

C. Donor Processes

Donor assistance takes many forms, one of which is the bilateral project, to which this handbook is oriented. Some of these projects are financed by loan, others by grant. In some cases the donor contracts with the implementer. In others, funds are made available to the host country, who then contracts for technical assistance. Project processes vary also, but some general activities are common. This handbook is directed to the common elements.

These stages are commonly found in the life of a project, even though the form will vary.

1. The donor will have a country strategy. Some may not be written, but others may be a comprehensive document based on extensive analysis.

2. Project development is the stage in which the donor decides in general terms what the project is and how much will be invested in it.

3. Project design determines the size of the project, the activities to be financed, the composition of the budget, the course of action, the amount and nature of technical assistance and other such matters, often in considerable detail. It is common to contract a short term team to help with this effort and to do studies that lead to it. Donors vary in their own direct input into project design but do assume final responsibility. The design is the official document of the donor's formal approval process.

4. Implementation almost always involves a team to provide technical assistance. Donors vary in how much they participate in this phase and how much they depend on the implementer for project management. The relative role of technical assistance in a project also varies. Typically a loan financed project will have less technical assistance than a grant financed project.

5. Evaluation is not really a phase, since it often occurs more than once in a project and is anticipated as early as project design. Good management provides for constant attention to evaluation. However, the specific evaluation activities occur after the other phases.

D. Handbook Organization and Use

This handbook is organized around the general project process. After a chapter on Principles of FSR/E, there are four chapters, corresponding to the four phases in the life of a project listed above--development, design, implementation, and evaluation. Material that is common to more than one chapter is contained in the Appendixes. A final section provides a list of