in the work of ASIRP. The TA team includes a Social Development and Gender Advisor who has been working closely with the DAE WID Focal Point. With the support of the Project, DAE has organised a number of workshops and published a variety of extension materials aimed at improving gender awareness. A Gender Resource Centre has been established in the DAE library.

113. Donor interest in gender has resulted in female BS attending more short training courses than their male counterparts. The additional training has usually been in technical matters regarding farm operations that have traditionally been handled women, such as post harvest activities, homestead gardening, nutrition and nursery establishment. (Most of this has been funded by donors other than DFID). Much less attention has been given to social issues affecting women, and there is scope for greater training in leadership, ownership rights, and legal measures to protect against gender discrimination and injustice.

114. Additional training has not overcome the fact that a very low portion of DAE staff are women. Less than 5% of Block Supervisors are female, and the GoB freeze on recruitment has prevented DAE from increasing this figure for more than 10 years. Most female BS are posted close to the Upazila office and, unlike a lot of NGO field staff, are not provided with motorcycles. The low numbers, combined with the problem of transportation, make it difficult for DAE to provide an adequate service to rural women. If the freeze on recruitment is lifted, which is something that the management of DAE seem to want, a case could be made for recruiting far more women BS than men.

115. Preliminary findings from the latest ASIRP Extension Coverage Study show that women received advice from DAE in only 1% of households. This figure is considerably higher than the Departments of Fisheries and Forestry (0.2% and 0.3% respectively) but a lot less than DLS (5%). Overall, female members of 6.2% of all households have received at least one service or piece of advice from a Government extension organisation in the past 12 months. This is about the same as the figure for contact with NGOs (6.8%). The combined GO and NGO figure is considerably less than services and

advice from private organisations (e.g. private vet or fertiliser shop) which is 23%. This last figure is surprising and potentially very interesting for at least two reasons. First private sector ESPs have received almost no project support, and second, women's seclusion does not seem to preclude their visiting them. This raises the prospect of channelling future extension advice through these private dealers.

116. ASIRP has tried to improve the contact rate for women farmers in two of the pilot activities: the Farmer-Led Extension model, and the Resource Centre model. These pilots were reviewed in sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 respectively. In summary: women's involvement in extension can be increased if:

- There are deliberate efforts to target women (e.g. by establishing groups especially for women, rather than individual contact);
- The content is appropriate to women's needs and interests (e.g. the provision of information on poultry and homestead vegetables, rather than rice);
- The venue allows them to feel safe (e.g. at an extension centre rather than in the field).

117. Even when DAE is targeting women through the formation of groups and the selection of female 'Farmer Promoters', access to other services remains problematic. Project reports show that 50% of women's groups in Rangpur and 22% of those in Sylhet were unable to make contact with other ESPs. It seems that the pilot projects have been able to facilitate women's demand for services, but have not always been successful in facilitating the supply of those services by other Government organisations.

118. Elsewhere in this report questions have been raised about whether DAE is willing and able to incorporate the lessons of the pilot projects into its regular activities. This question needs to be repeated with respect to the involvement of women. Is DAE serious about WID, or does it just want to please the donors?. Perhaps it is worth mentioning that the DAE Strategic Plan for 2002-2006 includes lots of pictures of women farmers, but the text has very little to say about them. It states that 'DAE will encourage women in decision making process for agricultural development specially Income Generating Activities'. It is not clear how this objective will be achieved. Rural women could certainly benefit from income generating opportunities, but the FLE model has shown that this usually requires inputs, credit and marketing opportunities, not just advice on technical issues. It could be argued that the mandate of DAE prevents the organisation from providing the services rural women actually need.

Lesson: the option of channelling extension advice to women farmers through private sector input and service providers deserves serious consideration, as in terms of contact with these farmers the private sector outperforms the government and NGO extension services combined

7 IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

7.1 Project design in terms of objectives and outputs

119. It is difficult to make any linkage between the original project design and the achievement of project objectives when project design has been changed so frequently over its lifespan. Making such a connection is further complicated by the complete staff changeover that occurred in mid-project. As noted earlier, the design was altered during the inception phase and a new log frame put in place less than six months into the project. At least four versions of the log frame have been produced and agreed between GoB, DFID and Project management, the latest one around 18 months ago. Comparing the first logframe with the current one, the changes have been quite radical: even the goal and purpose have changed. It is therefore probably more useful to comment on the current project design, beginning with the log frame (Annexe 1). Here there are problems with both the purpose and with the OVIs. The Purpose (“Effective structures and processes in place for implementing the NAEP and exploring sectoral approaches”) is actually two purposes, and the wording is ambiguous. It is not clear whether (a) sectoral approaches are to be explored, or (b) *effective structures and processes are to be put in place* for exploring sectoral approaches. Project management has sensibly assumed the former, and conducted a number of studies to serve this part of the project purpose.

120. There are three OVIs:

1. *By eop farmer satisfaction with extension advice is 25% higher under the Innovative Pilot Areas than in ‘Without’ Pilot Districts.*
2. *By eop at least 2 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, can demonstrate positive action taken to implement the NAEP*
3. *At least 4 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, are involved in strategic planning process by eop*

121. The second and third OVIs make sense in terms of the first part of the project purpose, but the first does not. It implies an unstated assumption that there is a causal relationship between the two. In addition, this OVI measures ‘farmer satisfaction’ only among the farmers whom the extension service actually reaches. The indicator is meaningless for those who are not reached. Had the indicator been couched in terms of reaching and influencing more farmers in ‘with’ districts than in ‘without’ districts, a high success rate would have been scored, as by August 2003 80% of farmers targeted by UAECC-planned activities have adopted or intended to adopt extension advice. But those targeted are a fairly small minority of farmers.

122. The other two indicators are better than the first, but they are far from ideal, since they measure success in terms of engaging in or completing a strategic planning exercise. As shown in Section 1.4 above, the DAE’s first strategic plan did not fully implement the NAEP, largely because of failings within the Department itself. Assuming that ‘in addition to the DAE’ means that the Department should also engage in a strategic planning exercise, the fact that it has now adopted a second, and better, Strategic Plan, means that this part of the indicator has been met. Outside of the DAE, at least three stakeholders (RDRS, Proshika and BRAC) have developed strategic plans

that follow NAEP principles, while at least another three (the Department of Livestock Services, the Department of Fisheries and the Ministry of Agriculture) are involved in such a strategic planning exercise. This signifies that the project has been successful in terms of these two indicators. However, although there is no way of knowing for certain at present, there are serious doubts as to whether all, or indeed any, of these stakeholders will continue to accept NAEP principles post-project.

123. The Project has three outputs.

1. *Innovative and integrated approaches to the NAEP implemented and evaluated under EPICC supervision.*
2. *The Revised Extension Approach implemented by DAE.*
3. *Sector-wide policies and processes investigated, designed and tested.*

Both the Outputs and the associated activities make rather more sense than the Project Purpose and OVIs.

124. Output 1. The activities under this (see Annexe 1) have largely been implemented. In the case of Activities 1.6 and 1.7, data collection has been completed and the analysis and reporting is still ongoing. They are expected to be completed by EOP. The only problem is with Activity 1.3, 'Monitor and evaluate current and future DPIF portfolio'. As explained earlier (section 3.4), there have been problems with monitoring this Activity.

125. Output 2. Most of the activities under this Output have been completed. The three listed below have not been completed because of a lack of counterpart funding from the GoB:

- 2.3 Extension leadership training for UAOs
- 2.4 Training and communication skills for new ATI instructors
- 2.5 Block Supervisor training: Phase II has been completed, but Phase III will not now be completed for the reason stated.

126. Output 3. All activities under this Output have been completed.

7.2 Government-donor-executing agency relationships

127. There is a perception among the TA team and partner organisations that DFID-B has become a 'hands-off' organisation, with the result that its advisers are in danger of losing touch with in-country conditions. Contrasts have been drawn with earlier phases of British technical assistance, when ODA staff would often accompany the TA team on field trips and would visit the offices of the executing agency to discuss and resolve outstanding issues.

128. In the ASIRP project specifically, DFID input probably needs to be understood in the context of two distinct periods. The period up to Mid-Term Review (MTR) was concerned with problems in the management of the DAE Partnership Unit. These required considerable and justifiable micro-management from DFID-B. After the redesign process that followed the MTR, less intensive intervention was required, but additional committee structures were put in place. In contrast with the first half of the project, there is now a feeling of inadequate engagement. DAE and NGO staff mentioned that they seldom see DFID-B staff nowadays, noting that there is little flow of information between them and the DFID-B office. These concerns probably relate to DFID-B's effective withdrawal from project committees and, in

particular, the MoA-based committees. The change in DFID-B's management approach seems not to have been fully explained to DAE/MoA, and has therefore been interpreted as a withdrawal. Rather more substantively, Project management report that they have not had any feedback from DFID-B regarding issues and problems that influence project outcomes.

Lesson: DFID-B staff need to do more re-engage with project TA teams and their executing agencies, partly in terms of explaining to the national partners any changes that have taken place in management style, and partly in terms of providing feedback to TA teams regarding issues that substantively affect project outcomes .

129. Relationships between project management and the executing agency are clearly cordial, but in a highly projectised institution, ASIRP is just another project, albeit a large one. There are areas in which DAE regarded ASSP and ASIRP inputs as unwelcome, and the current Strategic Plan specifically mentions the Department's lack of ownership of several ASSP and ASIRP inputs. ASIRP adopted a more facilitative role in the planning process for the second Strategic Plan than ASSP did, and the results have been positive. However the failure of its efforts to help reform M&E and other elements of MIS demonstrate that some of the most basic issues have yet to be resolved.

130. Another area in which lessons can be learned is that of inter-donor co-ordination, particularly in view of the statement in DFID's new CAP: 'we need more effectively co-ordinated donor action at all levels and, moving beyond that, donor cooperation and harmonisation of bi-laterals and international finance institutions'. The FAO component of ASIRP was small and relatively self-contained, but there was great potential scope for co-ordination between the DFID and World Bank components. The clearest example was in funding of the DPIF. Unlike the other two PIFs, this was funded by both WB and DFID, and there were joint management systems. However there was total separation of the projects on the ground, with the Bank supporting the PIF in three districts and DFID supporting it in nine. The second round of DPIFs, which were not approved until four months before the Bank component's closing date. At DAE insistence the projects went ahead, despite the fact that they had been designed to have a lifespan of up to a year. Had donor funding been less hermetically sealed, it would surely have been possible for the Bank-funded component to fund projects in all twelve districts in the first four months and for the DFID-funded component to take over afterwards.

Lesson: Meaningful co-ordination would require that line agencies move beyond the policy and consultation level towards increasing content (i.e. practice and procedures) and intensity (i.e. co-operation and collaboration of their co-operation). However decisions on the necessary changes do not lie at the level of the two country missions.

7.3 The Project Implementation Plan (PIP)

131. ASIRP has been using DFID's PIP system for quarterly reporting for the past two years. Project management find it useful to keep track of activities, identify problems of slippage and take corrective action. The DAE finds it useful in its reporting to the Ministry of Agriculture. However, as noted earlier there has been no feedback from DFID on some important issues

raised in the reports.

8. OVERALL CONCLUSION

132. ASIRP cannot be said to have achieved a great deal in terms of discovering ways of dramatically improving the delivery of services to poor farmers. Of the three partnership initiative funds, only the UPIF has met with any degree of success. The new extension models have yielded much more in terms of what works, including what works for the disadvantaged, but no single model could be advocated in its entirety. Doubts remain about their sustainability of all models, if only for financial reasons. Nevertheless several low cost elements of these models could be mainstreamed by DAE. The Project's efforts to improve DAE's institutional capital have largely failed, but this was for reasons connected with the organisational culture of the Department, as the DAE itself admits in its assessment of weaknesses in its current Strategic Plan. One area in which it was successful here was that ASIRP was able to avoid the mistakes made by ASSP in terms of ownership of the strategic planning process.

133. Nevertheless, ASIRP was primarily an innovations project, and it successfully tried a wide range of them. The evaluations published so far, like much of the Project's documentation, are excellent, particularly the ten-year evaluations that cover the ASSP-ASIRP continuum. ASIRP documents are not only informative, but also refreshingly self-critical, so that opportunities for lesson-learning have been maximised.

134. In addition to generating a number of useful lessons about extension methodology and organisational development, the ASSP-ASIRP projects have raised some important questions about the role of extension services in the broader context of the country's development. If improvements in national production cannot be attributed to the activities of these projects (as has been stated by the TA team) and if the DAE has been unable to find ways of helping smaller farmers and women, then a poverty-equity focussed institution like DFID might well ask what is the purpose of supporting the extension system? Although the NAEP and current Strategic Plan are useful steps towards answering these questions, the DAE appears to have exhausted the opportunities for making effective changes from within. Sufficient information, experience and expertise have been generated over the past 30 years to allow the Government and the donors to decide on what needs to be done from the outside to help determine a suitable role for DAE and provide it with the required mandate, resources and incentives. But there is yet to be a systematic assessment of the lessons that have been learnt about these broader issues. If there is a need for further collaboration between GoB and the donors, it should start with this kind of assessment, and it should be carried out at a higher level than has been the case in the past.

129. The Review Mission concurs with the conclusion of the World Bank's Implementation Completion Report (June 2003) that the Project has been successful.

Annexe 1. The Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project: Logical Framework

Narrative	OVI	Means of Verification	Assumptions and Risks
Goal:			
To improve the capacity of all categories of farmers, especially landless, marginal and small farmers to optimise their use of resources on a sustainable basis			
Purpose:			
Effective structures and processes in place for implementing the NAEP and exploring sectoral approaches	By eop farmer satisfaction with extension advice is 25% higher under the Innovative Pilot Areas than in 'Without' Pilot Districts.	EoP survey conducted in randomly selected Upazilas outside Pilot area to determine farmer satisfaction. Results to be compared with IEA Pilot approach findings Minutes of meetings, workshops,	

	<p>By eop at least 2 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, can demonstrate positive action¹⁶ taken to implement the NAEP</p> <p>At least 4 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, are involved in strategic planning process by eop</p>	<p>strategic plans etc.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings, workshops</p>	
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Outputs:	Output indicators		
Innovative and integrated approaches to the NAEP implemented and evaluated under EPICC supervision	<p>1.1 Please refer to the attached indicators (and hypotheses)</p> <p>1.2 An Extension Monitoring System designed and tested as part of the monitoring of IEA pilot activities.</p> <p>1.3 All 60 DPIF funded projects completed and evaluated on the principles of NAEP by eop with impact studies on at least 15</p>	<p>Quarterly reporting and eop evaluations</p> <p>Review of EMS</p> <p>Evaluation report on completion of DPIF funded projects by external consultants</p>	<p>UAECC/ DAEPC ToRs, processes operating in project area are replicable countrywide</p>
The Revised Extension Approach implemented by DAE	<p>At least three innovative models (including FLE) implemented and evaluated in 6 Districts by eop</p>	<p>Evaluation report by project</p>	

¹⁶Eg. strategic plans that follow the principles of NAEP

	<p>by eop.</p> <p>Lessons learned and methods of best practice for 6 extension innovations documented and disseminated by eop</p> <p>New DAE Strategic Plan operational from July 2002</p> <p>By eop 80% of all Upazilas have training plans for their block supervisors</p>	<p>Guidance sheets, reports on methods of best practice</p> <p>Strategic Plan produced by DAE</p> <p>Training plans collected by DAE training wing</p>	<p>GoB funds available for workshops</p>
<p>Sector wide policies and processes investigated, designed and tested</p>	<p>3.1 Common implementation arrangements agreed between at least 4 GoB stakeholders and Donors on movements towards sectoral approaches by mid 2002</p> <p>3.2 60 NPIF funded projects completed and evaluated by eop and at least 20 yield useful information for EPICC on sector issues and strategies</p> <p>3.3 At least 4 stakeholders as represented on main EPICC committee complete strategic studies to investigate sectoral issues by eop</p>	<p>Workshop proceedings Written report</p> <p>Evaluation report on completion of NPIF funded projects by external consultants</p> <p>Strategic studies produced</p>	
Activities for Output 1			
1.1 Establish new framework and relaunch DPIF			

<p>1.2 Select and contract DPIF portfolio</p> <p>1.3 Monitor and evaluate current and future DPIF portfolio</p> <p>1.4 Impact Studies on UPIF projects</p> <p>1.5 IEA Pilots implemented in accordance with NAEP principles</p> <p>1.6 All pilots (IEA/FLE) Monitored and Evaluated on the 11 principles of the NAEP.</p> <p>1.7 Lessons learned and methods of best practice for each of the models documented and disseminated</p> <p>1.8 UAECC M&E system designed and tested in IEA Upazilas</p>			
<p>Activities for Output 2</p>			
<p>2.1 Pilot FLE projects completed and evaluated</p> <p>2.2 Assist DAE to produce annual training plans in support of REA</p> <p>2.3 Extension Leadership Skills training for UAOs</p> <p>2.4 Training and Communication skills for new ATI instructors</p>			

<p>2.5 Establish Upazila Eco Teams</p> <p>2.6 Block Supervisor Training Phase 2 and 3</p> <p>2.7 New DAE Strategic Plan prepared by March 2003 and operational by EoP</p> <p>2.8 TORs written and development activities conducted for DAE Management Committee and Working Groups</p>			
<p>Activities for Output 3</p>			
<p>3.1 Ongoing review of NAEP and progress on implementation with EPICC and sub-committees</p> <p>3.2 TA support provided to jointly develop the process of GoB/ Donor movement towards sectoral approaches</p> <p>3.3 Establish new framework and relaunch NPIF</p> <p>3.4 Select and contract NPIF portfolio</p> <p>3.5 Monitor and evaluate current and future NPIF portfolio</p>			

Annexe 2. Recommendations and Progress Made Since the Last Implementation Review, September 2002

para	recommendation	progress
16	It is recommended that the ASIRP review how NAEP links to the NAPPA and to the I-PRSP (by December 15, 2002). This work should be co-coordinated with development partners (DANIDA, FAO and World Bank) to ensure consistent dialogue with the MOA.	<p>Linkages document produced and a working paper for the LCG of donors on the iPRSP</p> <p>Issue of lead in LCG with MoA. MoA refused to deal with LCG and Danida took lead. DAE largely unaware of NAP/PoA.</p> <p>GoB accepted NAPPA in March 2003</p> <p>No progress and among donors, NAEP relegated as a priority policy. Forum was essentially the LCG of donors. Support provided to LCG donor workshop May 2003.</p>
17	It is recommended that the ASIRP-TA Team participate in dialogue with relevant officials in the DAE and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) to outline feasible options for moving from projects to a coherent program within the DAE (by 30 January 2003). This could be part of a co-coordinated approach on sectoral processes through participation in the SWAP Working Group (name to be reviewed) with MOA, Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, Planning Commission, DANIDA, DFID, World Bank and possibly FAO representatives.	<p>DFID and ASIRPO excluded from Danida group.</p> <p>Work on programmes in DAE had already been done</p> <p>Mixed signals at the time as to whether public sector Agriculture (in broadest sense) was a DFID/World bank priority</p> <p>There was a dialogue but the conclusion/outcome was unsatisfactory</p>
18	It is also recommended that this policy dialogue with the DAE and MOA (and other partners as appropriate) be linked to the production of the new DAE Strategic Plan (2002-2005) to ensure that the Strategic Plan clearly describes the role of the DAE and how this may evolve in support of GOB objectives outlined in the NAPPA and the I-PRSP, for example moving	<p>DAE was encouraged to own their new plan. A strategy of limited engagement was followed (unlike ASSP's involvement in the first plan (1999 –2002). A process was followed in DAE and the production of the second plan was not finalised until mid 2003</p>

	from projects to a more programmatic approach, and articulate a stepped process as to how this might be realistically achieved (by March 31, 2003).	DAE 2nd Strategic Plan reflects this intent
21	It is recommended that the lessons learned from the UPIF reviews are widely disseminated to all stakeholders by November 30, 2002. UPIF funding should be continued and for this purpose creation of a revolving fund may be considered, similar to IFAD funded activities, at DAE.	UPIF results circulated and results presented at EPSC and EPICC Following a request from DAE, DFID refused the use of the balance of their partnership grants for UPIF. DAE have not secured additional GoB funding and PIF stopped as WB counterpart funds were unavailable for UPIF
24	It is... the recommendation of the review mission that only those proposals that have currently been recommended by the EPICC Partnership Sub-Committee (EPSC) for further negotiation be funded based on final selection by the EPSC and that there will be no further round of DPIF and NPIF during the project period.	Implemented
25	The review team supports the detailed evaluative study that is currently being undertaken on DPIF and NPIF. The DAE must give high priority to disseminate the results and lessons learned. It is also recommended that this learning be integrated into the DAE Strategic Plan to ensure objectives with respect to implementing the NAEP are placed in a realistic context.	Too early for full reflection in DAE Strat Plan. The issue remains of contracted partnerships and GoB's intention to contract in or contract out services
27	...the review mission observed the need to clarify the role of the EPICC committee system, particularly the DAEPCC, and to clearly link these committees with existing (particularly local) government committees and planning processes to ensure a more co-coordinated, and ultimately sustainable, approach within a coherent framework. The review mission	A report on the EPICC structures had already been produced in late 2001. This questioned the role of the UAECC and DAEPCC. DAEPCC was given a more active role in approving and monitoring DPIFs in the second round. In addition the models would provide an insight into the role if any DAEPCC is a DAE committee that historically meets to decide extension – research

	recommended that the DAE and TA team undertake a study on this matter by February 28, 2003.	linkages based on crop seasons. Enhanced role and links to LG not effective. ASIRP undertook a design study in May 2003 for a future project on Agriculture–Local Government linkages – DFID decided not to pursue the design
31	There are two key issues that the project should address over the rest of the project period: cooperation and services to the FLE groups by different ESPs and sustainability of the FLE model. Other than DAE, extent of co-operation and services from different ESPs to the FLE groups is variable. The mission recommends that clear guidance and instruction from respective Department Head is required to ensure services of different service providers to the groups.	Several activities were organised in both regions which brought together FLE representatives, staff from different ESPs (GO and NGO) and also some members of UPs. Department heads of all GOB ESPs were involved. There was evidence of responses from ESPs including training and the use of Extension Service Centres as focuses for field activities, e.g. DLS vaccination campaigns.
32	The mission recommends that careful consideration is given by the ASIRP TA Team and FLE partners to developing and establishing a mechanism by August 28, 2003 to improve the sustainability of the model, particularly that FPs get some benefits (financial or in kind) in return of their service.	For FPs to receive financial benefits from project would be unsustainable; NGOs, DAE could only pay with project support. Payment by group members raises difficulties of identifying and quantifying the services provided and would not be farmer-led if imposed from outside. FPs benefited through inputs as interest-free loans for demonstrations, extra training and the status. Sustainability of groups is not entirely dependent on FPs. In Rangpur, RDRS will continue support. In Sylhet, FIVDB will phase out support through 2004.
33a	The mission also recommends that the ASIRP TA Team ensure continual dialogue with the DAE and other partners as required so that they are aware of the progress of the various models and potential to support DAE's strategic objectives. The dialogue should result in clear options for scaling up the models, either adopting the models as a whole or scaling up	Dialogue with DAE senior staff has taken place periodically during the piloting. At the time of writing the Strategic Plan key lessons were shared with DAE, considered and incorporated where applicable.

	key elements, and this learning from any pilot approaches and mechanisms for mainstreaming should be considered in the new DAE Strategic Plan (by December 31, 2002).	<p>Formal evaluations/ lesson learning from the models were conducted during August/ September 2003. Key findings and recommendations will be disseminated through literature, meetings with DAE senior management and workshops during November/ December.</p> <p>Dialogue with partners on what/ how to scale up will take place during November/ December.</p>
33b	Operationalising these options will require clear prioritization and sequencing and should be described as part of a 'lesson learning' evaluation of the models conducted by the ASIRP TA team (by October 30, 2003).	See above point
37	It is recommended that the DAE Strategic Plan be further strengthened and placed it in a wider context with support from the ASIRP TA Team as required (by March 31, 2003). The Terms of Reference of the Senior Adviser (NAEP) should be modified to reflect the linkages between the policy environment and DAE's strategic response, and to have a co-ordination role for further inputs into the strategic planning process (by November 10, 2002).	<p>Implemented.</p> <p>The 2002-2006 DAE Strategic Plan reflects wider contextual thinking, particularly in terms of responsiveness to the iPRSP and emergence of local government.</p>
39	It is recommended that the Training Policy be reviewed when the new Strategic Plan is completed to ensure that it is consistent in approach (by December 31, 2002).	<p>Strategic Plan only recently finalised.</p> <p>Support to training policy analysis has concentrated on reviewing the positioning of the ATIs and CERDI – possibly more institutionally critical than the training policy itself.</p>
40a	It is recommended that an approach to evaluating any training be indicated in the strategic plan under M&E.	<p>Historical context of project support to overall MIS/M&E development is poor.</p> <p>Strategic Plan re-iterates need to have an overall MIS (including training), and identifies core indicators for extension service</p>

		provision but makes no specific provision for training M&E system.
40b	Given the need to priorities resource use, it is recommended that the revision of the training policy should consider the scope of training and how the DAE strategic plan is responsive to the revised policy by December 31, 2002.	<p>Not implemented</p> <p>Strategic Plan considers scope of 'extension' in its broader sense rather than training <i>per se</i>.</p> <p>Training Policy needs to be revisited, with key emphasis on ATI/CERDI – support has been provided on strategic positioning of these institutes</p>
45	It is recommended that as part of the finalization of the strategic plan by DAE that issues of monitoring performance against the plan be considered and the TA team provide support for this by January 31, 2003.	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Moving on from their first Strategic Plan, DAE have reduced the number of key objectives from 68 to 5, and have included specific OVI for each of the 5 objectives.</p> <p>The issue remains that DAE has no integrated MIS to support information collection to verify OVI achievement or /failure.</p>

Annexe 3. ASIRP End of Project Review (Sixth Review)

Terms of Reference

1. Project Title

Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project (ASIRP) – 1999 to 2003.

2. Background

The Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project (ASIRP) started on 1st July 1999¹⁷, following the completion of the Agricultural Support Services Project (ASSP). ASIRP was designed to build on the many reforms and improvements in agricultural extension achieved under ASSP. In particular, the introduction of the New Agricultural Extension Policy (NAEP) and the Department of Agricultural Extension's (DAE) Strategic Plan 1999-2002.

The goal of ASIRP is to improve the capacity of all categories of farmers, especially landless, marginal and small farmers to optimise their use of resources on a sustainable basis.

ASIRP was originally scheduled to run for three years. The total project cost is £18.76m. 49% financed by a DFID grant (£9.24m), 18% by the World Bank (WB) through a Learning and Innovations Loan, and 33% by Government of Bangladesh (GoB) who will additionally finance staff and other general costs. The FAO will provide US\$0.3m to co-finance specific research activities.

The Inception Period of the project covered July to October 1999 and full implementation of the DFID-funded TA components started on 1st November 1999. An Inception Report for the DFID supported components was finalised in February 2000 and accepted by DFID, the DAE, and the Ministry of Agriculture.

The first Joint Supervision Mission (JSM) with representatives from WB and DFID was held in April 2000, providing a review of overall progress and highlighting key issues and recommendations. A detailed Progress Report covering the first 6 months of project activities (November 1999 - April 2000) was produced, together with an update covering the period up to August 2000. The second JSM was held in September 2000. A separate output-to-purpose (OPR) review of the DFID funded components of ASIRP was held simultaneously. Progress over the first year of the project and recommendations for future activities are presented in a separate report. Building on this experience, DFID decided to carry out future independent reviews distinct from, but designed to feed into, the JSM process.

¹⁷ The DFID funded component of ASIRP started on 1st July 1999. The World Bank funded component of ASIRP-Credit was effective on 21st December 1999 and a launching workshop held on 9th February 2000.

Major areas of concern were identified in an output to purpose review conducted at the end of 2000. The 3rd Joint Supervision Mission from 18th March to 4th April 2001 addressed each of these in detail to assess key strategic, institutional and management aspects of the project. The objective was to review of the logical framework as a management tool, and for the project, DAE and DFID, to agree a set of milestones and an action plan for resolving the difficulties identified. Among a large number of recommendations, four key milestones were agreed by which progress could be measured, and on the achievement of which, depended any decision to extend funding of the project. These were:

- ***Partnerships objectives, structure and process redefined and agreed and new structures operational.***
- ***Project management structures and processes redefined, formalised and in operation.***
- ***Expansion of IEA pilots planned and preparation for implementation under way.***
- ***Establishment of a formal 'life of project' implementation plan***

The 4th JSM from 4th to 16th November 2001 revealed that substantial progress had been made on the DFID component since the last implementation assessment in April 2001. The implementation team has successfully clarified project strategies and expected outputs; restructured the technical assistance team, and developed improved implementation plans. Overall, the Mission was satisfied that the key milestones agreed by the last Joint Supervision Mission had been largely achieved and thus recommended an 18-month project extension of the DFID-funded components, until December 2003 was therefore recommended, subject to satisfactory completion and agreement of the partnerships arrangements by the end of January 2002.

A GOB/IDA/DFID/FAO team carried out an Implementation Review of Project during September 1-30, 2002 where it was noted that scaling up of pilot activities were yielding significant benefits and that DFID should continue its valuable support to develop and formulate/implement the second strategic plan (2002 – 2005) under the New Agriculture Extension Policy (NAEP).

The terms of reference for the sixth and final review conducted independently by DFID and Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership (RLEP) team will focus on assessment of operation experience, achievement of component objectives, factors affecting implementation, outcomes, lessons learnt and sustainability of the project activities

3. Overall objectives

The overall objective of the consultancy is to:

- Assess progress towards the PIMS markers set in the Project Memorandum and overall achievement of the project's objectives including revised outputs using DFID's Office Instructions as a guideline (OI Vol. II: I 1).
- Assess recommendations and progress made since the last implementation review September 2002.
- Determine level of achievement of each project component as stated in the logical framework and how this has impacted on the goal of the project.

- Document and present key lessons learnt to DFID, DAE and key partners.

4. Methodology

The consultancy is seen as working very closely with the TA team, and as this is an end of project review greatest emphasis must be placed on determining the overall performance according to tasks set in the project documents and periodic review recommendations and, to highlight key lessons learnt for not only the implementing organisations but also a wider audience. Implications of these key lessons learnt for future implementation of the DFID Country Assistance Plan (CAP) should be highlighted.

This, along with the tasks below, will contribute to the EoP report, in a format to be decided by the Team Leader, covering the issues indicated in this TOR, as well as completion of the standard DFID PCR form.

The team will receive a briefing from DFID and RLEP with regard to the TORs for this review. The ASIRP project office and RLEP Team Leader will be responsible for the operational aspects of the review. The itinerary will be finalised on arrival in Bangladesh.

The team members will undertake meetings and field visits as required to undertake their TORs and meet with project, DAE, project beneficiaries and other key stakeholders. The team members will, in addition to conducting the review, participate fully in writing a draft report for submission to DFID prior to departure. The team will be composed of two expatriate international consultants and one local consultant working closely with a cross-cutting team responsible for this project and two other DFID funded projects in the cluster namely CBFM-2 and FFP¹⁸.

The consultant team leader will be expected to collaborate with team leaders from other simultaneous reviews under the new 'cluster' arrangement to present key generic lessons learnt across the three projects in a 'Feedback Meta- Workshop'

The members of the team are listed below:

Core ASIRP consultants

1. Gerry Gill (Lead Consultant) - Institutional & Organisational Assessment / Extension reform and change management / Partnership Programmes
2. Andrew Bartlett (Senior Consultant – HRD Training & Extension / M&E (link with FFP)
3. Enamel Huda (National Consultant) – Extension reform and Social development (link with FFP).

Cross-cutting consultant

1. Tajpeera Begum (National Consultant) - Social development, poverty and gender assessment.

¹⁸ Community Based Fisheries Management – Phase 2, WorldFish and Department of Fisheries and Fourth Fisheries Project, Department of Fisheries.

Cross-cutting relationships

- i) Showkat Ali Ferdousi is core consultant for FFP and with cross-cutting responsibility for organisational change and reform (see matrix in Annex 1).
- ii) Tajpeera Begum will work closely with gender consultants participating in a separate gender thematic review.

Additional DFID-B will attend the OPR presentation and may join the review team for some or all of the fieldwork. These additional team members include:

- Martin Leach, Rural Livelihoods Programme Manager, DFIDB
- Tim Robertson, DFIDB Natural Resources & Environment Adviser (livelihoods, natural resources and environment).
- Duncan King, DFIDB Rural Livelihoods Programme Adviser (livelihoods, natural resources)
- Amita Dey, DFIDB Social Development Adviser (poverty, equity and gender issues)
- Najir Ahmed Khan, Programme Support Officer

5. Scope of work

The consultants will review project documentation (point 10), and work with staff from the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), the DAE/TA project team, national consultants working on the project and liaise with other key agencies to address the logical framework outputs and specific tasks listed below:

- Innovative and integrated approaches to the NAEP implemented and evaluated under EPICC supervision
- The Revised Extension Approach implemented by DAE
- Sector wide policies and processes investigated, designed and tested

The outputs of the DAE component are specified in the project design summary¹⁹ and this evaluation will consider each output along with the critical assumptions. Each output will be considered in terms of achievement and will be classified simply as 'not achieved', 'partially achieved' and 'fully achieved'. The likely achievement of the project development objectives will be assessed along with the contribution to the higher level goal of accelerated agricultural growth. The DFID PEC Memorandum and the PP will provide the basis of the evaluation. In particular, the evaluation of the following factors are required.

Institutional Development

- i. Comment on overall organizational changes resulting from project intervention. DAE has made further progress in sector wide approach, drafting strategic plan (2002-2006), implementing partnership programs, innovative extension pilots and reforming the human resources development program.
- ii. Assessment of implementation of NAEP/EPICC²⁰ and DAE's strategic plans.

¹⁹ Briefing Information, Section 10, Number 1 of this document

²⁰ Extension Planning Implementation Coordination Committee

- iii. Development of GO-NGO linkages and working relations between DAE, NGOs, private sector and other government agencies at Upazila, District and National levels
- iv. Assess impact and sustainability of M+E and MIS developed for DAE.
- v. Comment restructuring and reform of Training Wing, development of training policy, implementation of HRM/D and the role and effectiveness of the training approach in the ATIs²¹ and CERDI.²²
- vi. Assess to what extent the PIF has promoted the principles of inter-agency co-operation and pro-poor service delivery.
- vii. Identify key issues emerging from the support for the Integrated Agriculture Development Plan (IADP) and its associated working group.

Partnership Programmes

- viii. Comment on the promotion of NAEP principles through the multi-tier PIF competitive funding program.
- ix. Evaluate the development of DAEPC²³ and UAECC extension partnerships among DAE and other agencies.

Extension Approaches

- x. Comment on pilot approaches that have been developed under ASIRP to test ways to foster closer working relationships among rural extension service providers (ESPs).
- xi. From available information assess the relative benefits in adopting the Farmer Led Extension model (FLE) piloted in greater Rangpur and Sylhet districts.
- xii. Evaluate evidence of improved capability and capacity of Block Supervisors to deliver up to date and relevant messages/technologies.
- xiii. From survey work, evaluations and case studies assess wider livelihood impacts for intended beneficiaries through implementation of extension models.

Cross cutting Issues

- xiv. Evaluate whether all project capacity building and training activities have addressed gender issues.
- xv. Evaluate whether DAE WID Focal Point and other GO WID Focal Points have been effective in the mainstreaming of gender related issues as specified in the DAE strategic plan and in the context of the NAEP principles. What lessons can be drawn for this work to strengthen implementation of the CAP gender elements?
- xvi. Cutting across all project components evaluate whether appropriate gender sensitive plans, implementation and monitoring arrangements have been followed.
- xvii. Evaluate the environmental impact of project activities if relevant from project document information.

²¹ Agriculture Training Institutes

²² Centre for Extension, Research Development Institute

²³ District (& Upazilla) Agriculture Extension Planning Committee

Implementation Issues

- xviii. Comment on the original project design and assess the quality of design in terms of the achievement of the project objectives and outputs.
- xix. Comment on donor, Government, executing agencies relationships its impact on project performance, especially during project evaluation, with special emphasis on lessons learned that may be relevant in the future.
- xx. Assess whether the development of a Project Implementation Plan (PIP) has considerably improved the monitoring of progress by the DFID-funded components of ASIRP.

It is important that the consultants review and evaluate key lessons learnt as defined by the project team/DAE in delivering this project for the benefit of both GoB, DFID and key partners. Specific emphasis may be placed on apparent gap in ease of implementation between direct input supply versus change management processes leading to institutional reform. What are the key messages to be fed into current thinking for DFID-B programme implementation?

6. Expected Outcomes and Deliverables

Before departure the team will present their findings to project and DAE, partners and DFIDB Advisers. The date and presentation venue will be arranged and coordinated by the project and RLEP Team Leaders.

After the team presentation the Team Leader will work with Team Leaders from reviews of FFP and CBFM-2 to pull together common trends, highlight generic issues, contrast and compare approaches and provide composite key findings from three simultaneous reviews. This will be presented to a wider audience coordinated by RLEP through a 'Feedback Meta-workshop'

A draft copy of the report and completion of DFID PCR format tables, prepared in MS Word and will be left with DFID before departure and a final copy sent to DFID within 14 days of arrival back home.

The Team Leader will prepare the final report. The report will include a summary (not more than 5 pages), and will address the following areas:

- Assessment of development objective and design and of quality at entry; including the original objectives, any revised objectives, the original component, any revised components and the quality at entry.
- Achievement of objective and outputs; including the outcome /achievement of objectives, outputs by component.
- Major factors affecting implementation and outcome; including factors outside the control of government or DAE, factors generally subject to government control, factors generally subject to DAE control, and costs and financing.
- Sustainability; including the rationale for the sustainability rating and the transition arrangements to regular operations.

- Lessons Learned.
- Partner Comments.
- Appropriate DFID format EoP and PCR forms completed.

7. Competencies and Expertise Required

Consultants will be appointed with the following competencies.

- Good understanding of the rural service delivery, especially natural resource extension (preferably the agriculture sector) and development issues in Bangladesh;
- Strong institutional and organisational development skills and knowledge of governance issues in Bangladesh
- Experience of working with government agencies in Bangladesh
 - Experience of DFID's policy and commitment to poverty reduction;
 - Understanding of change management and organisational, institutional process in development agencies;
 - Understanding of gender, equity, poverty issues in Bangladesh
 - Good understanding and familiarity of using the sustainable livelihoods approach.
 - Excellent report drafting, communication skills and team working will be required

8. Conduct of Work

The consultants will facilitate the process of the review and the preparation of the report. They will work from the ASIRP office in the Department of Agricultural Extension and RLEP/BETS office in Gulshan 1²⁴, which will provide logistical and administrative support and facilitation as and when required.

The Review and RLEP Team Leaders will be responsible for allocating responsibility and coordinating different aspects of the review in liaison with ASIRP project team and DFID advisers.

9. Inputs and timing

The core part of the in-country review will take place between the 4th October and 16th October, 2003. (5th October is public holiday) The Team Leaders from the three projects being reviewed simultaneously will remain to present common and composite key findings through a 'Feedback Meta-workshop' planned for the 19th October.

The total input for the core teams will consist of 15 days, broken down into:

2 days preparation (reading briefing materials before arrival in Bangladesh)

²⁴ BETS Gulshan address: House No. 10, Road No. 135, Gulshan-1, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.
Telephone: (88-02) 9861531-2. RLEP Team Leader, Alan Brooks. Ext. 128. Mob. 018-225366.

12 days in-country

1 day final report writing

10. Briefing Information

1. Project design summary and logframe for ASIRP
2. PEC Submission ASIRP (DFID component)
3. Project Appraisal Document (PAD) of World Bank
4. GoB Project Proforma (PP) & Revised PP
5. Project Inception Report – ASIRP.
6. Aide Memoire for Implementation Review September 2002
7. “*Women and Girls First*”. DFID Bangladesh Country Assistance Plan 2003 – 2006.
8. Livelihood Impact Assessment Report 2000
9. DFIDB Programme Poverty Review (Summary Paper; Annotated Bibliography) June 2000
10. DFIDB Gender Strategy. March 2000
11. World Bank End of Mission Report of Investment Completion Report (ICR) March 2003
12. DAE Strategic Plan 2003-2005
13. ASSP/ASIRP – 10 years of experience on HRM/HRD*
14. ASSP/ASIRP – 10 years of experience on NGO Partnerships*
15. ASSP/ASIRP – 10 years experience of extension services*
16. ASSP/ASIRP – 10 years experience of organisational development in DAE*
17. Evaluation Reports of Integrated Extension Approaches*
* in process and due to be completed by end of Sept 2003.

Appendix 1. DFID Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership (RLEP): Cluster 1 review teams

Project and Lead Consultant	Core elements of review	Cross cutting 1	Cross cutting 2	Cross cutting 3	Special reviews (Not part of OPR or EoP review)
CBFM2 Barry Blake	Institutional development and organisational change, including policy influencing, public sector reform, implementation issues, strategic planning, delivery, project design and overall project performance against formal indicators. Completion of OPR/EOP forms. Fisheries and agriculture sectors.	Community based fisheries (with experience of leasing arrangements and reaching the poor) Partnerships and specialist knowledge of NGOs/CBOs International: Julian Barr Local: Clement Peris		Social issues in access to services; gender mainstreaming (feed into gender thematic review) Local: Tajpeara Begum	Gender M+E Communications
FFP James Muir	Local: (Showkat Ali Ferdousi - Institutional development & organisational change specialist)	Community based natural resources management/ livelihoods and poverty. Social exclusion International: Sue Philips (link to local social development/gender consultant)	Strategic HRD and Training. Partnership programmes, competitive funding and extension approaches	<i>Collaborate with Sue Philips and Gender Review consultant at the time of overlap.</i>	Gender M+E Communications
ASIRP Gerry Gill			International: Andrew Bartlett Local: Enamul Huda		Gender M+E

Notes

1. Core Teams are i) CBFM2 - Barry Blake, Julian Barr & Clement Peris; ii) FFP - James Muir, Sue Philips & Showkat Ali Ferdousi and iii) ASIRP - Gerry Gill, Andrew Bartlett & Enamul Huda.
2. Team members are responsible for all specific project ToR but have specific crosscutting roles where indicated i.e. i) Julian Barr leads the CBO thematic team with Sue Philips and Clement Peris. ii) Sue Philips coordinates with Tajpeara Begum and International consultant for special thematic review on Social development and gender mainstreaming, and iii) Andrew Bartlett teams up with Enamul Huda to assess HRD and extension approaches.

Terms of Reference for Gerard Gill, *Lead Consultant*

Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project Output to Purpose Review, 4th October – 20th October 2003

To supplement the ToR above, the Lead Consultant will be responsible for co-ordination of the EoP itself and through a series of field visits and meetings as required will be responsible for undertaking the following specific tasks:

1. Leading the review team ensure the objectives as stated in the ToR are achieved:
 - Assess progress towards the PIMS markers set in the Project Memorandum and overall achievement of the project's objectives including revised outputs using DFID's Office Instructions as a guideline (OI Vol. II: I 1).
 - Assess recommendations and progress made since the last implementation review September 2002.
 - Determine level of achievement of each project component as stated in the logical framework and how this has impacted on the goal of the project.
 - Document and present key lessons learnt to DFID, DAE and key partners.

Institutional Development

2. Comment on overall organizational changes resulting from project intervention. DAE has made further progress in sector wide approach, drafting strategic plan (2002-2006), implementing partnership programs, innovative extension pilots and reforming the human resources development program.
3. Assessment of implementation of NAEP/EPICC²⁵ and DAE's strategic plans.
4. Development of GO-NGO linkages and working relations between DAE, NGOs, private sector and other government agencies at Upazila, District and National levels
5. Assess impact and sustainability of M+E and MIS developed for DAE.
6. Assess to what extent the PIF has promoted the principles of inter-agency co-operation and pro-poor service delivery.
7. Identify key issues emerging from the support for the Integrated Agriculture Development Plan (IADP) and its associated working group.

Partnership Programmes (shared responsibility with Andrew Bartlett and Enamul Huda)

9. Comment on the promotion of NAEP principles through the multi-tier PIF competitive funding program.
10. Evaluate the development of DAEPC²⁶ and UAECC extension partnerships among DAE and other agencies.

General Tasks

²⁵ Extension Planning Implementation Coordination Committee

²⁶ District (& Upazilla) Agriculture Extension Planning Committee

11. Support and guide the consultancy team in collaboration with the principal project contact person and RLEP Team Leader.
12. Assess the performance of the local consultant reporting directly to the RLEP Team Leader giving full consideration to recommended areas of support through self-development and future mentoring.
13. Working with Lead Consultants reviewing FFP and CBFM-2 in collaboration with the RLEP Team Leader draft a key issues paper to be presented to a wider audience (to be announced) with interests in the improving the livelihoods of the rural poor.
14. Assist and guide the cross-cutting social development consultant to undertake her ToR (see below)

Terms of Reference for Andrew Bartlett, *Senior Consultant*

Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project Output to Purpose Review, 4th October – 20th October 2003

To supplement the ToR above, the consultant should support the Lead Consultant and the national consultant and carry out/participate in a series of field visits and meetings as required and undertake the following tasks:

Institutional Development of HRM/D

1. Comment restructuring and reform of Training Wing, development of training policy, implementation of HRM/D and the role and effectiveness of the training approach in the ATIs²⁷ and CERDI.²⁸

Partnership Programmes (shared responsibility with Gerard Gill and Enamul Huda)

1. Comment on the promotion of NAEP principles through the multi-tier PIF competitive funding program.
2. Evaluate the development of DAEP²⁹ and UAECC extension partnerships among DAE and other agencies.

Extension Approaches (shared responsibility with Enamul Huda)

4. Comment on pilot approaches that have been developed under ASIRP to test ways to foster closer working relationships among rural extension service providers (ESPs).
5. From available information assess the relative benefits in adopting the Farmer Led Extension model (FLE) piloted in greater Rangpur and Sylhet districts.
6. Evaluate evidence of improved capability and capacity of Block Supervisors to deliver up to date and relevant messages/technologies.
7. From survey work, evaluations and case studies assess wider livelihood impacts for intended beneficiaries through implementation of extension models.
8. Provide cross cutting project learning and lesson sharing with FFP review team specific to HRM/D, extension and training. The scope of work (FFP ToR and for information only) for this lesson sharing is:

²⁷ Agriculture Training Institutes

²⁸ Centre for Extension, Research Development Institute

²⁹ District (& Upazilla) Agriculture Extension Planning Committee

- Review and comments on the initiatives taken by the FFP to support and strengthen capacity of the DoF Training Wing in order to address DoF's strategic HRM/D requirement.
 - Assess the progress towards reaching poorer households particularly in achieving training objectives and wider livelihood outcomes.
 - Comment on the monitoring system and whether this does determine and understand the social context of the beneficiaries and who the project is actually working with through the training programme or extension reach and how it can promote inclusion of more women.
 - Comment on the opportunities for creating linkages, coalitions and alliances with other projects and government agencies working in service delivery in the NR sector to improve the institutional capacity of DOF to address these issues.
 - Comment on the sustainability of the extension approach and its incorporation into the NAqES for future implementation as part of a DoF led strategic extension plan.
8. Assist and guide the cross-cutting social development consultant to undertake her ToR (see below)

Terms of Reference for Enamul Huda, *National Consultant*

Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project

Output to Purpose Review, 4th October – 20th October 2003

To supplement the ToR above, the consultant should support the Lead Consultant and the Senior Consultant and carry out/participate in a series of field visits and meetings as required and undertake the following tasks:

Partnership Programmes (shared responsibility with Gerard Gill and Andrew Bartlett)

1. Comment on the promotion of NAEP principles through the multi-tier PIF competitive funding program.
2. Evaluate the development of DAEPC³⁰ and UAECC extension partnerships among DAE and other agencies.

Extension Approaches (shared responsibility with Andrew Bartlett)

3. Comment on pilot approaches that have been developed under ASIRP to test ways to foster closer working relationships among rural extension service providers (ESPs).
4. From available information assess the relative benefits in adopting the Farmer Led Extension model (FLE) piloted in greater Rangpur and Sylhet districts.
5. Evaluate evidence of improved capability and capacity of Block Supervisors to deliver up to date and relevant messages/technologies.
6. From survey work, evaluations and case studies assess wider livelihood impacts for intended beneficiaries through implementation of extension models.
7. Provide cross cutting project learning and lesson sharing with FFP review team

³⁰ District (& Upazilla) Agriculture Extension Planning Committee

specific to HRM/D, extension and training. The scope of work (FFP ToR and for information only) for this lesson sharing is:

- Review and comments on the initiatives taken by the FFP to support and strengthen capacity of the DoF Training Wing in order to address DoF's strategic HRM/D requirement.
 - Assess the progress towards reaching poorer households particularly in achieving training objectives and wider livelihood outcomes.
 - Comment on the monitoring system and whether this does determine and understand the social context of the beneficiaries and who the project is actually working with through the training programme or extension reach and how it can promote inclusion of more women.
 - Comment on the opportunities for creating linkages, coalitions and alliances with other projects and government agencies working in service delivery in the NR sector to improve the institutional capacity of DOF to address these issues.
 - Comment on the sustainability of the extension approach and its incorporation into the NAqES for future implementation as part of a DoF led strategic extension plan.
8. Assist and guide the cross-cutting social development consultant to undertake her ToR (see below)

Terms of Reference for Tajpeara Begum, *National Consultant*

Community-Based Fisheries Management Project-Phase 2

Output to Purpose Review, 4th October – 20th October 2003

To supplement the ToR above, the consultant will cross-cut all three projects under the guidance of the Lead Consultants with oversight from the FFP Senior Consultant, Ms Sue Philips to carry out/participate in a series of field visits, meetings and literature review as required and undertake the following tasks:

1. Generally assess social issues in access to services, equity, gender mainstreaming particularly the focus towards women and girls, rights based issues as relevant and pro-poor targeting.
2. To achieve this, the consultant is guided by specific tasks as stated in the ToR for each project. These tasks will be progress towards relevant OVI's as guided by each project lead consultant. Additionally, the ToR 'scope of work' for each project describes social development and gender related issues listed as bullet points below.

Community-Based Fisheries Management Project - Phase 2

3. Review progress towards a better understanding of gender issues within the project activities, specifically review and advise on work to develop a project gender strategy, and the model of women-led management of seasonal floodplains through the NGO (*Banchte Sheka*);
4. Comment on how the project is orientating itself towards supporting the DFID CAP "Women and Girls First". DFID Bangladesh Country Assistance Plan 2003 – 2006" and identify areas within the capacity of the project framework where greater focus may be applied to supporting achievement of CAP objectives. Review the revised relevant output drafted at the last OPR with subsequent comments by DFIDB

advisers to ensure activities and indicators do focus sufficiently on women and girls.

Fourth Fisheries Project

5. Review progress towards incorporating gender equality issues and more gender focused activities within project activities. Special attention should be given to relating these issues to the DFID, CAP with recommendations (within the existing framework) as to how the project may reorient its activities in line with the principles and goals of the CAP. It is important to note that this element of the study is linked to a full gender thematic study conducted over the same period.

Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project (ASIRP)

6. Evaluate whether all project capacity building and training activities have addressed gender issues.
7. Evaluate whether DAE WID Focal Point and other GO WID Focal Points have been effective in the mainstreaming of gender related issues as specified in the DAE strategic plan and in the context of the NAEP principles. What lessons can be drawn for this work to strengthen implementation of the CAP gender elements?
8. Cutting across all project components evaluate whether appropriate gender sensitive plans, implementation and monitoring arrangements have been followed.

Annexe 4. Persons Consulted

1. Group Consultations

Farmers of:

Ajaipur Village, Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Arambag Village, Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Barkamta Village, Debidwar Upazila, Comilla

Haripur Village, Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Maharajpur Village, Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Pituatoli village , Shibganj Upazila under Chapai Nawabganj

FLE groups, Mohendra Nagar, Lalmonirhat

Women farmer-extensionists, Sadar Upazila, Comilla

2. Individual Consultations

Abedin, Mr. Md. Joynal, FEO, Gomastapur Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Ahmad, Mr Md. Tofael, Block Supervisor, Choumuhuni Block, Chapai Nawabganj

Ahmed, Mr. Kayes BS, Chapai Nawabganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Ahmed, Mr. Tofael BS, Chapai Nawabganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Ali, Dr. M. Korban, Principal Extension and Training Specialist, Bangladesh Sugarcane Research Institute, Ishurdi, Pabna

Ali, Mr. Hazrat UAO, Gomastapur Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Ali, Mr. S.M. Hasen UAO, Shibganj Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Amanullah, BS, Chapai Nawabganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Azad, Mr. Abul Kalam, Consultant, Aid-Comilla, Comilla

Baker, Mr. Md. Abu, Project Director, SIDATAC Project, Department of Agricultural Extension, Khamarbari, Dhaka

Banu, Ms. Laila, Social Development and Gender Adviser, Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project, Department of Agricultural Extension, Dhaka

Baroi, Mr. Dipak, Project Manager, Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB), Chapai Nawabganj

Baten, Mr Abdul, Executive Director, Cotton Development Board, and ex-Project Director, ASIRP

Begum, Ms. Mustari BS, Chapai Nawabganj

Bela, Begum (Mrs.) Jabunnahar, District Women Affairs Officer, Comilla

Bhuiya, Mr. Ishaque DFO, Chapai Nawabganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Bhuiyan, Mr. Md. Amjad, Senior Instructor, Training Wing, Department of Agricultural Extension, Khamarbari, Dhaka

Bhuyan, Mr Nural Islam, Joint Director Planning & Evaluation, Department of Agricultural Extension, Dhaka

Faruque, Mr. Mahmudul AEO, Shibganj Upazila, Chapai Nawabganj

Fisher, Mr. Keith, Team Leader, Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project, Department of Agricultural Extension, Dhaka

Gartside, Mr Andrew, Integrated Extension Adviser, Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project, Department of Agricultural Extension, Dhaka

Haque, Mr. Anwarul BS, Chapai Nawbganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawbganj

Haque, Mr Md. Serajul, Director, Training Wing, Department of Agricultural Extension, Khamarbari, Dhaka

Haque, Mr. Kbd. Md. Fazlul, Additional Director, Planning and Evaluation Wing, Department of Agricultural Extension, Khamarbari, Dhaka

Hassan, Mr Krishibid M. Tariq, Director, Field Service Wing, Department of Agricultural Extension, Khamarbari, Dhaka

Hoque, Mr. Ainul, DD, DAE, Rangpur

Hoshneara, Begum (Mrs), Farmer, Rajapara, Sadar Upazila, Comilla

Hossain, Mr. Altaf, Project Coordinator, ASIRP/NPIF Project, PROSHIKA, Dhaka

Islam, Mr. Md. Fakirul UFO, Gomastapur Upazila, Chapai Nawbganj

Islam, Mr. Md. Sadequl BS, Shibganj Upazila, Chapai Nawbganj

Islam, Mr. Moktanemul BS, Chapai Nawbganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawbganj

Islam, Mr. Md Robiul, Block Supervisor, Baroharia Block, Chapai Nawabganj

Islam, Mr. Md. Rafiqul, Director, Bangladesh Islamic Youth Society (BIYS), Chapai Nawabganj

Islam, Mr. Saiful Veterinary Surgeon, ULOffice, Gomastapur Upazila, Chapai Nawbganj

Karim, Mr. Rezaul BS, Chapai Nawbganj Sadar Upazila, Chapai Nawbganj

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Annexe 6. Notes prepared for Key Findings Forum on an Opportunities-Based Approach

Extension approaches in the agricultural sector have traditionally adopted a production-based approach, leading to problems like seasonal gluts.

With processes like urbanisation and globalisation, the context of sectoral development is rapidly changing, and new opportunities are emerging (e.g. niche markets) while the rationale for old ways of doing things (e.g. spraying with high-residue pesticides) disappear. Increasingly the starting point for agricultural development is in many cases not what the farmers can produce, but what can they profitably sell. (There are and will remain cases where production will remain subsistence-dominated for some time, but this is shrinking.)

An opportunity-based approach needs marketing skills to identify emerging possibilities, and the private sector has comparative advantage here over farmers, extension agents and NGOs. Private businesses must therefore be brought into any partnership approach as suppliers of inputs and services and purchasers of produce.

This is already happening to some extent: preliminary findings from ASIRP's 2003 Extension Coverage Study show that 23% of women farmers obtain extension advice from the private sector (vets and fertiliser shops) compared with 6.2% from the DAE and 6.8% from NGOs.

Extension has also been dominated by a problem approach. The demand led approach has been interpreted as a farmer-led approach, and efforts have concentrated on addressing the farmers' present problems. However in a commercial setting it is the consumer whose demand counts, and the farmers' problems revolve around how to satisfy this demand.

Within an opportunities-based approach, there is a strong basis for partnerships rooted in mutually-complementary comparative advantage and a pro-poor stance is achievable. The following are necessary conditions.

1. The market must remain (or become) competitive. Monopolies emerge where supply is unpredictable, quality is poor, produce is of the wrong variety, etc. In such a setting transaction costs are high and only monopoly profits attract private buyers. Farmers have to learn to deliver what the market wants: the right quantity of the produce of the right quality at the right time in the right place, preferably in groups to enhance their bargaining power. NGOs have comparative advantage in group formation. The Government extension service, if equipped with the right skills and motivation, would have comparative advantage on the production side. Alternatively the private sector may provide extension services as part of a contract growers scheme.

2. The disadvantaged must be empowered to take advantage of emerging livelihood opportunities. Lack of financial, social and other capital, skill gaps, risk aversion, etc, prevent poor farmers and women farmers from taking advantage of emerging opportunities. NGOs have comparative advantage here and could help ensure that the disadvantaged are not left behind.

3. A business-friendly enabling environment is created. This is needed to reduce the transaction costs of doing business. Policy think tanks have comparative advantage here in identifying the necessary reforms and designing the necessary policy instruments. Government has absolute advantage, since it is the only agency that can make the necessary reforms.

ANNEXE 7 – Output to Purpose Progress Forms for DFID PRISM monitoring.**DFID PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT - Annex D**

Monitoring ID :

Type of Report:

For quarterly monitoring, complete Part A and C; for annual review complete Parts A, B and C

PART A.

Country:	Bangladesh	Project:	Agricultural Services Innovation and Reform Project
Project Officer	Najir Khan	Start Date:	July 1999
Date of Visit:	4 th to 16 th October 2003	End Date:	Currently December 2003
Date of Report:	4 th November 2003	MIS Code:	
		Risk Category:	

Project Budget	Spend in period under review	Cumulative spend	Forecast for current financial year
TA Contract £7,635,161	£1,426,996 (Sept 02-Sept 03)	£6,098,283 (end Sept 2003)	£1,447,671 pending decision

Goal Statement	OVI
To improve the capacity of all categories of farmers, especially landless, marginal and small farmers, to optimise their use of resources on a sustainable basis	50% reduction in the people living in poverty by 2015

Purpose Statement	OVI
Effective structures and processes in place for implementing the NAEP and exploring sectoral approaches	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. By EoP farmer satisfaction with extension advice is 25% higher under the Innovative Pilot Areas than in 'Without' Pilot Districts. 2. By EoP at least 2 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, can demonstrate positive action³¹ taken to implement the NAEP 3. At least 4 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, are involved in strategic planning process by EoP

Outputs /OVIs	Progress		Comments
	Planned (period under review)	Actual (including comments if required)	Planned for next period
Output 1. Innovative and integrated approaches to the NAEP implemented and evaluated under EPICC supervision Score: 2			
1.1 Please refer to the attached indicators (and hypotheses) -Annex 7.1	All pilot initiatives were concluded in August 2003. Evaluations carried out of each pilot approach	Pilots completed with following results with results as shown in Annex 1	Review and learning with a multi stakeholder forum in December 2003 Within a project based approach – the pilots were largely

³¹Eg. strategic plans that follow the principles of NAEP

	approach		successful – the issue will be attempting to address the viability as a mainstream activity
1.2 An Extension Monitoring System designed and tested as part of the monitoring of IEA pilot activities.	DAE requested that original ASIRP M&E system be discontinued. Pilot activities monitored and reported	M&E system for pilots designed and implemented	Large number of DAE projects have M&E activities. There is a need to consolidate/rationalise all project M&E systems and provide DAE M&E system
1.3 All 60 DPIF funded projects completed and evaluated on the principles of NAEP by eop with impact studies on at least 15	10 of 45 first round DPIFs evaluated in early 2003. Further 5 of 21 second round DPIFs evaluated in late August 2003. Impact assessment of round 1 undertaken	15 DPIF evaluations carried out and impact evaluations of 10 vs NAEP completed	Final 5 evaluations to be completed by Dec 2003
Output 2 The Revised Extension Approach implemented by DAE Score 2			
2.1 At least three innovative models (including FLE) implemented and evaluated in 6 Districts by EoP.	All models (3) plus FLE evaluated in 6 districts	Completed	
2.2 Lessons learned and methods of best practice for 6 extension innovations documented and disseminated by EoP	Evaluation reports produced	Evaluations and thematic analysis to be produced for workshop and dissemination by Dec 2003	
2.3 New DAE Strategic Plan operational from July 2002	DAE produced its own strategic plan by March/April 2003	Second 2002-2006 Strat Plan produced by DAE	Awareness needs to be raised but already greater ownership that the first plan produced by the ASIRP TA Team
2.4 By EoP 80% of all Upazilas have training plans for their block supervisors	Training plans collected by Training Wing of DAE and consolidated in annual training plan	Completed	Training inputs suspended due to lack of DAE counterparts funds for training
Output 3. Sector wide policies and processes investigated, designed and			

processes investigated, designed and tested Score 3			
3.1 Common implementation arrangements agreed between at least 4 GoB stakeholders and Donors on movements towards sectoral approaches by mid 2002	The project engaged with GoB and donors on sectoral approaches and more programmatic approaches by mid 2002	Completed but way forward obscured by lack of consensus on the way forward by donors and their commitment to agricultural programmes	Initial indications and acceptance by MoA of more programmatic approach. The project also involved with the Plan of Action for Agriculture and the iPRSP process with donors
3.2 60 NPIF funded projects completed and evaluated by eop and at least 20 yield useful information for EPICC on sector issues and strategies	Only 20 NPIFs implemented (11 Round 1 and 9 Round 2). 10 Evaluated in round 1 and 5 due for impact evaluation in round 2 Synthesis of all Partnership Initiative Funds produced in Feb 2003	First round (10) impact evaluations produced Additional study on Extension Coverage on a national basis produced and 10 years of NGO partnership produced	Five second round evaluations produced Extension Coverage Survey and Partnership Evaluation and reviews to documented and produced by Dec 2003
3.3 At least 4 stakeholders as represented on main EPICC committee complete strategic studies to investigate sectoral issues by EoP	Several stakeholders have undertaken strategic studies but role of the project was limited to participation in events and seeking ownership of the principles of the NAEP	Partial response only	Largely outside the control of ASIRP a project based intervention in 1 line agency of MoA. However, aspects of the NAEP have been incorporated in other ESP strategies
Output 4			

General progress assessment - Project Purpose	2
Justification	
Other stakeholders have adopted many of the NAEP principles and developing strategic plans . The project did as much as it could given its location and the fact that the structures and process to achieve the purpose were MoA led. Farmer satisfaction is difficult to measure and a series of proxy indicators were developed for output level monitoring. The benefits of cross sectoral collaboration	

and co-operation have been achieved and demonstrated at the micro level. Work at the macro level on sectoral approaches have been hindered by a lack of common understanding within GoB and within donors

General progress assessment - Project Outputs

2- (2+2+3)

Justification

The project has largely achieved everything that was within its control. Some outputs are dependent on responses in other stakeholders and donors. ASIRP is a project within one line agency(DAE) of MoA and given the design would always find the ability to stimulate change at the macro level in other Ministries of GOB very difficult

PART B.

Purpose /OVIs	Progress	Comments
<p>1 By EoP farmer satisfaction with extension advice is 25% higher under the Innovative Pilot Areas than in 'Without' Pilot Districts.</p> <p>2. By EoP at least 2 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, can demonstrate positive action³² taken to implement the NAEP</p> <p>3. At least 4 stakeholders, in addition to DAE, are involved in strategic planning process by EoP</p>	<p>Partial fulfilment of OVIs 2 and 3</p> <p>Output 1 Partially correct - Generally farmers satisfaction (as expressed through the proxy of using advice)is higher in the pilot areas</p>	<p>Satisfaction of farmers is higher in pilot area for a variety of reasons</p>

Attribution

The outputs of the project do not directly lead to the achievement of the purpose. The purpose is concerned with structure and processes for implementation of the NAEP, and sectoral approaches. An assessment was made by the project of the NAEP (New Agricultural Extension Policy) in terms of its usefulness as a policy framework for sectoral approaches – the NAEP does not fully meet the requirements but was judged to be better than other policy frameworks. The structures and processes for NAEP implementation were MoA/DAE Committees. The principles of the NAEP were easier to achieve at the micro level than the macro level – where the GoB administration is highly compartmentalised and development planning is highly project based . The project examined current practices in terms of sectoral approaches in Bangladesh (incl. education and health) and existing “programmes” . The operation of committee structures improved during the second half of the project The outputs are not sufficient to achieve the project purpose

³²Eg. strategic plans that follow the principles of NAEP

Purpose to Goal

The quality and quantity of services delivered by all Extension Service Providers remains relatively low. The bias towards larger land holding farmers remains and the targets set in the DAE Revised Extension Approach have not been met. Farmers that happen to be in areas where projects happens are advantaged whether they receive GO or NGO advice ASIRP is a national project with an institutional focus rather than project led technical and social interventions. DAE in their first Strategic Plan (actively supported by ASSP/early ASIRP support) defined their targets as 25% of all activities for all farmers; 60% of activity targeted at farmers with landholdings of < 1 ha; and 15% targeted at farmers with > 1 ha. The targeting is skewed towards larger land holding categories ,DAE has recognised its failings on targeting I and emphasises pro-poor services in the second strategic plan

DOES LOGFRAME REQUIRE REVISION?

Not at this late stage but conflicts highlighted earlier by TA Team

DO PIMS MARKERS REQUIRE REVISION [Mandatory for projects approved prior to 1.8.98]

No

Quality of Scoring

Sufficient information was made available to the team including an historical perspective of the DFID interventions in DAE . A range of stakeholders in the GO ,NGO and farming community were consulted

Lessons learned, and suggested dissemination

ASIRP represents a series of projects in DAE funded by DFID - 11 years of DFID projects in DAE. There are significant lessons learned on extension , institutional change and GO - NGO partnerships. It is the intention of the project to present these lessons to multi stakeholder fora in December 2003. It is very important to draw lessons over time and the TA team have prepared documents to support this . The larger national Extension Coverage Surveys indicates the poor outreach of project based approaches in Bangladesh.

This is true of GOs and NGOs. The early results of the latest survey (July 2003) indicates an expansion of private sector advisory services. However, the quantity of services available remains low.

PART C.

Key Issues / Points of information

Dissemination of results and lessons learning will be undertaken through a series of workshops and production of reports by Dec 2003

Recommendations	Responsibility	Date for completion
1. To explore the viability of scaling up/mainstreaming of project based extension approaches with DAE	TA Team	Dec 2003
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Review team:	RLEP EoP Review Team
People met:	Extensive list of Dhaka and Field based individuals in GoB, NGOs and donors provided in report

Scoring system:

- 1 = likely to be completely achieved* *4 = only likely to be achieved to a very limited extent*
2 = likely to be largely achieved *5 = unlikely to be realised*
3 = likely to be partially achieved *x = too early to judge extent of achievement*

Annex 7.1

IEA Indicators/ Hypotheses

Project-wide Indicators/ Hypotheses

1. By EoP farmer satisfaction³³ with extension advice is 25% higher under the innovative pilot areas than in 'without' pilot Districts. – **Partially correct** (% of farmers using advice is very similar in with and without areas. However, farmers prefer advice in pilot project areas for a variety of reasons)
2. By August 2003 80% of UAECCs have incorporated the suggested planning, monitoring and evaluation formats – **Not correct**

³³ Proxy indicator for 'farmer satisfaction' will be 'use of advice' that will be presented something along the lines of:

% of farmers that have used the last advice they received

FLE	Farmer Information Advice Centre	Specialist Cooperation	UAECC Strengthening	'Without' project areas (ECS 2003)

3. 80% of farmers targeted by UAECC planned activities have adopted or intend to adopt the advice. **Correct**
4. 20% of the activities appearing in the plans of the 12 original upazilas and 60% of those appearing in the plans of the IEA pilot Upazilas are actually implemented - **Correct**
5. 60% of UAECC members found at least 2 of the different model activities useful and would like to use them again in the future given the opportunity-**Correct**
6. The UAECC works with all kinds of farmer and of farmers contacted 50% are women and 50% are within the two poorest categories³⁴ - **Not correct**

³⁴ Available through quarterly monitoring

Evaluation of the Specialist Cooperation Model Hypotheses/ Indicators

PIRS

1. 60% of participating BS/FS each returning PIRS on a monthly basis by August 2003³⁵. – **Not Correct**
2. UAEECs are using consolidated information from PIRS as a Farmer Information Needs Assessment and have addressed at least one issue arising in the Upazila. - **Correct**
3. Field staff pass on problems they cannot deal with and forward these to technical specialists who then respond to them (either personally to the FW or to the full group of FWs at the next fortnightly briefing session). -**Correct**
4. Farmers whose problems have been submitted in the form of a PIRS have received a relevant response from an ESP. -**Correct**
5. 50% of technical briefings given by specialists are based on PIRS. -**Correct**

Technical Briefings

6. Participating BS/ FS are receiving a technical briefing on livestock and fisheries (and crops in Bagerhat) at least once a month³⁶. –**Partially Correct**

³⁵ Data available through quarterly reporting

³⁶ Ditto

7. ESPs are now providing more and better non-specialist advice to farmers than before the project as a result of the technical briefings. **-Cannot be fully answered – but ESPs in pilot areas recognise technical briefings provide opportunities to learn**

FARS

8. The written record of advice sheets allows supervisors to check on technical quality – **Partially correct**.
9. Farmers given advice sheets are sharing these with neighbours. - **Correct**
10. 60% Of participating BS/ FS are giving guidance sheets to farmers each month³⁷. **Correct**

Adoption of advice

11. By August 2003 70% of farmers are implementing advice or intend to implement advice received from a participating BS/ FS on a guidance sheet (FARS)³⁸.

³⁷ Ditto

³⁸ looking at both FARS in the ESP's own discipline and outside that discipline

**Evaluation of the Farmer Information and Advice Centres (FIAC)
Hypotheses/ Indicators**

1. Male and female farmers benefit from the FIAC. - **Correct**
2. Male and female farmers in the Union in which the FIAC is located are aware of the existence, opening hours and services provided by the FIAC. – **Partially correct**
3. Farmers (male and female) and ESPs are making repeat visits to the FIAC³⁹ **Partially correct**
4. The UAECC sub-committee is able to manage and staff the FIAC **Partially correct**
5. The FIAC is a cost-effective way of responding to farmers' enquiries – **Correct**
6. Each UAECC plans and implements at least one activity related to an extension issue particular to the CHT. **Partially Correct**
7. By August 2003, 50% of UAECC members regard the RC as a success **Correct**

³⁹ This will answer the following indicators that were jointly set: '1.2 50% of ESP users of the RC find it useful' and '1.3 50% of farmers who used the RC found it useful'

UAECC Strengthening Model
Hypotheses/ Indicators

1. Local Situational Analyses lead to improved mutual understanding of ESPs' activities, improved targeting of resources. **Correct**
2. Relatively unsupported UAECCs are capable of organising and undertaking LSA and PRA and setting up ISWG which can make and implement action plans. – **Partially correct**
3. ISWG action plans are based on the priority needs of farmers. – **Correct**
4. 80% of UAECCs implemented at least 4 extension activities which were identified through the issue identification process by August 2003⁴⁰. - **Not correct**
5. UDCCs in 50% of Upazilas approve ADP funds for extension activities as a result of the model. **Not correct 33% only progressing**

⁴⁰ Data available through quarterly reporting

Farmer-led Extension Evaluation

Hypotheses

1. FPs are able to mobilise services or advice from non-LAFT ESP- **Correct**
2. Members of FLE Groups receive more advice/ services from more ESPs and 'other farmers' than non-members- **Correct**
3. A higher proportion of FLE Group members than non-members trialed the last advice they received and got a good result. – **Not correct**
4. Activities undertaken by FLE groups are initiated by, and respond to the needs of the majority of members-**Partially correct**
5. FLE Groups enable members to access microcredit - **Correct**
6. FLE Management Committees are effective at managing their groups⁴¹ - **Mainly incorrect**

⁴¹ To be measured by the following proxy indicators:

- Positions of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Farmer Promoter (x2) are filled
- FPs are mobilising advice/ services from non-LAFT ESPs
- Group membership has remained constant since the group was formed
- Group members are saving and accessing credit from the internal C&S fund
- The group has/ will undertake activities that meet the needs of members
- Meetings are regular and attendance is high
- Group decisions are recorded