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Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE) Final Performance Evaluation FINAL REPORT



January 2013

This report was produced at the request of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). It was prepared independently by Anthony Ortiz, Christabel Dadzie, Sonali Chowdhury, and Foyzul Bari Himel of Optimal Solutions Group, LLC through the “Learning, Evaluation, and Analysis Project” (LEAP), Contract Number: AID-OAA-C-11-00169

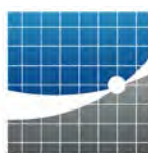
Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competiveness of Enterprises (PRICE)

Final Performance Evaluation

FINAL REPORT

Prepared for United States Agency for International Development

Prepared by Optimal Solutions Group, LLC



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Cover Photo

A trader in Jessore collecting farmers' vegetables, which will be sold to wholesalers later

Disclaimer

The authors' views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States government.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	iii
Acronyms List	v
Executive Summary	vi
Project Purpose and Background.....	vi
Purpose of the Evaluation.....	vi
Key Evaluation Questions	vi
Methodology.....	vii
Key Findings.....	vii
Key Recommendations	viii
I. Introduction	1
II. The Development Problem and USAID’s Response	2
III. Purpose of the Evaluation	3
IV. Methodology	4
Evaluation Limitations	6
V. Evaluation Findings	7
PRICE Overall Performance	7
PRICE’s Effect on Sector Competitiveness	11
Changes in Value Chain Market Linkages	24
PRICE’s Effectiveness and Results Achievement.....	26
Women’s Empowerment under PRICE.....	27
Effectiveness of SME and Workforce Development Initiatives Under PRICE	30
Conclusions	32
VI. Lessons Learned	35
VII. Recommendations	38
VIII. Appendices	42
Appendix 1 – Evaluation Statement of Work.....	42
Appendix 2 – Reference List.....	59
Appendix 3 – Value Chain Maps	63
.....	63
Appendix 4 – Case Studies.....	69
Appendix 5 – Evaluation Design Matrix.....	72
Appendix 6 – Stakeholder Survey	75
Appendix 7 – Evaluation Survey Questions.....	77
Appendix 8 – Focus Group Discussion Questions Template	80
Appendix 9 – Document Review Summaries Template	81

Appendix 10 – List of Stakeholder Interviews	82
Appendix 11- Data Coding Methodology	84
Appendix 12- Life of Project Comparison Tables.....	85
Appendix 13 – Additional Evaluation Findings	87

Acronyms List

AFL-CIO	The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations
ATDP	Agro-based Industries and Technology Development Projects
AVC	Agricultural Value Chains
BETS	A consulting firm in Bangladesh with specialization in environmental assessment
BFFAE	Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters Association
BMO	Business Membership Organization
CIP	Country Investment Plan
COEL	Centre of Excellence for Leather Skill Bangladesh Limited
COP	Chief of Party
DITF	Dhaka International Trade Fair
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FI	Financial Institutions
FtF	Feed the Future
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMSS	Goldhamari Fishermen Cooperative Society
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
ILO	International Labour Organization
JOBS	Job Opportunities and Business Support
LEAP	Learning, Evaluation, and Analysis Project
LFMEAB	Leather Goods & Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh
LTSE	Leather Technologist Small Entrepreneurs
LoP	Life of Project
MFI	Microfinance Institutions
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NFP	National Food Policy
NGO	Non-government organization
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRICE	Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises
PRIDE	PRIDE Agro Enterprise
SDC	The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SOW	Statement of Work
TAMCSS	Talora Model Fish Farmers' Cooperative Society
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
WEAI	Woman's Empowerment in Agriculture Index
ZOI	Zone of Influence

Executive Summary

Project Purpose and Background

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh contracted Optimal Solutions Group, LLC (Optimal) through the Learning Evaluation and Analysis Project (LEAP) contract (AID-OAA-C-11-00169) to conduct a final performance evaluation of the Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE) project. The PRICE project, with total funding of \$12.9 million, was implemented between 2008 and 2013 and follows several other USAID enterprise development projects. Its main mission was to reduce poverty sustainably by increasing enterprise competitiveness across three main sectors in Bangladesh: horticulture, aquaculture, and leather. Chemonics International (Chemonics) was the PRICE project's implementing partner.

Specific PRICE objectives across the three sectors included improving pro-poor economic opportunities, workforce skills, social compliance practices, governance practices related to economic growth and poverty reduction, small and medium enterprise (SME) development, growth of the non-textile private sector, and the capacity and use of knowledge management systems.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the PRICE final performance evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the PRICE project in achieving its program objectives, to evaluate any constraints to achieving expected results, and to provide recommendations and lessons learned for future private-sector competitiveness and value chain development programs.

Key Evaluation Questions

USAID/Bangladesh provided the following six evaluation questions, which guided the evaluation process:

- 1) How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels? Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?
- 2) As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value chain market linkages to complement its production focus?
- 3) How did the project extension and 2011 re-alignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the Feed the Future region affect PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement?
- 4) Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of the PRICE interventions? What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for women in the value chains?
- 5) How effective have the SME and workforce development initiatives by PRICE been in the leather sector growth?
- 6) What institutional capacity-building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value chain, hunger, and poverty alleviation investments?

Methodology

The evaluation team used a mixed-method evaluation approach, employing sequential and iterative strategies at various stages of the evaluation. Data collection tools included document reviews, structured interviews, stakeholder surveys, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The team also coded qualitative data throughout the evaluation to quantify and identify trends among stakeholder feedback.

Through the above approach and data collection tools, 55 stakeholders were interviewed throughout Dhaka, Khulna, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Chuadanga, and Bogra, encompassing the three sectors of focus: horticulture, aquaculture, and leather.

Political instability in Bangladesh during the time of the evaluation limited travel to the project implementation areas, which affected the team's ability to meet its goal of conducting 25 surveys and 3 FGDs per sector. However, the team employed telephone surveys as a mitigation strategy.

Key Findings

Evaluation findings were gathered through data collection activities and subsequent qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The evaluation findings are based on the six evaluation questions and focus areas and are categorized by sector (multi-sector, horticulture, aquaculture, and leather). The main findings include the following:

- PRICE was successful in achieving its six project objectives across the three sectors.
- In the horticulture sector, PRICE succeeded in job creation; however, while job creation exceeded its Life of Project (LoP) targets, this success is a result of seasonal labor among horticulture farmers.
- In the horticulture sector, total increases in investments were achieved through increased access to financial institutions or reinvestment by private-sector organizations into their own businesses.
- Horticulture farmers' access to new markets was limited to a single closed-contract arrangement, as opposed to multiple market access opportunities in an open and competitive market.
- In the horticulture sector, PRICE was able to successfully address local constraints, including constraints on low productivity, access to quality inputs on virus-free seeds and high-yield seed varieties, and access to new local markets.
- Lead horticulture firms benefited from PRICE in community mobilization, training, and adoption in wider community and geographic areas, as the current environment does not allow for business entities to conduct such activities without the benefit of cost sharing from a development project.
- Feed the Future (FtF) reallocations enabled southern farmers and project beneficiaries to strengthen their capacity and build their resource base to become an established horticulture hub that was able to attain objectives that had already been achieved in the north.

- PRICE interventions in the horticulture sector did not regularly create full-time jobs for women. Due to cultural and social limitations, women were only moderately empowered in decision-making about agricultural inputs and production.
- PRICE training increased women’s technical skills in horticulture and aquaculture production, specifically at the homestead level, which increased family incomes.
- PRICE achieved 97 percent of its LoP goal for increased investments in the aquaculture sector. Processors, who are the largest investors within the aquaculture sector, made moderate investments.
- PRICE support successfully increased the total value of sales in aquaculture, achieving 99 percent of its LoP target.
- For the shrimp subsector, PRICE was effective in addressing mainly international constraints. For the fish subsector, PRICE was able to effectively resolve local and national constraints.
- PRICE interventions strengthened capacity among aquaculture value-chain actors and for business membership organizations (BMOs) to carry out interventions to resolve sector constraints following project completion.
- In reaching 105 percent of its LoP target and creating the Centre of Excellence for Leather Skill Bangladesh Limited (COEL), job creation in the leather sector was a project highlight.
- Through PRICE SME initiatives, SMEs were able to gain access to markets, financial services, and training; the aggregation of SMEs into the Leather Technology Small Entrepreneurs Association (LTSE) served as the most valuable SME development initiative.
- Leather sector partners were able to carry forward interventions to non-project beneficiaries without support from PRICE.
- PRICE interventions strongly contributed to empowering women in the leather sector, primarily through skill development trainings for floor workers.
- PRICE significantly contributed to leather SME development by improving access to markets, financial services, and training.
- PRICE’s workforce development initiatives, in particular the establishment of COEL in a public-private partnership mode, made the industry more competitive.

Key Recommendations

The evaluation team makes the following recommendations for implementing similar projects in the future:

- Given the low domestic demand for horticulture products, USAID should emphasize linking horticulture producers with international exporting processors.
- To aid small-scale horticulture and aquaculture farmers, future USAID projects should help banks or microfinance institutions ensure that loan products have grace periods long enough to cover at least one crop cycle.

- Agricultural loans should also facilitate sustainable credit practices through support that identifies and develops business models to provide adequate training and knowledge among beneficiaries. In addition, an agriculture voucher system could be incorporated into loans, as the evaluation team discovered that a significant portion of loans is spent on household expenses rather than agricultural activities.
- BMO partnerships should continue to receive support to bring project benefits into geographic locations where non-project beneficiaries reside. Nodal organization partnerships are also recommended to establish networks from the national to village level, including local technical specialists.
- Group production is a sustainable option to increase production levels, which qualify producers for linkage with national or regional market intermediaries. Group production ensures that farmers harvest a sufficient volume of products and encourages large marketing intermediaries to directly collect from the farmers.
- New USAID projects could identify whether the number of farmers with requisite farming knowledge has increased in the south, follow the contract-farming model implemented in the north, and replicate in southern districts the direct link between farmers and buyers.
- Established organizations, such as Murail Rural Development Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd. are able to promote continued implementation of PRICE project practices following project completion. Through continued partnerships, local horticulture project beneficiaries will continue mutually beneficial arrangements even when they do not have direct access to project technical assistance.
- USAID needs to examine how to apply the COEL job creation model in other sectors, as COEL contributed to women's empowerment and strengthened job creation for women. COEL should also expand to regional centers in Chittagong, Rajshahi, and Khulna.
- In the leather sector, future projects should assist large manufacturers in finding price-competitive international markets. Domestic sales of leather products can also be improved through continued assistance with organizing leather product fairs and innovative marketing programs.

The PRICE project was an overall success, with significant improvements made in increasing competitiveness in the horticulture, aquaculture, and leather sectors in Bangladesh. Many goals were achieved, and future projects can build on PRICE's established practices.

I. Introduction

Poverty has been the major development challenge in Bangladesh since the country achieved independence in 1971. In 2004, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) ranked Bangladesh 72 out of 93 developing countries in the Human Poverty Index. In addition, nearly 50 percent of Bangladesh's 140 million people subsisted below the national poverty line, and 82 percent of the country's population lived on less than US\$2 a day. To address these concerns, USAID has targeted Bangladesh's economic growth—a prerequisite for poverty reduction—to remain at a rate of 7 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) to address this most enduring problem.¹

Since 1971, USAID has been designing and implementing projects to promote private-enterprise development and employment generation in Bangladesh. To varying degrees, these prior projects typically provided assistance aimed at (1) strengthening product, market development, and market linkages; (2) promoting economy-wide and sector-level reforms; and (3) increasing lending to target firms. Of particular relevance are the USAID enterprise development activities that immediately preceded the PRICE project, including (1) the Job Opportunities and Business Support (JOBS) project (1997–2002, \$10 million) and (2) the Agro-based Industries and Technology Development (ATDP I and II) projects (1995–2000, \$10 million; and 2000–2004, \$10 million, respectively).

The objective of JOBS was to create private-sector jobs and increase incomes for poor people in Bangladesh through the provision of technical and business assistance to microenterprises in rural areas and to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in urban and suburban areas. Technical assistance focused on product development and improvement, finance, market information, and linkages. Sectors of focus included footwear, leather goods, and handicrafts.

The objective of ATDP I was to alleviate poverty by supporting improved agricultural productivity, crop diversification, improved access to technology and financing, and policy reform benefiting small farmers and emerging agribusinesses. The ATDP II project aimed to increase agricultural incomes and jobs by providing technical assistance to create more productive and competitive markets for agricultural inputs and outputs and to strengthen agribusiness support institutions and policy reform.

USAID's private-enterprise development projects have always been designed to support host governments' national development plans, including the *Bangladesh Country Investment Plan: A Road Map Towards Investment in Agriculture, Food Security, and Nutrition*.² The Country Investment Plan (CIP) is a country-led planning, fund-mobilization, and alignment tool that aims to support effective public investment to increase and diversify food availability in a sustainable manner and improve access to food and nutrition security. Its interventions also aim to mobilize investment by smallholder farmers and other private-sector food security actors through a five-year comprehensive plan.

Together with regular economic growth efforts and a forward-thinking national government, Bangladesh has the potential to achieve its economic growth goals.

¹ UNDP, Human Development Index Report, 2004, cited in *USAID Economic Development, Growth with Equity* (EDGE)

² Bangladesh Country Investment Plan: A Road Map towards Investment in Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition, https://www.gafspfund.org/sites/gafspfund.org/files/Documents/BangladeshCIP_ARoadMap.pdf

II. The Development Problem and USAID’s Response

PRICE is a five-year USAID economic development project in Bangladesh. The project focuses on alleviating limitations in the horticulture, aquaculture, and leather-products value chains. PRICE seeks to sustainably increase the agricultural productivity of Bangladesh’s small farmers and increase the purchasing power of the food-insecure poor.

Designed in 2007 and launched in February 2008, PRICE builds on earlier USAID projects under the USAID Mission’s Strategic Objective 12: “Expanded Economic Opportunities Created Through Equitable Economic Growth.” At the time, PRICE’s project goal was to advance Bangladesh’s competitiveness in global markets while contributing to pro-poor economic growth. The project had total funding of \$12,998,503. In 2011, USAID/Bangladesh realigned the focus of the PRICE project so that it could contribute to USAID’s Feed the Future (FtF) Presidential Initiative under the Mission’s Country Development Cooperation Strategy Development Objective 2: Food Security Improved. In 2011 the PRICE project goal was refined to the following: “reduce poverty sustainably by promoting the broad-based development and competitiveness of the horticulture, aquaculture, and leather-products sectors in Bangladesh.”

This new goal was fully consistent with, and very relevant to, the development objectives of the government of Bangladesh’s CIP. From its beginning in 2008, the PRICE project operated in the northern and southern areas of Bangladesh. Specific PRICE project objectives in the horticulture, aquaculture, and leather sectors included:

- 1) increasing pro-poor economic opportunities;
- 2) improving workforce skills—especially for women and youth—and social-compliance practices;
- 3) improving governance practices related to economic growth and poverty reduction;
- 4) increasing SME development;
- 5) increasing the growth of the non-textile private sector; and
- 6) increasing capacity and use of knowledge-management systems.

To accomplish these project objectives, just after implementation, Chemonics International (Chemonics), the PRICE project’s implementing contractor, proposed that much of this assistance, at least at the firm and association levels, could be effectively outsourced to existing business service providers and “NGOs with an entrepreneurial bent.” In Chemonics’ view, facilitating access to business support services rather than providing them directly would not only help meet the needs of target firms but also foster the development of business service providers and thereby help ensure the sustainability of competitiveness improvements even after the PRICE project ended. This initial approach to the PRICE project’s implementation was then modified during the first year to

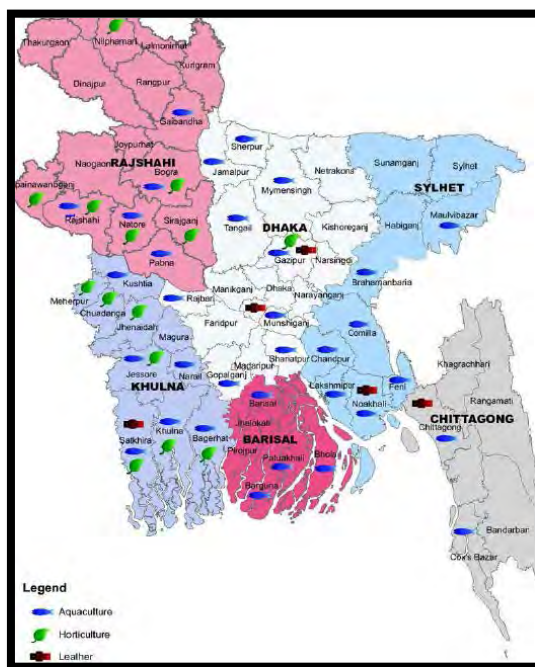


Figure 1. PRICE’s operating districts

obtain faster results on the ground. As a result, the reliance on business service providers to deliver services targeting firms was deemphasized, and Chemonics' own subsector experts assumed more hands-on roles to strengthen all linkages in the value chains. This revised model of providing assistance under PRICE continued through project completion.

III. Purpose of the Evaluation

Optimal Solutions Group, LLC (Optimal) was contracted under the Learning, Evaluation, and Analysis Project (LEAP), contract no. AID-OAA-C-11-00169, to plan, design, and conduct a final performance evaluation of the PRICE project. The contract's period of performance is October 2013 through March 2014.

According to the Statement of Work (SOW), the major objectives of this evaluation are to

- review, analyze, and evaluate the effectiveness of the PRICE project in achieving the program's objectives and contributing to USAID/Bangladesh's efforts to increase private-sector competitiveness and value-chain development;
- evaluate major constraints in achieving expected project results; and
- provide specific recommendations and lessons learned related to strategies and approaches that USAID/Bangladesh should continue in its future planning and value-chain development.

The evaluation covers the PRICE project period from February 2008 to December 2013, with a special focus on the post-midterm evaluation period. Because PRICE is a follow-on project to previous USAID investments in this area, its activities need to be examined in the overall context of private-sector competitiveness and value-chain development in the country.

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be used to improve the implementation of the newly awarded agricultural value chains project and will also be used in the design of other relevant projects. With the exclusion of procurement-sensitive sections, USAID intends to disseminate the report widely among such stakeholders as USAID implementing partners and other donors.

The key evaluation questions are as follows:

- 1) How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels? Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?
- 2) As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value-chain market linkages to complement its production focus?
- 3) How did the project extension and 2011 realignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the FtF region affect PRICE's effectiveness and the results achieved?
- 4) Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions? What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for women in the value chains?

- 5) How effective have the SME and workforce-development initiatives by PRICE been in leather-products sector growth?
- 6) What institutional capacity-building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value-chain, hunger, and poverty-alleviation investments?

IV. Methodology

To conduct the evaluation, the LEAP team adopted mixed-methods, sequential, and iterative evaluation approaches. The following data-collection tools were employed: document reviews, structured interviews, stakeholder surveys, and focus-group discussions (FGDs).

With sequential and iterative combinations, each of these tools were employed one after the other, with the findings from methods used earlier in the evaluation informing the design and implementation of methods used later in the evaluation. Through this process, data-collection tools had two roles: (1) shaping how research questions were defined and (2) clarifying any questions the evaluation team had as fieldwork progressed.

The PRICE evaluation team began the evaluation with an extensive document review, conducted between October 16 and November 18, 2013. The documents reviewed were gathered from the web and provided by USAID/ Bangladesh, a list of which can be found in Appendix 2: Reference List. The document review was used to capture background information on the project, its goals, stakeholders, inputs, outputs, and outcomes. It was also used to assess whether the project activities were implemented as planned and to identify any challenges or problems that delayed or altered their implementation.

Prior to conducting the site visit in Bangladesh, the LEAP team created a document review summary template to collect key findings in the PRICE documents for each program by year and quarter. The document-review summaries included information on specific project activities, measurable impacts of PRICE, shortcomings, focus areas, and information relevant to questions presented in the SOW. Throughout site preparation, data analysis, and reporting, this information was referenced to support the final evaluation’s findings.

The team arrived in Dhaka on November 18, 2013. The following day, the team conducted an in-brief with USAID Bangladesh to discuss the pending evaluation’s work plan and implementation process. Over the course of the evaluation, the team interacted with a total of 55 PRICE

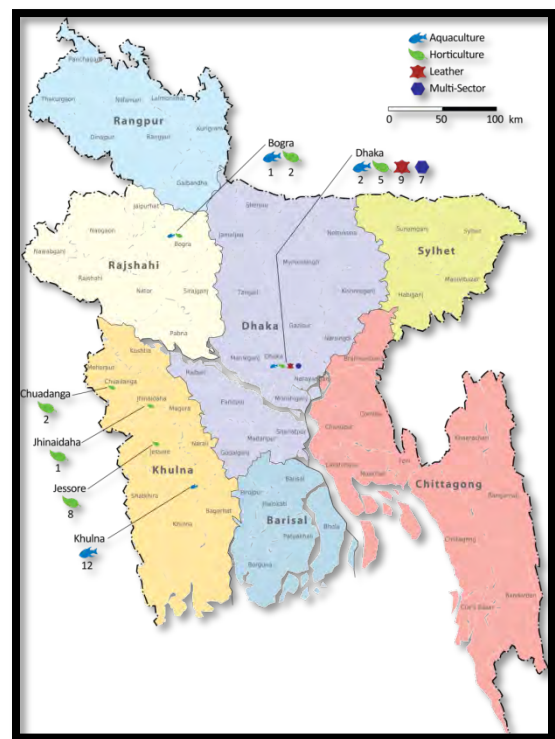


Figure 2. Map of PRICE Evaluation Respondents, by Sector

stakeholders via structured interviews, surveys, and FGDs. For the purpose of this evaluation, a stakeholder is defined as a person with an interest or concern in PRICE practices. Stakeholders included USAID staff, project staff, PRICE beneficiaries, and project-implementation partners. The team interviewed 46 of the 55 PRICE stakeholders. From November 24 to 27, 2013, one team member was able to travel to Khulna to meet local stakeholders.

The evaluation team also used a comprehensive survey to gauge perceptions of project results among 42 stakeholders. Through asking stakeholder questions, the team directly addressed and quantified the six priority evaluation questions. Stakeholder surveys included different sets of questions for each sector. Among leather sector stakeholders, the team asked 18 questions, aquaculture stakeholders were asked 18 questions, horticulture stakeholders were asked 17 questions, and multi-sector stakeholders were asked 19 questions.

The team conducted a total of three FGDs: one with multi-sector stakeholders on November 23, one with aquaculture stakeholders on November 25, and one with leather stakeholders on December 4. To accomplish this, the evaluation team engaged in participatory rural appraisal analyses, which allowed the team to observe social attributes and conduct open-ended discussions with focus groups to identify first-hand findings and accumulate relevant field research. To verify notes and findings, the team also transcribed the FGDs through a field interpreter and note-taker.

Interviews, surveys, and FGDs were conducted with stakeholders based in the districts of Dhaka, Khulna, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Chuadanga, and Bogra. Leather, horticulture, and aquaculture sector stakeholders were located in Dhaka. Horticulture and aquaculture stakeholders were located in Khulna, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Chuadanga, and Bogra.

During the In-brief meeting with USAID/Bangladesh in Dhaka, the team was asked to incorporate the *Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index* (WEAI) domains into the evaluation findings to identify whether and how WEAI concepts existed within PRICE practices. The five WEAI domains include women's empowerment in (1) agricultural-production decision-making, (2) agricultural-resources ownership and access, (3) agricultural-income control, (4) participation in social groups, and (5) time allocation.

Prior to departing Bangladesh the team presented to a group of external stakeholders on December 10, 2013 and held an internal Out-brief meeting with USAID on December 11, 2013.

For data coding, the team divided qualitative data into five findings sections, which correspond to evaluation questions one through five. Because evaluation question six deals with lessons learned about institutional capacity building, the team included findings from this question in the lessons learned section of the report. The five findings sections have been subdivided based on focus areas identified within the evaluation questions and clarified during the internal In-brief meeting with USAID. See Appendix 10 for how the questions were divided and coded using an evaluation matrix. Using this matrix, the team coded data and identified trends from the desk review, stakeholder surveys, structured interviews, and FGDs.

Stakeholder perception surveys were scored on a scale of 0 to 3 or 0 to 1. For survey questions with a score of 0 to 3, 0 means that stakeholders perceived that there was no change as a result of

project interventions, 1 means that stakeholders perceived slight improvements, 2 means that stakeholders perceived some improvements, and 3 means that stakeholders perceive significant improvements. For survey questions with a score of 0 to 1, stakeholders were asked yes or no questions. For all 0 to 1 questions, 0 is a negative response and 1 is positive response.

Evaluation Limitations

Throughout the performance evaluation, the primary constraint to effectively assessing the PRICE project was the regular occurrence of hartals (labor strikes and collectives actions). Nationally, hartals occurred from November 26 to 29, 2013 and December 1 to 13, 2013. After the team had met with USAID and the PRICE chief of party (COP) on November 19, the evaluation team was able to leave their hotel only 29 percent of the available work days.³ During this time, regular street violence occurred in Dhaka and at potential field sites. Thus, hartals limited the team's ability to move freely within Dhaka and to its field locations (Jessore, Khulna, and Bogra) because the protests put the evaluation team in harm's way.

The hartals also significantly affected the team's evaluation output. The team intended to complete at least 25 stakeholder surveys per sector and conduct at least three FGDs per sector. Because surveys and FGDs were the core data collection tools for this evaluation, hartals limited the findings among local, field-level stakeholders. The team was also unable to establish connections and network with field-level stakeholders, which would have assisted in identifying previously unidentified stakeholders. As an alternative data-collection strategy, the team conducted individual phone and e-mail surveys and interviews with beneficiaries with whom team members had initially planned to conduct structured interviews and FGDs.

Another limitation was the lack of access to former PRICE staff members, since the PRICE project was in the final stages of close-out by the time the evaluation team was in the field. Alexis Ellicot, the former COP, was helpful in connecting the team with former PRICE colleagues. However, without a centralized base of operations, the team had to independently locate and arrange meetings with former PRICE staff members.

³ The team worked in Bangladesh from November 18 to December 13. During the evaluation, there were six workdays in a seven-day week, for a total of twenty-one workdays out of twenty-six calendar days. The team began fieldwork on November 20, following the in-brief with USAID and the initial meeting with the PRICE COP. From November 20 to 25, the team was able to leave their hotel and establish relationships with sector team leaders. Following these initial meetings, hartals prevented the team from leaving their hotel on available workdays. Thus, the team was able to move freely on only six out of twenty-one workdays, or 29% of the time. Since the evaluation team was not able to meet with stakeholders after November 25, the team was not able to conduct face-to-face interviews with stakeholders introduced as a result of these meetings.

V. Evaluation Findings

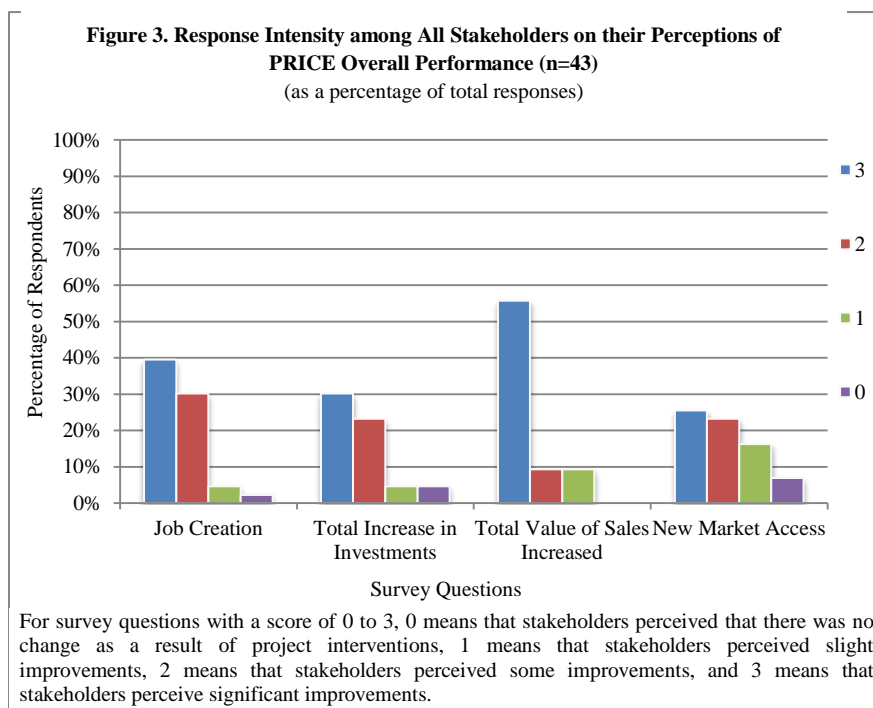
This section provides the evaluation team’s findings and identifies several general factors that provide context for the PRICE project. A discussion of the overall findings is followed by a detailed discussion of the findings related to each evaluation question. Under each evaluation question, the information is grouped by sector (horticulture, aquaculture, leather, and multi-sector), as each sector has its own distinct practices and objectives.

Based on the overall evaluation findings (stakeholder perceptions and relevant project performance indicators), PRICE was successful in achieving its six stated objectives across the three sectors. A review of PRICE’s performance on the six project objectives was directly linked to the first evaluation question, which addressed project effectiveness. Project effectiveness was also addressed through the first four stakeholder survey questions on 1) job creation, 2) total increase in investments, 3) total value of sales, and 4) new market access created as a result of PRICE interventions. Project effectiveness survey questions that were used in reviewing PRICE’s performance were scored 0 to 3. To identify their importance among stakeholders surveyed, the team calculated their response intensity, which gauges the percentage of respondents who provided respective scores. Figure 3 below captures the response intensity among all stakeholders and provides an overall picture of the PRICE stakeholder perspective.

PRICE Overall Performance

Among the PRICE stakeholders surveyed, nearly 60 percent of respondents said there was a significant increase in the total value of sales, which marks a significant achievement for PRICE. Nearly 70 percent of respondents said that there was some or significant improvements in job creation. Fifty-five percent of respondents said there was some or significant improvements in increased investments; stakeholder responses about new market access were more uniform.

When asked about increases in the total value of sales, horticulture stakeholders reported that PRICE interventions enabled



private-sector firms to expand their dealer networks and operating areas, which resulted in significant sales increases. In the aquaculture sector, stakeholders attributed the increase in the total value of sales to increased sales of both shrimp and fish. There is a constant demand in the shrimp export market, which was further promoted with PRICE international market-linkage interventions. Fish processors were able to strengthen linkages to increase the additional quantity supplied by the depots.⁴

Another project highlight is job creation in the leather sector as a result of Centre of Excellence for Leather Skill Bangladesh Ltd (COEL). Created as a public-private venture with support from the International Labour Organization's (ILO's) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) program and PRICE, COEL recruits potential operators, supervisors, and machine technicians for leather goods manufacturers and trains them following a combination of theoretical, workshop-based, and on-the-job training sessions.

Stakeholders were also asked about PRICE's ability to remove sector constraints at the local, national, and international levels. To answer this question, they were given four choices:

- 3—PRICE has removed constraints at three levels;
- 2—PRICE has removed constraints at two levels;
- 1—PRICE has removed constraints at one level; and
- 0—PRICE has removed no constraints.

Fourteen percent of respondents stated that PRICE had removed constraints at three levels, 26 percent stated that PRICE had removed constraints at two levels, 14 percent stated that PRICE had removed constraints at one level, and 2 percent stated that PRICE had removed no constraints at any level.

PRICE's approach in the horticulture sector to identify constraints was different than in the leather and aquaculture sectors. With leather and aquaculture, sector-level constraints were addressed, the effects of which then trickled down to local constraints. However, the horticulture sector started by identifying constraints at the production level of the value chain and worked with local constraints.

⁴ Depots are locations for farmers to store their products while waiting to move on to the next step in their respective value chains. The next steps in the value chain are post-harvesting or processing.

	Indicator	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2011		FY 2012		FY 2013	
			Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
1	Total value of sales increased	\$366,387,601	\$12,700,000	3.47%	\$39,343,393	10.74%	\$129,192,657	35.26%	\$124,885,117	34.09%	\$98,588,574	26.91%
2	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	67,274	1,658	2.46%	9,585	14.25%	19,736	29.34%	28,325	42.10%	23,900	35.53%
3	Total value of investment	\$20,992,917	\$520,000	2.48%	\$1,870,585	8.91%	\$3,993,362	19.02%	\$12,595,841	60.00%	\$2,045,717	9.74%
4	Number of persons who participated in workforce development programs	28,400	1,616	5.69%	3,137	11.05%	8,643	30.43%	28,400	100.00%	7,481	26.34%
5	Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or microcredit	32,677	-	NA	2,239	6.85%	4,216	12.90%	6,553	20.05%	18,304	56.01%
6	Value of incremental sales at farm level attributed to Feed the Future (FtF) implementation	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	\$64,240,241	NA	\$61,320,959	NA
7	Value of new private-sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by FtF implementation	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	\$12,415,721	NA	\$1,693,153	NA
8	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	5,310	NA	8,868	NA
9	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	15,743	NA	33,609	NA
10	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural-sector productivity or food-security training	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	57,208	NA	48,509	NA

NOTE: Tables 1-5 are taken from PRICE annual reports. However, the evaluation team noted a mismatch between the tables in the annual reports and the tables in the PRICE Final Report. The PRICE Final Report tables can be found in the appendix. In these tables, the team did not include FY 2008 indicators because, at the time, indicators were recorded using an interval of February 2008 to March 2009, which overlaps with FY 2009 (October 2008–September 2009). Also, as this report details a final performance evaluation, the indicators are defined by the 2013 Final PRICE Monitoring and Evaluation Plan, which replaced an earlier set of seven indicators with the ten indicators in the table, following USAID’s 2011 refocus on FtF. Also, because indicators 6 to 10 were the new measures of project performance, 2012 and 2013 were the only years to measure performance, and there was no LoP target.

On limitations to PRICE success, stakeholders were asked two questions: 1) success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and 2) success limited to geographic areas. When asked if PRICE success was not limited and it reached non-PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises, Forty-nine percent of respondents stated that PRICE’s success was not limited and that it reached non-PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises, while 12 percent stated that PRICE’s success was limited. When asked if success was limited to selected geographic locations, 37 percent stated that success was not limited, and 23 percent stated that success was limited. When asked about success among a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises, respondents’ feedback indicated that PRICE targeted all the beneficiaries that it could—within project resources—to achieve project results. About selected geographic locations, respondents commented that, as a result of FtF realignment, PRICE shifted project resources to target specific areas and not all of its earlier locations.

Final project indicators demonstrated that PRICE met its Life of Project (LoP) targets by achieving the following:

- 110 percent of its LoP target for increases in the total value of sales;
- 124 percent of its LoP target for the number of full-time equivalent jobs created;
- 100 percent of its LoP target for the total value of investments;

- 174 percent of its LoP target for the number of persons who participated in workforce development programs; and
- 96 percent of its LoP target for the number of firms and farmers receiving United States Government (USG) assistance to access formal loans or microcredit.

Table 1: PRICE Performance Data disaggregates these LoP targets by year. As a percentage of LoP targets, the total value of investment increases reached 161 percent in 2012, the number of persons participating in a workforce-development program reached 102 percent in 2012, and the number of firms and farms receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or microcredit reached 96 percent in 2013.

When disaggregated by sector, from 2010 to 2012, horticulture performed the best. Among its achievements, as a percentage of LoP targets, were the number of full-time equivalent jobs created (186 percent) and the total value of increased sales (170 percent). During this period, most aquaculture indicators reached their LoP targets, including the number of persons who participated in workforce development programs (99 percent). The leather sector performed well in the number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or microcredit, reaching 104 percent of LoP.

When examining indicators disaggregated by gender, generally, men and women were equal project beneficiaries for the three indicators with longer-term gender disaggregated data. For the number of full-time equivalent jobs created, women achieved 117 percent of their LoP target and men achieved 122 percent; for the number of persons participating in workforce development programs, women achieved 80 percent of their LoP target and men achieved 104 percent; and for the number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or microcredit, women achieved 375 percent of their LoP target and men achieved 129 percent.

	Indicator	Unit	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY 2010		FY 2011		FY 2012		FY 2013	
				Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
				2	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	Male	53,537	8,212	15.34%	13,652	25.50%
		Female	13,738	1,373	9.99%	6,084	44.29%	3,801	27.67%	4,869	35.44%
4	Number of persons who participated in workforce development programs	Male	11,743	1,064	9.06%	3,327	28.33%	2,867	24.41%	5,027	42.81%
		Female	16,658	2,074	12.45%	5,316	31.91%	3,529	21.19%	2,454	14.73%
5	Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or microcredit	Male	27,843	1,108	3.98%	20,328	73.01%	5,102	18.32%	9,479	34.04%
		Female	4,834	1,131	23.40%	6,701	138.62%	1,451	30.02%	8,825	182.56%
8	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Male	NA	-	NA	-	NA	4,352	NA	7,247	NA
		Female						958		1,622	
9	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Male	NA	-	NA	-	NA	11,668	NA	25,465	NA
		Female						4,076		8,144	
10	Number of individuals who have received USG-supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	Male	NA	-	NA	-	NA	44,526	NA	13,507	NA
		Female						12,682			

The following performance indicators suggest that the project benefited men more than women: the number of persons who participated in workforce development programs in FY 2013, the number of full-time jobs created in FY 2012, and the number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or micro-credit in FY 2011. Table 2 provides the performance data aggregated by gender.

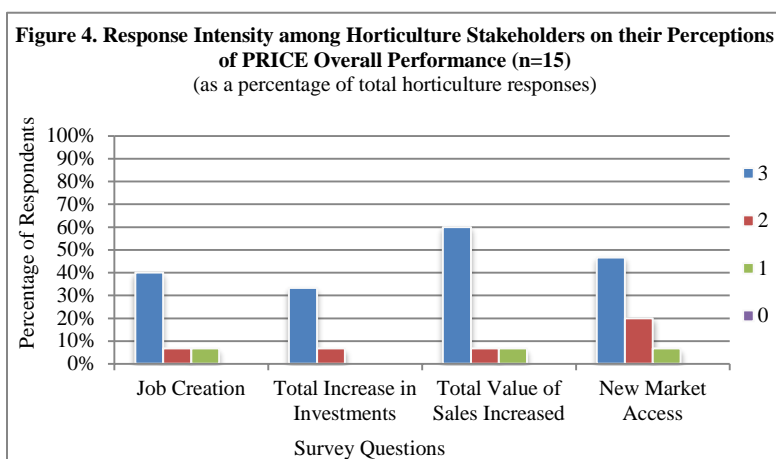
PRICE’s Effect on Sector Competitiveness

Evaluation Question 1: How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels? Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?

Horticulture

a. Full-Time Job Creation

The project’s target for full-time equivalent job creation was 16,657 jobs, but it actually created a total of 31,021 full-time equivalent jobs, which means that PRICE far exceeded its target in this area. Forty percent of stakeholders stated that there were significant improvements as a result of PRICE, 7 percent stated that there were some improvements, and 7 percent stated that there were slight improvements.



Institutional stakeholders who worked with primary beneficiaries (such as Chesta, PRIDE, and Konica seeds) mentioned during discussions that new jobs were created in the area of seed cultivation of potatoes and post-harvest processing of potatoes and mangos. Some input companies, such as Lal Teer, also mentioned that they expanded to new areas in Chittagong and that new jobs were created for sales assistants.

As farmers who plant eggplant or potato typically do not require year-round support, more part-time or seasonal jobs were created as a result of PRICE interventions. Hired help is required mainly two times per crop season—during land preparation/seed sowing and harvesting and during post-harvesting processing. With increased production due to PRICE interventions, farmers required additional seasonal workers.

Discussions with farmers revealed that at present, farmers engaged around 60 laborers (mostly male) during land preparation and 40 laborers (mostly female) during harvesting and post-harvesting for every *bigha*, or parcel of land. During land preparation, a laborer is employed for 3 or 4 days, and during harvesting, a laborer is employed for 4 to 5 days.

b. Total Increase in Investments

The stakeholder survey findings supported the LoP figures in this area. By 2013, PRICE reported a cumulative investment in the horticulture sector of 132 percent of its LoP target, and 33 percent of stakeholders stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements, while 7 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements.

Increases in investments were primarily achieved through increased access to financial institutions or reinvestment by private-sector organizations into their own businesses. For example, input dealers mentioned that they increased their business volume, their dealer networks, and the number of offices in new locations. These changes resulted in a significant increase in investment.

	Indicator	Unit	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY 2010		FY 2011		FY 2012		FY 2013		FY2009 to FY2013	
				Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
1	Total value of increased sales	USD	\$69,405,244	\$6,418,209	9.25%	\$12,772,253	18.40%	\$36,096,309	52.01%	\$62,383,489	89.88%	\$117,763,732	169.68%
2	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	Number	16,657	2,656	15.95%	3,453	20.73%	6,588	39.55%	18,264	109.65%	31,021	186.23%
3	Total value of increased investment	USD	\$1,368,748	377,394	27.57%	\$175,785	12.84%	\$239,447	17.49%	\$899,753	65.74%	\$1,808,501	132.13%
4	Number of persons who participated in workforce development programs	Number	8,196	0	0.00%	1,270	15.50%	1,130	13.79%	4,516	55.10%	7,012	85.55%
5	Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or micro-credit	Number	28,478	1,037	3.64%	2,700	9.48%	5,741	20.16%	17,771	62.40%	27,249	95.68%

NOTE: The evaluation team took each fiscal year indicator from its respective annual reports. FY 2009 is not included since, at the time, reported indicators were not disaggregated by sector.

As a result of the PRICE partnership, farmers were able to invest more in their businesses, as they had access to microfinance institutions. Microfinance institutions expressed that they were able to lend more as they partnered with PRIDE and Chesta. Because these organizations were already receiving training on production enhancement, the microfinance institutions felt more confident disbursing loans to these farmers. PRICE Annual Reports also discuss this arrangement.

c. Total Value of Sales Increased

Stakeholder survey results also indicated that horticulture stakeholders' perceptions were in line with reported indicators about sales increases. By 2013, PRICE reported a cumulative sales total in horticulture of 170 percent of the targeted sales value, and 60 percent of respondents said that PRICE created significant improvements. Stakeholders reported that this significant increase in sales was due to an overall increase in production volume, the increased quality of production, and a shift in cultivation from low-value to high-value crops.

Approximately 64 percent of respondents stated that the sales increase was a result of improved production quality. Roughly 45 percent of respondents believed that they learned better

production practices through enhanced knowledge and skills, which led to increased productivity. As local demand for potato and eggplant was strong in the FtF region, farmers were able to sell their products.

Private-sector firms also experienced significant sales increases as they expanded their dealer networks and operating areas. This was mostly due to the fact that increased productivity provided farmers with more access to land under cultivation, resulting in increased sales of inputs: seeds, fertilizers, and agrochemicals. For example, during the qualitative discussion, Lal Teer indicated that it was able to enter new areas while also increasing business in existing areas. It experienced sales growth in the new areas because it was one of the first entrants in an emerging market.

d. New Market Access

Sixty-seven percent of respondents stated that PRICE interventions created significant or some improvements in new market access, which indicates that stakeholders believe that PRICE was successful in creating new market access for beneficiaries. Enterprise-level stakeholders working with PRICE input sellers and contract buyers worked with different types of forward market actors. With productivity-level interventions supported by market-linkage activities, input sellers Konika and Lal Teer were able to sell products to a new group of farmers or to farmers from new geographic regions. Similarly, with market-linkage activities implemented by PRICE, contract buyers Cheshta and PRIDE gained access to new buyer groups and could sell higher crop quantities.

Farmers had a different experience than enterprise-level stakeholders did. Farmers bought more inputs, but because they were contract farmers of buyers Cheshta and PRIDE, they had very few customers to whom they could sell their products. Although they could produce and sell an increased volume of horticulture products, their new market access was limited to a single closed contract arrangement versus multiple market access opportunities in an open and competitive market.



Figure 5. A fish retailer in Khulna

In the Southern region, horticulture products are in demand locally, and because the farmers are grouped by enterprises (Cheshta, PRIDE, and other nongovernmental agencies [NGOs]) and linked through a relationship where the enterprises purchase all the products, farmers actually did not need to find new market access, as they were able to work profitably within their existing markets. Not gaining new market access did not hinder sales increases for farmers, especially in the FtF geographic areas.

e. Removing Sector Constraints

Horticulture sector stakeholders perceived that PRICE worked at removing primarily local constraints but did not work toward addressing national and international constraints. Their response intensity is uniform: 13 percent stated that PRICE interventions addressed all constraint levels, 13 percent stated that PRICE addressed two constraint levels, 13 percent stated that PRICE addressed one constraint level, and 7 percent stated that PRICE addressed no constraint

levels. PRICE mostly addressed constraints related to low productivity, access to quality inputs on virus-free seeds and high-yield seed varieties, access to new local markets, and (to some extent) post-harvest-related constraints in horticulture, which were local-level constraints.

PRICE did not address national constraints in the southern region. For example, stakeholders commented that constraints on poor infrastructure and the availability of cold storage for potatoes needed more support.

In the horticulture sector, PRICE’s approach to identifying constraints was different than in the leather and aquaculture sectors. With leather and aquaculture, sector-level constraints were addressed, the effects of which then trickled down into local-level constraints. However, the horticulture sector started with identifying constraints from the root level of the value chain (i.e., the production level) and worked with a large number of local constraints.

f. Limitations to Specific Beneficiaries and Geographic Regions

The response intensity for survey questions about beneficiary and geographic limitations were identical. Thirty-three percent indicated that success was not limited to a few beneficiaries/enterprises, and 7 percent indicated that success was limited. Thirty-three percent indicated that success was not limited to certain geographic regions, and 7 percent indicated that geographic success was limited.

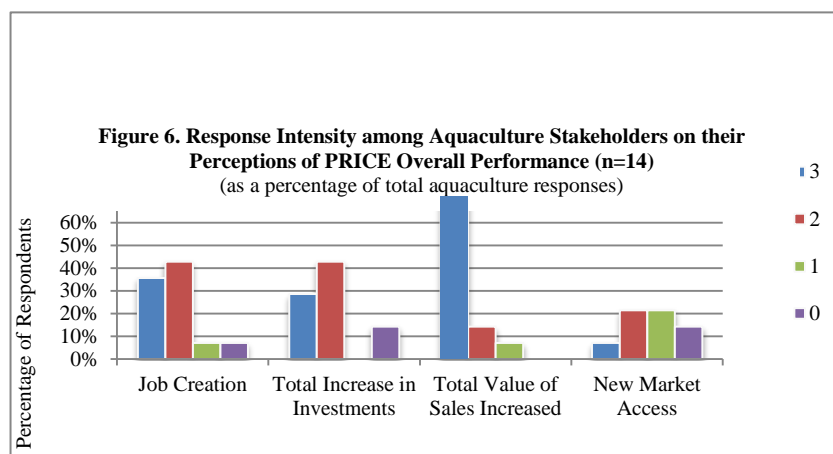
Lal Teer Seed, a partner seed company of PRICE, expanded its network to the Chittagong area, which was accomplished only through implementing its cost-share-basis intervention with PRICE. Konika Seeds, another partner seed company of PRICE, had a dealer network in only 13 districts before PRICE and expanded its dealer network to 23 out of 64 districts across Bangladesh; the FtF zone covers 20 districts in South-Southwest. However, the geographic and demographic scale-up in the horticulture sector was not as widespread as in the leather or aquaculture sector. Konika Seeds stated that if it were to increase productivity through the sale of quality seeds, it would need the support of a project such as PRICE for community mobilization, training, and adoption in wider communities and geographic areas, as there is not yet an enabling environment that allows a business entity to conduct such activities without the benefit of cost sharing from a development project.

Two microfinance institutions mentioned that they extended credit to farmer groups that PRICE had trained in productivity enhancement. Because PRICE did not establish a mechanism for continuing such future high-quality training for farmers in other areas, disbursement of similar credit schemes would be difficult to continue.

Aquaculture

a. Full-Time Job Creation

The majority of aquaculture sector business entities are not fully functional throughout the year due to its seasonal practices. Rather than full-time job creation, the reported



indicator in aquaculture was a full-time job-creation proxy, defined as a person to be employed with an aquaculture business entity for a minimum of 150 days per year. Stakeholders used this definition to provide their feedback. With the creation of 44,411 full-time-equivalent jobs (103 percent of goal), the project surpassed its aquaculture LoP target of 43,245 full-time equivalent jobs. Thirty-six percent of stakeholders stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements, 43 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, 7 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements, and 7 percent stated that PRICE created no improvements. The stakeholders' main feedback was that the creation of full-time-equivalent jobs was not uniform throughout the sector or even throughout subsectors within the aquaculture sector.

Stakeholders observed a slight increase in full-time job creation in the input-supply function of the aquaculture sector, as PRICE was able to help increase the production of both shrimp and fish. As a result, there was increased demand for inputs such as post-larvae, fingerlings, and aquachemicals. Hatchery owners hired seasonal workers and technicians to increase the production of post-larvae and fingerlings. Some of these jobs may be defined as full-time, but many were seasonal jobs that ranged from 80 to 100 days of employment per year. However, job creation for aquachemical suppliers was mainly in the areas of marketing and technical assistance provision, which are full-time jobs.

b. Total Increase in Investments

According to PRICE's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) report documents, PRICE did not achieve its target for increased investment in the aquaculture sector: the target amount was US\$18,437,841 and the project actually achieved US\$17,931,241 by the end of the project. This finding was supported by the input from aquaculture stakeholders, with 29 percent stating that there were significant improvements, 43 percent stating that there were some improvements, and 14 percent stating that there were no improvements.

Indicator	Unit	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013		FY2009 to FY2013	
			Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
1 Total value of increased sales	USD	\$198,792,236	\$26,077,767	13.12%	\$94,791,429	47.68%	\$52,531,384	26.43%	\$11,960,581	6.02%	\$197,752,817	99.48%
2 Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	Number	43,245	5,814	13.44%	13,758	31.81%	19,001	43.94%	4,366	10.10%	44,411	102.70%
3 Total value of increased investments	USD	\$18,437,841	1,099,491	5.96%	\$3,497,954	18.97%	\$12,176,274	66.04%	\$793,400	4.30%	\$17,931,241	97.25%
4 Number of persons who participated in workforce development programs	Number	7,969	1,112	13.95%	4,057	50.91%	1,770	22.21%	985	12.36%	7,954	99.81%
5 Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or micro-credit	Number	4,171	1,198	28.72%	1,513	36.27%	791	18.96%	532	12.75%	4,163	99.81%

NOTE: The evaluation team took each FY indicator from its respective annual report. FY 2009 was not included since, at the time, reported indicators were not disaggregated by sector.

The main reason for the low increase in investments is only moderate investments from processors, who are the largest investor not only within the shrimp value chain but also within the entire aquaculture sector. However, moderate investment from processors does not reflect a lack of interest in the business. Rather, the moderate investments are a result of the large investments they made prior to PRICE. At the initial stage of the industry's growth, processors

invested in business registration, physical facilities installation, relationship building with other value-chain actors, and hiring and training of laborers. Unfortunately, according to the stakeholders interviewed, the processing plants could operate only at a maximum capacity of approximately 25 percent, meaning that the bulk of the capacity remained underutilized. As a result, processors had access to limited supply from depots.

However, with PRICE interventions, production at the farmer level increased, which gradually spurred supplies at the depot level to increase. Since the processing plants already had the needed capacity, additional investment was not required to enhance capacity for the plants. During this time, the number of processors remained the same, but the processing volume increased and led to increased capacity utilization. As a result of PRICE, according to processor estimates, the plants are able to run at 40 to 50 percent of capacity.

c. Total Value of Sales Increased

PRICE could not reach the goal of US\$198,792,23 for the total value of sales increases; instead it achieved US\$197,752,817 (99 percent of the goal). Stakeholder perception frequencies are consistent with this finding: 71 percent stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements, 14 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, and 7 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements.

Stakeholders reported increased sales among almost all value-chain actors for both shrimp and fish. In the shrimp subsector, there is a constant demand in the export market, which was further promoted by PRICE international market-linkage interventions. The domestic demand for fish is also significantly higher than the supply. Hence, the processors could easily sell the additional quantity supplied to them by the depots, which were ultimately collected from the shrimp farmers. Also the fish farmers experienced increased sales in the domestic market through different levels of traders due to the significant gap between demand and supply. Overall, stakeholders were satisfied with aquaculture sales figures.

d. New Market Access

Seven percent of stakeholders stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements in new market access, 21 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, 21 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements, and 14 percent stated that PRICE created no improvements. Stakeholders stated that the project did not have an impact in terms of new market access because there was very little need for such market enhancement.

Stakeholders' perceptions about the lack of a need for new market access are also supported by the 2011 Annual Report.⁵ As mentioned earlier, the domestic fish market has a significant demand and supply gap, which the farmers could exploit through increasing production. The demand for Bangladeshi shrimp in the international market, especially in the U.S. and European markets, is significant, and the processors could not meet such demand. When capacity utilization was at 25 percent, processors did not have the supply of fresh shrimp. After PRICE interventions, the supply of fresh shrimp increased and the capacity utilization then increased to 40 to 50 percent.

⁵ "In the domestic market, fish currently has no limit as to the market size due to a huge unmet demand—anything produced has an automatic market" (PRICE Annual Report, 2011).

Through market-linkage interventions, PRICE further increased this demand by linking processors with new customers from the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia and expanding within the European market.

Although PRICE market-access interventions were not significant, such new market access was also not required, since demand was already established and remained strong throughout the entire aquaculture sector during PRICE's implementation period.

e. Removing Sector Constraints

Value-chain actors with different roles across the aquaculture sector varied in their feedback on the removal of sector constraints. Individual stakeholders commented on PRICE's effort to resolve constraints only in their own value-chain functions; they could not comment on all three levels of constraints—local, national, and international—throughout the sector. The response intensity score for removing sector constraints is more uniform: 14 percent stated that PRICE addressed all levels, 21 percent stated that PRICE addressed two levels, and 14 percent stated that PRICE addressed one level.

As mentioned earlier, the constraints were different for individual subsectors. For instance, the constraints differed for the shrimp and fish subsectors within the aquaculture sector. The shrimp subsector mainly faced pressure from its export buyers and the international community for not following labor rules and not maintaining the required quality in the end product.

Labor Compliance in the Shrimp Sector
The American Federation of Labour-Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO) filed a petition with U.S. Trade Representatives against Bangladesh in 2007 on charges of labor-rule violations in a few export-oriented industries, one of which was the shrimp industry. According to Solidarity Center, a wing of the AFL-CIO, the shrimp industry was involved with child labor, and, at the same time, the wage structure and overall work environment of the industry were not compliant. The shrimp industry worked with PRICE from 2008 in processing and exporting plants to improve the situation. After more than 1 year, the situation was improved, as was evident from the August 2009 press statement from the Country Programme Director of Solidarities, which said, "[The] shrimp industry [is] more compliant than before. The industry has worked hard to make an improvement in child-labor issues and compliance of wages."

Therefore, PRICE worked with shrimp associations to resolve this international constraint. However, the processing plants and the depot owners in the shrimp subsector faced a limited supply of shrimp from farmers, which could be defined as a national constraint. This constraint was an accumulation of local-level productivity constraints among the farmers as a result of limited productivity, lack of updated production technology, low-quality inputs, and limited availability.

Farmers in the fish subsector also faced similar problems. Apart from working to resolve international constraints, PRICE worked to resolve local constraints, which eventually then resolved those on the national level. Thus, from this perspective, the project worked to ease all three levels of constraints—local, national, and international—within the fish subsector. There were no international constraints among fish value chain actors, and interventions were concentrated on resolving local and national constraints.

f. Limitations to Specific Beneficiaries and Geographic Limitations

Fifty-seven percent of stakeholders said that success was not limited to specific beneficiaries, and 7 percent stated that success was limited. Fifty percent of stakeholders stated that success was not limited to a few geographic regions, and 14 percent stated that success was limited.

In discussion with the stakeholders, the evaluation team found that PRICE worked with key stakeholder groups, which gave the project leverage points to disseminate the interventions' success over a wider range of demographic and geographic contexts. In the shrimp sector, PRICE worked with the Bangladesh Frozen Foods Exporters Association (BFFEA), the largest shrimp export business membership organization (BMO). In the fish sector, as there are no national-level associations, PRICE worked with a number of regional BMOs of fish farmers.

In addition to working with specific value-chain actors, PRICE worked to enhance capacities for these BMOs to carry out interventions to resolve sector constraints. For example, during the field visit, the evaluation team observed the BFFEA arranging monthly review meetings with quality-monitoring officers (employed and paid by the association) on the overall product quality of export-oriented shrimp. The associations have also been working to increase farmers' awareness and technical knowledge, develop service providers to provide extension services, and increase knowledge among depot owners.

Leather

a. Full-Time Job Creation

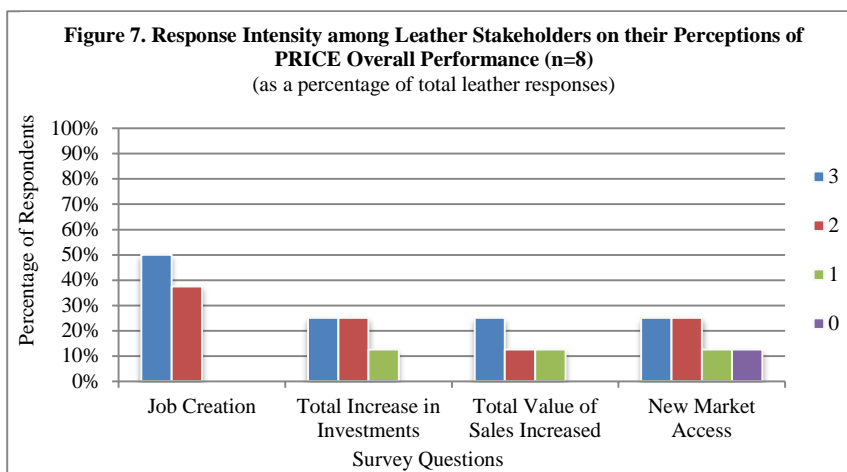
Fifty percent of stakeholders stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements in full-time job creation, and 38 percent stated that there were some improvements, which demonstrates that overall stakeholders perceived PRICE's full-time job creation to be successful. The data in the 2013 Annual Report also

support this perception: the project created 7,645 full-time jobs (105 percent of the goal), although the target was only 7,772. Full-time jobs were created at the enterprise and SME levels. At the enterprise level, the bulk of the jobs created were in the position of machine operators, although jobs were also created for supervisors and machine technicians.

The intervention's most encouraging component for job creation was the establishment of COEL. Created as a public-private venture with support from the ILO's TVET program and PRICE, the center has been scouting for potential operators, supervisors, and machine technicians for leather goods manufacturers and has been training them following a combination of theoretical, workshop-based, and on-the-job training sessions.

b. Total Increase in Investment

By 2013, PRICE reported a total increase in investments of 109 percent of its LoP goal. However, this reported figure did not correspond with the perceptions of stakeholders: 25 percent stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements, 25 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, and 13 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements,



indicating that the stakeholders perceived the project as moderately successful in increasing investments. After further investigation with the stakeholders, it was revealed that when answering the survey questions, the stakeholders only considered the investment external to the sector and did not consider any reinvestment.

Table 5. PRICE Performance Data Table for Leather

	Indicator	Unit	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013		FY2009 to FY2013	
				Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
1	Total value of increased sales	USD	\$98,190,122	\$6,847,417	6.97%	\$21,628,975	22.03%	\$36,257,424	36.93%	\$24,244,504	24.69%	89,174,437	90.82%
2	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	Number	7,372	1,115	15.12%	2,524	34.24%	2,736	37.11%	1,270	17.23%	7,772	105.43%
3	Total value of increased investments	USD	\$1,186,328	393,700	33.19%	\$319,623	26.94%	\$180,120	15.18%	\$352,564	29.72%	1,288,892	108.65%
4	Number of persons who participated in workforce development programs	Number	12,235	2,025	16.55%	3,316	27.10%	3,496	28.57%	1,980	16.18%	11,415	93.30%
5	Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or micro-credit	Number	28	4	14.29%	3	10.71%	21	75.00%	1	3.57%	29	103.57%

NOTE: The evaluation team took each FY indicator from its respective annual report. FY 2009 was not included since, at the time, reported indicators were not disaggregated by sector.

Investment in the leather sector takes two distinct forms: capital expenditure and operation expenditure. With the emergence of Bangladesh's leather sector in the late 1990s, large enterprises, such as Apex Adelchi, Jenny's, and Bay, invested a significant amount of capital to establish production facilities, purchase state-of-the-art machinery, and develop distribution and retail chains. These investments took place before PRICE's initiation. However, due to the scarcity of skilled human resources, these facilities could not operate at their optimum capacity.

According to estimates from representatives of Apex and Bengal Shoes, their typical capacity utilization was approximately 25 percent before PRICE initiation. The PRICE workforce development initiative poured a continuous supply of skilled resources into these enterprises, and now their capacity utilization is approximately 50 percent.

In addition, external sources made investments, mostly in SMEs, largely due to PRICE finance initiatives. Eastern Bank introduced a new financial product called EBL Uday for the SMEs to partner with Aarong.⁶

c. Total Value of Sales Increase

The reported sales increase due to the PRICE interventions was significant: 91 percent of the LoP. However, stakeholder perception was more mixed, with 25 percent stating that PRICE interventions created significant improvements, 13 percent stating that PRICE created some

⁶ EBL Uday was established in November 2011 when the SME Foundation and Eastern Bank Limited signed an agreement for a credit wholesaling program. EBL Uday is a specialized product developed for leather sector SMEs. This financial product has two salient features: a single digit interest rate and no collateral requirement. As of September 2013, 22 small enterprises had availed themselves of a total of BDT 10 million (approximately US\$125,000) of working capital, with a final disbursement of US\$6,100 planned for this reporting year. Eastern Bank has now gone beyond the initial group of SMEs to service additional leather clusters. The partnership has also enabled Eastern Bank to obtain a list of SMEs that planned to supply goods to Aarong. This information acted as soft collateral against a purchase order for the larger group.

Aarong is a large handicraft supplier based in Dhaka. Their goal is to maintain their standing as a fair trade organization that is dedicated to bringing about positive changes in the lives of disadvantaged artisans and underprivileged rural women by reviving and promoting their skills and craft.

improvements, and 13 percent stating that PRICE created slight improvements. The stakeholders' scores indicate that they perceived only a moderate increase in sales. This difference may be attributed to the two distinct perspectives in the sector: the SME perspective and the large enterprise perspective.

Traditionally, SMEs are subcontractors supplying leather products to large enterprises. Due to the poor capacity of the SMEs, the large enterprises could not obtain the required quantity of products, which led to a significant demand-supply gap in the domestic market. Through PRICE SME initiatives, SMEs were able to take advantage of subcontracting opportunities with the large enterprises and increase their sales. This initiative was further strengthened by market linkage interventions, which helped SMEs participate in national trade fairs and with established retail stores.

Sales mechanisms for large enterprises are a cumulative result of several factors: international demand, the price of raw materials sourced from both the national and international market, the political situation, and regulations. In addition, the interventions related to large enterprises were relevant to workforce development, not to market expansion in both the domestic and international market.

d. New Market Access

Among respondents, 25 percent stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements in new market access, 25 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, 13 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements, and 13 percent stated that PRICE created no improvements. As with the sales increase indicator, the evaluation team found that the survey answers reflected two different perspectives: those of the SMEs and those of the large enterprises.

Large enterprises indicated that they already had strong access to international markets but were unable to cater to the existing demand due to the lack of a skilled workforce. The PRICE interventions did not focus on international market expansion, since large enterprises did not view this as a major constraint. Thus, their productivity increased dramatically with the capacity enhancement of their workforce. As a result, they were able to supply more products to existing customers and expand capacity for existing relationships, but there was almost no increase in new market access for new customers.

For SMEs, market access regularly presents a challenge, and they indicated that PRICE contributed significantly to broadening market access. The smaller SMEs indicated that they were able to gain access to large local buyers such as Aarong, Vertex, Apex and Bay Emporium because of PRICE. Buyer-seller meetings, which connected SMEs with buyers, also facilitated SME growth. The aggregation of SMEs into the Leather Technology Small Entrepreneurs Association (LTSE) was also an important platform that enabled SME participation in high-end national fairs, such as the Dhaka International Trade Fair (DITF), which provided access to larger buyers.

According to the surveys, the linkage with DITF provided SMEs with opportunities to better comprehend the domestic market. After the PRICE project completed, SMEs continued to engage in buyer-seller meetings and seek participation in DITF through their own initiatives and at their own cost. Through these initiatives, new marketing channels have opened for the SMEs.

They now have a retail chain, *Leather Cave*, in collective operation under LTSE, through which they are able to target export markets.

e. Removing Sector Constraints

Among leather stakeholders, 13 percent stated that PRICE interventions removed all levels of constraint, 50 percent stated that PRICE addressed two levels, and 13 percent stated that PRICE addressed one level. The large enterprise stakeholders identified two different levels of constraints: international constraints related to compliance issues for raw leather quality and local constraints related to the limited availability of a skilled workforce. PRICE worked on both constraint levels through interventions, which included introducing a testing facility with BETS, a local consulting firm, to generate awareness among tanneries and create a workforce development program through COEL.

For SMEs, the national constraints included limited access to markets, limited access to financing, and individual levels of production inefficiency. PRICE also addressed these constraints through capacity development in technical and managerial areas, arranging access to market and financing for the SMEs.

f. Limitations to specific beneficiary and geographic locations

The evaluation scores indicate divergent stakeholder perspectives. Stakeholders expressed that project impacts were not bound to specific beneficiaries and that the project had a moderate reach to non-beneficiaries, with 50 percent of stakeholders stating that success was not limited and 25 percent stating that success was limited. However, when it came to geographic limitations, only 13 percent stated that success was not limited while 63 percent stated that success was limited.

PRICE leather sector interventions were implemented through different BMOs, Leather & Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh, and LTSE. The interventions were not implemented entirely with funds from the project, rather through a cost-sharing modality. Through these initiatives, partners began to carry forward the interventions to non-project beneficiaries without support from PRICE. As a result, PRICE partners are transmitting the intervention results to non-project beneficiaries and that project success is not limited to a few project beneficiaries.

As for geographic limitations, there are no locations in Bangladesh outside of Dhaka where interventions can move forward. The SME and large enterprise clusters for leather are situated in the Dhaka urban area. Outside of Dhaka, there are a few enterprises located in Chittagong, where PRICE also worked. However, there is no established cluster in other areas of Bangladesh, mainly because of the distance from the rawhide suppliers, which are based in the southern parts of Dhaka.

Multi-Sector

a. Full-Time Job Creation

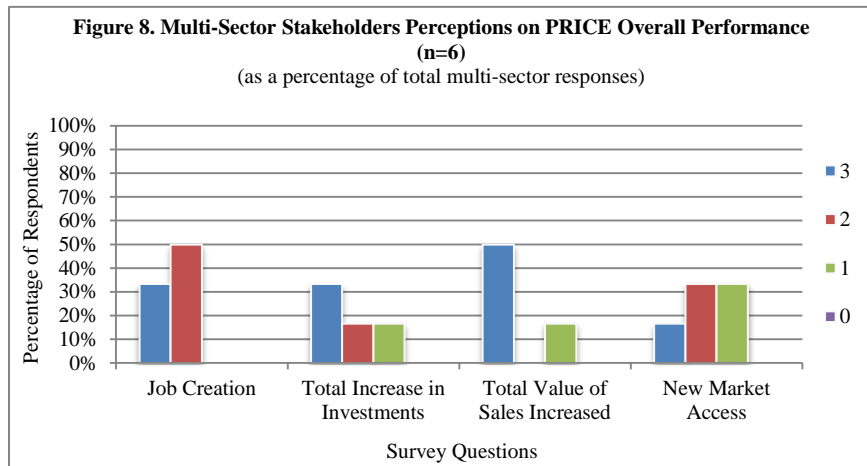
Eighty-three percent of multi-sector stakeholders stated that PRICE interventions created significant or some improvements in full-time job creation. The stakeholders who the team interviewed and who provided scores perceived that PRICE created a nearly significant increase

in full-time job creation for the project as a whole. However, this score cannot be taken to represent their perceptions across each sector. Rather, stakeholders commented that some individual sectors were stronger in creating full-time employment and compensated for weaker sectors.

For the leather sector, multi-sector stakeholders stated that full-time, annual employment was a successful PRICE

component and that the project created full-time employment for many local beneficiaries. About the horticulture and aquaculture sectors, stakeholders stated that because both areas created seasonal employment, four to five months at a time, they did not generate the employment opportunities of the leather sector. They

also commented that in the horticulture sector, PRICE focused only on full-time employment in production, not on full-time jobs across the sector. However, as “full-time equivalent” is defined as 150 days per year, their responses are consistent with reported indicators since horticulture requires more seasonal employment than yearlong employment.



b. Total Increase in Investments

Among stakeholders, 33 percent stated that PRICE created significant improvements in increased investments, 17 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, and 17 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements. The five multi-sector stakeholders who the team interviewed and who provided scores stated that, based on indicators and project outputs, PRICE reached its goals. For this reason, their perceptions were based primarily on achieved project results and reported indicators.

c. Total Value of Sales Increases

Among the five multi-sector stakeholders, perceptions about sales increases were consistent with the LoP target achievement, as 50 percent stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements and 17 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements, which indicates a somewhat significant increase in the total value of sales investments as a result of PRICE interventions. Among stakeholder perceptions of PRICE effectiveness, this was the highest frequency for significant improvements as a result of PRICE interventions.

Similar to the total increase in investments, stakeholder explanations about their perceptions of the total value of sales increases were based on the project goals being achieved. Because PRICE achieved these project goals, stakeholders had a positive perception of the total value of sales increases.

d. New Market Access

Multi-sector stakeholder survey responses about new market access were not as high as those described above: 17 percent stated significant improvements as a result of PRICE, 33 percent stated some improvements, and 33 percent stated slight improvement. Their scores represent their perception of new market access within individual sectors as a result of PRICE interventions, not their perception of new market access across all sectors. For this reason, respondents commented that within the individual sectors of horticulture and leather, there was new market access. Multi-sector stakeholder respondents did not comment on the aquaculture sector. However, as described earlier, PRICE did address access to new international markets for the aquaculture and leather sectors.

In the horticulture sector, PRICE was able to link stakeholders with other market participants—for example, contract farming through local beneficiaries enabled access to the local market that farmers did not have earlier. In leather, project initiatives involving lead firms and SMEs created new market access. This also led to market access among traders, wholesalers, and additional buyers.

e. Removing Sector Constraints

The four multi-sector stakeholders who commented on sector constraints addressed through PRICE interventions believed that PRICE successfully addressed local and international constraints, but they did not comment on national constraints. Seventeen percent stated that PRICE addressed all three levels, 33 percent stated that PRICE addressed two levels, and 17 percent stated that PRICE addressed one level.

On the local level, according to those interviewed, PRICE primarily handled production constraints related to horticulture and aquaculture. According to the stakeholders, PRICE was focused on productivity and providing technical assistance in the horticulture sector rather than creating access in technical services.

There was little response among stakeholders about national constraints. As only one multi-sector respondent discussed national constraints during open-ended discussions with the team, it is likely that the stakeholders were not privy to this information or that PRICE, as perceived by stakeholders, did not address this constraint. The stakeholder who commented on national constraints stated that PRICE indirectly addressed these constraints through local and international level practices in the aquaculture and leather sectors.

On the international level, stakeholders commented that PRICE successfully addressed constraints for the aquaculture and leather sectors but not for the horticulture sector. As discussed earlier, the horticulture sector started with identifying constraints from the production level of the value chain and worked with a large number of local constraints. Multi-sector stakeholder respondents reiterated this observation.

In addition, multi-sector stakeholders mentioned that although PRICE was successful in meeting its projected targets, it did not make macro-level changes, such as setting up new service providers in the areas of agriculture extension or supplying quality inputs in more challenged geographic areas.

f. Limitations to Specific Beneficiaries and Geographic Regions

Sixty-seven percent of stakeholders stated that PRICE's success was not limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises, while 17 percent stated that PRICE success was limited in this regard. Fifty percent of stakeholders stated that PRICE success was not limited to a few selected geographic locations, and 33 percent said it was limited.

Respondents commented that PRICE targeted all the beneficiaries that it could, within project resources, to achieve project results. Respondents also indicated that limitations to land transportation were a constraint in reaching rural areas and that because of FtF, PRICE shifted project resources to target specific areas and not all of its earlier locations.

Specific to the horticulture sector, multi-sector stakeholders commented that technical assistance and access to seeds were not limited to specific project beneficiaries. Rather, non-beneficiary farmers observed the successes of the interventions and started adopting those in nearby geographic locations where PRICE did not work.

Changes in Value Chain Market Linkages

Evaluation Question 2: As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value chain market linkages to complement its production focus?

The March 2011 mid-term evaluation recommended that PRICE put more emphasis on market development and linkages and less on production, in an attempt to create further scale. The mid-term evaluation also suggested that the PRICE project should direct more of its efforts away from individual producers and towards suppliers and institutions that have the potential to impact entire subsectors.

Horticulture

Within the horticulture sector, 20 percent of PRICE stakeholders stated that there were significant improvements as a result of the project adjustments, 7 percent stated that there were some improvements, and 7 percent stated that there were slight improvements. This indicates that stakeholders believe that PRICE was somewhat successful in improving the value chain market linkage to complement its production focus.

At the enterprise level, PRICE's production-focused interventions centered on technical training related to production increases, pest control, and post-harvest processing, which increased horticulture production. To complement the production-focused interventions, PRICE supported input suppliers with marketing agro-inputs and supported NGOs, PRIDE, and Cheshta in marketing their horticulture products to new customers at a higher quantity through designing and implementing marketing campaigns.

At the farmer level, PRICE did not implement any marketing interventions to capture new customers. However, farmers were linked with enterprises, such as PRIDE and Cheshta, who purchased additional products from the farmers due to their own sales increases. Thus, the project was also successful at the farmer level in improving the value chain market linkages.

Aquaculture

The perception score about value chain market linkages among aquaculture stakeholders was the lowest of any stakeholder group: 7 percent stated that there were significant improvements, 21 percent stated that there were some improvements, and 29 percent stated that there were slight improvements. The low perception scores reflect stakeholders' feelings that there was only a slight improvement in the value chain market linkages to complement the production focus.

During discussions, stakeholders revealed that the core value chain actors, such as farmers, depot owners, and processors, did not feel an improvement in value chain market linkages due to the PRICE interventions. However, the core value chain actors involved in more than one function (for example, semi-integrated fish farms involved in producing, processing, and exporting) were able to identify slight improvements in value chain market linkages. Input suppliers also recognized slight improvement in value chain market linkages.

They indicated that the interventions, although mainly focused on production improvement, could also bring actors from two interdependent value chain functions together. For example, farmer training was conducted through hatchery owners. Training mainly focused on increasing farmer productivity. The next season, the farmers leased more land and increased production, which required more fingerlings and fries. These additional fingerlings and fries were supplied by the hatchery owners who had originally trained the farmers.

Similar relationships were established between farmers and depot owners and between farmers and processors. Although the interventions were not specifically market-linkage focused, as natural demand within the value chain and interventions brought the value chain actors together, the market within the value chain expanded for almost all value chain actors. In discussions with multi-sector stakeholders, such as project staff and partners, they were satisfied with practices such as intra-value chain market expansion.

Thus, the study team concludes that PRICE was not as successful in improving value chain market linkages as it was in enhancing the competitiveness of the sector. However, there were some improvements in the value chain linkages, which are yet to be realized among core value chain actors.

Leather

Only two stakeholders provided scores related to value chain market linkage and both scored PRICE a 3. However, during qualitative discussions, stakeholders commented that value chain market linkages were successful for the SMEs.

After the mid-term evaluation, PRICE implemented extensive interventions with SMEs. As discussed earlier, PRICE assisted the SMEs through participation in national trade fairs—the 2012 and 2013 DITF and the 2012 National SME Fair. Exposure visits were also arranged for SMEs to strengthen their relationships with enterprises and exporters. SMEs expressed their satisfaction with these interventions. Thus, the SME value chain market linkage successfully complemented its production focus. However, for the large enterprises, there was no market linkage intervention after the mid-term evaluation.

PRICE's Effectiveness and Results Achievement

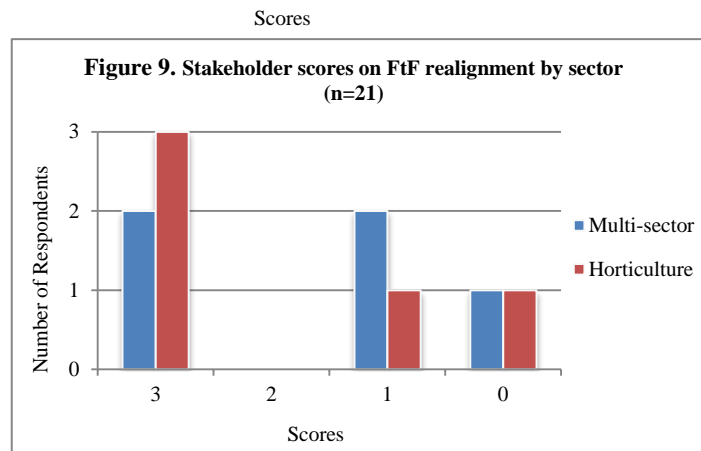
Evaluation Question 3: How did the project extension and 2011 re-alignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the Feed the Future region affect PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement?

Horticulture & Multi-Sector

Among horticulture stakeholders, 30 percent stated that PRICE interventions created significant improvements, 10 percent stated that there were some improvements, and 10 percent stated that there were slight improvements. Among multi-sector stakeholders, 33 percent stated that there were significant improvements, 33 percent stated that there were slight improvements, and 17 percent stated that there were no improvements. None of the eleven respondents who answered this survey question said that PRICE created some improvements. Rather, all respondents stated that PRICE created significant, slight, or no improvements. This frequency pattern is of interest, because similar to their feedback, it reflects either largely positive or largely negative responses to the project extension or 2011 realignment.

Horticulture stakeholders from southern districts indicated that PRICE's realignment had a significant positive effect on program effectiveness and results achievement. This is a result of more resources being allocated for horticulture given the FtF focus and its complementary effect. Stakeholders, particularly seed companies, mentioned that there was an increased focus on marketing in 2012.

Horticulture stakeholders from northern districts indicated that the realignment had a negative effect since the new focus on the FtF region in the south caused the reallocation of resources, as partners were asked to shift their focus to the southern region. Local northern NGOs and multipurpose cooperatives did not have the ability to expand their networks to the southern region, and they commented that they did not receive the same resources and attention as they did prior to 2011.



Multi-sector stakeholders who perceive project realignment as a significant improvement stated that the FtF reallocation of resources enabled the horticulture sector to strengthen its results since this sector had more resources to accomplish its project outputs. PRICE was able to use its resources to build on technical assistance prior to FtF realignment. Within the horticulture sector, PRICE had more partners, and this led to more investments and sales.

Multi-sector stakeholders who said that PRICE made slight or no improvements stated that as a result of the FtF reallocation of resources, there were no changes in quality or technical assistance, but there was a geographic change. In addition, they commented that the north is a hub for horticulture products, such as potato and mango and that the south is not known for these

products. Thus, when the project went from north to south, PRICE discontinued working with established, successful areas in north.

However, stakeholder perceptions are consistent with FtF goals, which focus on geographic areas that have greater poverty and provide a more significant impact with resources in a more constrained environment. As described above, PRICE shifted its focus to geographic areas that did not have well-established horticulture resources. The FtF goal contributes to a longer-term goal of transforming the southern areas into an established horticulture hub that is able to attain objectives that were already achieved in the north.

Women’s Empowerment under PRICE

Evaluation Question 4: Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of the PRICE interventions? What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?

Women play a prominent role in agriculture, and empowering women is particularly important to achieving the FtF objective of inclusive agriculture sector growth. The WEAI was developed to track the change in women’s empowerment levels that occurs as a direct or indirect result of interventions under FtF. As stated in the methodology section, the study team employed WEAI measures in determining whether the PRICE project was effective in promoting women’s empowerment in the agriculture sector. The WEAI measures how much input women have in productive activities and decision-making and is a combination of indices: the Five Domains of Empowerment—production, resources, income, leadership, and time—and the Gender Parity Index. A female respondent is considered to have gender parity if her empowerment score is equal to or greater than the empowerment score of the male respondent in her household. Table 4 below provides the survey responses based on the WEAI-related questions asked.

Horticulture

Among horticulture stakeholders, 24 percent stated that PRICE interventions had created significant improvements for women’s empowerment, 6 percent stated that PRICE created some improvements, and 18 percent stated that PRICE created slight improvements. On women’s job creation as a result of PRICE, 23 percent said that there were some improvements and 54 percent said there were slight improvements. Based on stakeholder surveys, PRICE was successful in empowering women across the horticulture sector but create limited employment opportunities for women.

Among respondents, there were seven stakeholders who did not respond to these questions and were unaware of women’s empowerment through job creation in horticulture. This is significant since, culturally, women’s participation in full-time jobs in the horticulture sector, apart from homestead cultivation, is limited in Bangladesh. Women participate mostly in post-harvest processing of horticulture products: grading, sorting, cleaning, and packing. The respondents shared that jobs were created mainly in the mango subsector of the post-harvest processing. There were also a few jobs created in post-harvest processing for the potato subsector.

PRICE’s training did help women increase their technical skills in horticulture production. Specifically, they helped women increase their production at the homestead level, which increased family incomes. These skills helped women make decisions about the usage of agricultural inputs in homestead cultivation areas. As reported in the 2013 Annual Report, these trainings were particularly helpful for marginalized women in increasing the production of vegetables through dyke vegetable farming.

Table 6. Response Intensity on WEAI Dimensions among all sector stakeholders

WEAI Dimension	Survey Question	Response Intensity		Number of respondents who answered
		Yes	No	
1. Production	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in the management of production?	23.26%	16.28%	17
2. Resources	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in the management of resources?	9.30%	16.28%	11
3. Income	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in the management of income?	18.60%	11.63%	13
4. Leadership	As a result of PRICE, do women have more leadership roles?	16.28%	11.63%	12
5. Time	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in the management of time?	20.93%	6.98%	12

Although PRICE interventions did not regularly create full-time jobs for women and most of the jobs were seasonal or included individual roles in their respective value chains, the interventions promoted women’s empowerment to a moderate level in regard to making decisions on agricultural inputs, production, and increasing household income, as per the WEAI. However, among other WEAI indicators, the stakeholders’ survey responses offered no evidence that PRICE made an impact on women’s leadership or their management of time. The stakeholders could not comment about these two areas of women’s empowerment.

Aquaculture

Among aquaculture stakeholders, 29 percent said that PRICE created significant improvements in women’s empowerment, 29 percent said that PRICE created some improvements, and 21 percent said that PRICE created slight improvements, which indicates that the stakeholders believe that project interventions did empower women. The shrimp processors stated that processing plants, to some extent, currently involve more women and that historically, approximately 50 percent of the processing plant workers have been women. According to the processors, the project interventions could increase this percentage from 50 percent to 60 percent at most.

The farmers also indicated that there was an increase in women’s participation in farming, although only in homestead farming. This is primarily because there are strong cultural barriers to women working in farms that are not located near the homestead. Hence, there were not many women involved in commercial farming. Women’s involvement in other areas such as depots or input supplies was negligible, and this situation did not improve as a result of the project.

Thirty-two percent of the total trainees are women. The primary reason for including women in the trainings was that most were engaged in the sector in some way, either as an employee of a

processing plant or as a member of a fish-farming household. The trainings did enhance their technical skills and knowledge, which could assist women in increasing their own or their household's income through improved production and productivity. Project interventions also assisted homestead fish farming women in making better decisions about the use of inputs and resources for production. As a result of the interventions, processing plant workers could better contribute to post-harvest processing with practices such as cutting heads, cleaning, and packing.

An insignificant percentage of women could obtain new employment through the trainings: only 8 percent of the total jobs created in 2013 in the aquaculture sector were for women. However, stakeholder responses indicated that the PRICE project provided moderate contribution to job creation: 7 percent of aquaculture stakeholders stated that PRICE created significant improvements in job creation for women, 21 percent stated that there were some improvements, and 14 percent stated that there were slight improvements. Stakeholders reiterated that this is a result of homestead farming and strengthened technical skills during training.

Leather⁷

In the leather sector, 38 percent of stakeholders stated that there were significant improvements as a result of PRICE, and 38 percent stating there are some improvements as a result of PRICE. This indicates that women were significantly empowered as a result of project interventions across the leather sector, more so than they were in the other two sectors.

Respondents commented that the project strongly contributed to empowering women with regard to various aspects of employment within the leather sector. An increase in jobs through skill development trainings, particularly for floor workers, made a valuable contribution to women's empowerment. However, very few women hold managerial, supervisory, or entrepreneurial roles. This means that in some of these roles, women were not making decisions on what to produce.

100 percent of trainees mentioned that the leather sector maintains better work hours and flexible terms than the other sectors. As a result, women who worked in this sector are able to devote more time to their families. All stakeholders perceived the ready-made garments sector to be more oppressive, with longer work hours and no flexibility to allow women to better manage their time.

Frequency for job creation for women was 50 percent scoring 3 and 13 percent scoring 2, indicating a significant increase in the level of job creation for women. As mentioned earlier, a total of 7,772 jobs were created through the project.

According to the 2013 Annual Report, in FY 2013, PRICE facilitated workforce development training for 1,980 workers including 1,403 women (71 percent of the total trainees). An estimated 40 percent of the workers in sewing and prefabrication departments of the footwear and goods subsectors are women. Since women already have an established role in the leather sector workforce, USAID was able to build on this and develop women's technical and managerial skills

⁷ The evaluation team also addressed WEAI in the leather sector. This can be found in the Appendix 13.

Multi-Sector

Multi-sector stakeholders' responses about women's empowerment as a result of PRICE interventions were diverse: 17 percent stated that there were significant improvements, 33 percent stated that there were some improvements, 17 percent stated that there were slight improvement, and 17 percent stated that there were no improvements. Thirty-three percent stated that there were significant improvements in job creation for women, 33 percent stated that there were some improvements, and 17 percent stated that there were slight improvements.

In response to questions about women's empowerment, stakeholders indicated that women already participated in the leather sector and that this existing relationship strengthened women's empowerment in this sector during PRICE. In horticulture, since project activities take place in rural areas, respondents commented that women are not more empowered than they were earlier, since in rural areas, women are less likely to be empowered because of cultural/societal constraints. Respondents did not provide consistent comments on women's empowerment within aquaculture.

Feedback on WEAI dimensions was limited among multi-sector stakeholders since they were not aware of WEAI dimensions and their application to PRICE. Among multi-sector respondents, their only consistent observation related to women's management of time within the leather sector, which enabled women to better balance their employment obligations with their leisure time. This is consistent with feedback among leather sector stakeholders.

Multi-sector stakeholders revealed that the number of jobs created for women in the leather sector is a significant project highlight. Consistent with the project indicators and answers about jobs creation in PRICE's effectiveness survey questions, all stakeholders commented that the leather sector created jobs for women and that other sectors were not able to accomplish similar results.

Effectiveness of SME and Workforce Development Initiatives Under PRICE

Evaluation Question 5: How effective have the SME and workforce development initiatives by PRICE been in the leather sector growth?⁸

Leather

To address this question, the team asked leather sector stakeholders two distinct sub-questions about SME development and workforce development initiatives. About SME development, 38 percent of respondents stated that there were significant improvements and 38 percent stated that there were some improvements as a result of PRICE interventions. About workforce development initiatives, 75 percent of respondents stated that there were significant improvements, and 13 percent stated that there were some improvements as a result of PRICE interventions. Feedback from both survey questions indicates significant effectiveness of SME and workforce development initiatives in the growth of the leather products sector. The

⁸ Although the original evaluation question does not target the aquaculture sector, throughout the evaluation, our team found that PRICE implemented regular SME and workforce development initiatives within the aquaculture sector. For this reason, the team included an analysis of the aquaculture sector. The study's findings are in appendix 11.

qualitative information received from the FGD with COEL trainees and other stakeholders also supports this conclusion.

All the stakeholders expressed their satisfaction with the SME development initiatives. As mentioned above, SME initiatives involved access to markets, financial services, and training. According to the stakeholders, the most valuable initiative was the aggregation of SMEs into the LTSE. This gave the SMEs the power of numbers and provided them with bargaining power to seek entry into high-profile events such as the Dhaka International Trade Fair, to hold buyer seller meetings with big buyers, and to showcase their produce in domestic markets. *Leather Cave*, which aims to become an important player among international market actors, is now an established brand for LTSE and SMEs.

Under the workforce development initiative, establishing the COEL in a public-private partnership mode was highly effective. Two senior representatives of LFMEAB and COEL expressed that the initiative made the industry more competitive as none of the existing programs from the government technical education board were catering to the development of a skilled workforce. Prior to the PRICE initiative, the only other option to get trained was by working alongside *Ostaads*, a senior mentor in a factory. However, this is a slow process and it is on-the-job training, which means individuals not working in a factory cannot get this training opportunity. The training program of COEL accelerated the learning curve of workers by accelerating the process of learning.

Discussions with COEL trainees showed that some of them migrated to this sector from the readymade garment sector, while others came to know of the training program through their family or other social networks. Seventy-five percent of the trainees interviewed actually had a different career trajectory; they became trainers within the COEL sub-centers. As the number of sub-center grows, this trend may continue and job creation may lead to employment as floor workers and trainers. Most trainers were satisfied with the compensation and flexibility the job offered.

The success of the project in placing almost 100 percent of the trainees in the industry also created further donor interest. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) granted CHF US\$1 million to COEL in 2011 for the *Industry-led Apprenticeship Pilot Project*. This project invested in machine operators, supervisors, and machine maintenance technicians through which COEL purchased 40 new machines for machine operators, purchased machinery for the machine maintenance technicians, and equipped three classrooms.

Conclusions

Horticulture

- As farmers typically do not require year-round support, more part-time or seasonal jobs were created as a result of PRICE interventions. While job creation exceeded its LoP targets, this job creation is a result of seasonal labor among horticulture farmers.
- Total increases in investments were achieved through increased access to financial institutions or reinvestment by private-sector organizations into their own businesses.
- The increase in sales is due to an overall increase in production volume, the increased quality of production, and a shift in cultivation from low-value to high-value crops.
- To gain new market access, enterprise-level stakeholders were able to sell products to a new group of farmers or to farmers from new geographic regions. Similarly, with market-linkage activities, contract buyers gained access to new buyer groups and could sell higher crop quantities.
- New market access among farmers was limited to a single closed-contract arrangement versus multiple market access opportunities in an open and competitive market.
- PRICE addressed local-level constraints rather than national or international constraints. Local-level constraints were related to low productivity, access to quality inputs on virus-free seeds, high-yield seed varieties, and access to new local markets.
- Horticulture lead firms need the support of a project such as PRICE for community mobilization, training, and adoption in wider communities and geographic areas, as there is not yet an enabling environment that allows a business entity to conduct such activities without the benefit of cost sharing from a development project.
- PRICE was able to successfully support input suppliers with marketing agro-inputs and support NGOs, PRIDE, and Cheshta in marketing their horticulture products to new customers at a higher quantity through designing and implementing marketing campaigns. This allowed value-chain market linkages to complement their production focus.
- The project extension and 2011 re-alignment had a significantly positive effect on program effectiveness and results achievement in southern districts since FtF allocated more horticulture resources. Northern districts felt a negative effect since north horticulture stakeholder received a lesser allocation of resources.
- FtF reallocation enabled the south to strengthen their capacity and build their resource base to become an established horticulture hub that is able to attain objectives that were already achieved in the north.



Figure 10. Radish wholesaler in Jessore grading radishes collected.

- Women’s employment in the horticulture sector is limited in Bangladesh for cultural reasons. Apart from homestead cultivation, PRICE was not able to target women’s empowerment in the horticulture sector.

Aquaculture

- Similar to the horticulture sector, job creation in the aquaculture sector is seasonal and part-time. Creation of full-time-equivalent jobs was not uniform throughout the aquaculture sector.
- Processors, who are the largest investors within the aquaculture sector, made moderate investments, but PRICE was able to achieved 97.25 percent of its LoP goal.
- The aquaculture sector was successful in increasing the total value of sales since they increased sales among almost all value-chain actors for both shrimp and fish and achieved 99 percent of its LoP target.
- As a result of PRICE interventions, access to new markets was not significant, but there was no need for new market access among aquaculture value chain actors.
- For the shrimp subsector, PRICE was effective in addressing mainly international constraints. For the fish subsector, PRICE was able to effectively resolve local constraints, which eventually addressed those on the national level.
- PRICE interventions strengthened capacity among value-chain actors and for BMOs to carry out interventions to resolve sector constraints following project completion.
- PRICE was not as successful in improving value chain market linkages as it was in enhancing the competitiveness of the aquaculture sector.
- Similar to horticulture, there are strong cultural barriers that prevent women from working in farms that are not located near the homestead, but PRICE was able to contribution moderately to job creation for women as a result of homestead farming and strengthened technical skills.



Figure 11: A shrimp retailer in Khulna, selling shrimp to the consumers

Leather

- In reaching 105 percent of its LoP target and creating COEL, job creation in the leather sector was a project highlight. The jobs created are significant since they were created at the enterprise and SME levels for a diverse array of leather practices, including operators, supervisors, and machine technicians.
- PRICE established finance initiatives that strengthened the leather sector mostly for SMEs, with the main financial product being Eastern Bank’s EBL Uday.

- Through PRICE SME initiatives, SMEs were able to successfully take advantage of subcontracting opportunities with large enterprises and increase their sales. However, PRICE was not able to affect large enterprises, as sales mechanisms for large enterprises are a result of market forces.
- PRICE contributed significantly to broadening market access for SMEs, and for large enterprises, PRICE expanded capacity among existing relationships.
- PRICE successfully addressed international and local constraints for large enterprises. For SMEs, PRICE successfully addressed national constraints.
- Through PRICE initiatives, leather sector partners were able to carry forward interventions to non-project beneficiaries without support from PRICE. As a result, PRICE partners are transmitting the intervention results to non-project beneficiaries and that project success is not limited to a few project beneficiaries.
- As there are no locations in Bangladesh outside of Dhaka, where interventions can move forward in the leather sector, there are limited opportunities for geographic expansions throughout the country.
- The SME value chain market linkage successfully complemented its production focus as a result of the suggestion in the mid-term evaluation.
- PRICE interventions strongly contributed to empowering women in the leather sector. This is primarily a result of skill development trainings for floor workers.
- PRICE significantly contributed to SME development through access to markets, financial services, and training. These benefits are a direct result of creating a platform that resulted in SMEs merging and gaining entry into high-profile events, holding buyer seller meetings with big buyers, and showcasing their produce in domestic markets.
- On leather products sector growth, for workforce development initiatives, establishing COEL in a public-private partnership mode was highly effective and the initiative made the industry more competitive as none of the existing programs from the government technical education board were catering to the development of a skilled workforce.

Multi-sector

- PRICE successfully addressed new market access for the horticulture and leather sectors. In the horticulture sector, PRICE was able to link stakeholders with other market participants. In the leather sector, project initiatives involving lead firms and SMEs created new market access.
- PRICE would have benefitted from making macro-level changes, such as setting up new service providers in the areas of agriculture extension or supplies of quality inputs in more challenged geographic areas.
- PRICE was able to target all the beneficiaries that it could, within project resources, to achieve project results. This is also a result of the FtF reallocation of project resources.
- The leather sector was a significant project strength when it comes to women's empowerment. As women already participated in the leather sector, this existing relationship contributed to women's empowerment during PRICE.

VI. Lessons Learned

Through stakeholder interviews, surveys, and FGDs, respondents provided valuable insights that can inform future USAID interventions related to value chains, hunger, and poverty alleviation.

Evaluation Question 6: What institutional capacity building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value chain, hunger, and poverty alleviation investments?

Horticulture

Productivity enhancements through a direct transfer of technology: Throughout PRICE, the horticulture sector benefited from a direct transfer of technology to farmers and other support organizations across the value chain. One hundred percent of horticulture stakeholders commented that value chain actors experienced productivity enhancements as a result of this transfer, which also serves as a mechanism for acquiring knowledge and creates knowledge spillover effects among all actors involved.

Cost-sharing arrangements: As there is not yet an enabling environment that allows a business entity to conduct horticulture activities without the benefit of cost sharing from a development project, cost-sharing arrangements are viewed as necessary among horticulture stakeholders. Among horticulture enterprise-level stakeholders, 100 percent indicated that the practices of cost sharing and opportunities to work with trained experts in the field were beneficial. In addition, as discussed earlier, Konika Seeds stated that if it were to increase productivity through the sale of quality seeds, it needs further support for community mobilization, training, and adoption in wider communities and geographic areas.

Training on disease control and post-harvest processing: Local farmers need regular training on disease control and post-harvest processing. Eighty-eight percent of horticulture farmers interviewed stated this as their “lesson learned.” In addition, 64 percent of respondents mentioned that the horticulture sales increase was a result of improved production quality, which indicates that this is a practice that needs to continue. As demonstrated throughout PRICE, this can be accomplished through technical training, practical orientation on demonstration plots, and exposure visits to successful farms.

Aquaculture

The following are the lessons learned from high-level stakeholders (large business enterprises, association representatives, and marketing intermediaries):

BMOs as partner organizations: As macro-level institutions, BMOs are able to ensure sustainability and effectiveness throughout the aquaculture sector in implementing project interventions. These interventions include farmer training and ensuring the quality of shrimp. Examples within PRICE are the shrimp exporter association, BFFEA, and fish farmers association, GMSS. 100 percent of high-level stakeholders stated that future USAID projects should work with BMOs as partners in intervention.

Sustainable sources of capacity building: Similar to the horticulture sector, knowledge creation among aquaculture stakeholders is a sustainable mechanism to create knowledge spillover effects

among all actors involved. This facility creates a sustainable source of capacity building and is beneficial for those involved. Seventy-five percent of high-level stakeholders stated that USAID projects should continue such initiatives.

Local human resources: For PRICE, project staff and project consultants oftentimes were not local people in the geographic areas where they worked and their sole motivation was higher amounts of remuneration received from the project. For this reason, local value chain actors could not appoint them to continue delivering their services, as local salaries can not compete with those earned during work with PRICE.⁹

The following are the lessons learned from lower-level stakeholders (farmers):

Additional training options for farmers are needed: As local farmers benefited from access to technical training, aquaculture farmers and other production-level actors should continue training on updated technical areas. One hundred percent of lower-level aquaculture stakeholders reiterated this lesson learned. Future USAID projects should continue these efforts and ensure the regular availability of technical expertise among local stakeholders.

Creating market linkages: International, national, and local market linkages have provided significant benefits for aquaculture farmers and have resulted in explorations of new markets and the strengthening of existing ones. Future USAID projects need to maintain this as a project objective. Forty percent of lower-level stakeholders stated this importance.

Leather

COEL was as a successful initiative in workforce development: As the team has discussed throughout this report, COEL is a project highlight. Seventy percent of leather stakeholders commented that COEL was successful at workforce development. COEL made the industry more competitive as none of the existing programs from the government's technical education board were catering to the development of a skilled workforce.

Market linkages implemented by PRICE: All leather stakeholders interviewed, SMEs, and large enterprises stated that market linkages were a successful project component. Market linkage initiatives were successful since PRICE explored possible marketing opportunities and potential customers for SMEs and helped them utilize these opportunities through linking the SMEs with the buyers.

SME links to financial institutions: Among all leather stakeholders, there is high satisfaction with PRICE interventions related to linking SMEs and financial institutions. Of these links, the most significant is Eastern Bank's new financial product, EBL Udooy, which enabled SMEs to partner with Aarong.

⁹ Replicable examples to expand capacity at the local level during PRICE implementation are the local fish doctors. Fish doctors are local people, and in many cases, neighbors of the fish farmers with a basic education. Their incentive was the service charges they received from delivering the services to the fish farmers, depots, and processing plants. The remuneration was affordable for a group of fish farms or a processor. During the field visit, it was observed that these fish doctors continued their services in their locality and their remuneration was partly shared by the recipient fish farmers and associations. Although their expertise is not as high as the project staff or consultants, it is enough to provide the basic services required by the farmers, such as checking water and soil PH content, checking the quality of the fingerlings, conducting regular health checkups of the fish, performing initial investigation of diseases, and providing primary treatment. They are also valuable sources of information for the farmers in the areas of feed management, pond treatment, stocking density and post-harvest handling of fish.

Multi-Sector

As multi-sector stakeholders have interests in more than one sector, their lessons learned on institutional capacity building include multi-sector practices and existing practices in individual sectors that can be carried over into other sectors.

Sector-wide mechanisms to strengthen local practices: The primary lesson learned about institutional capacity building, which was stated by 100 percent of respondents, is that PRICE benefited from sector-wide mechanisms aimed at strengthening entire sectors. Multi-sector stakeholders mentioned that local-level farmers benefitted from sector service centers and organizations to facilitate sector compliance regulations. In addition, 67 percent of respondents stated that interventions that only focused on technical assistance were a project limitation since they did not create mutually beneficial partnerships.

Women's empowerment in the leather sector: Women's empowerment in the leather sector through the COEL model is another project highlight. Sixty-seven percent of those interviewed stated that women's empowerment is stronger in the leather sector than the other sectors. Job creation among women can be a successful intervention when USAID builds on existing societal practices, rather than create practices that require societal readjustments.

International constraints to strengthen local constraints: National or international constraint mitigation interventions have trickle-down effects to mitigate local-level constraints, which reduce the need for numerous local-level interventions.

In the aquaculture sector, PRICE identified the sector-specific constraint of inferior quality shrimp, which did not meet the expectations of the export market. When PRICE designed its intervention, it worked only with the processors and depot owners. Later, processors and depot owners worked with their individual group of farmers, resulting in an improved quality of shrimp at the local level. In addition, the intervention involved the local fisher associations, Department of Fisheries, and local law enforcement agencies, which are all entities with local impact on improving shrimp quality at the farmers' level. After project completion, the entities involved at the sector level remained and continued to address their constraints at the local level.

In the horticulture sector, the project identified local-level constraints and worked directly with local-level farmers in different districts to address them. Although the interventions worked well at the local level, the cumulative results could not address constraints at all three levels (local, national, and international). At the same time, after project completion, the interventions, such as farmers' training and market linkage, are not as frequent and widespread as during the project implementation.

VII. Recommendations

This section provides recommendations made by the evaluation team based on the evaluation findings and conclusions. The recommendations are grouped by major evaluation questions and categorized by sub-topic areas.

1. How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels? Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?

Market Access and Sales

1.1 Explore international markets: When linking local horticulture farmers with processors, USAID should explore the international market. Horticulture products in processed form do not have a high demand domestically. If there is potential for the processors to export, only then should USAID projects link farmers and project beneficiaries with processors. Primarily, horticulture farmers should be linked with national-level wholesalers, like those in Karwanbazar, Dhaka, and should work with fresh vegetables targeting the domestic market.



Figure 12. A mango farmer in his orchard from Chapai Nawabganj, a northern district well-known for its mangoes

1.2 Begin interventions with forward-linking actors: Future USAID projects should initiate work with forward-linkage actors, such as the processors, exporters, and marketing intermediaries, and then proceed towards the backward links, such as to production and input supply areas. In doing this, USAID aquaculture and horticulture interventions begin with the end in mind, and local level actors have better direction of their final output.

1.3 Dyke vegetable farming alternative: Future USAID projects should create an enabling environment for farmers to brand dyke vegetables as safe vegetables and should link dyke vegetable farmers with chain shops to increase farmer sales. The PRICE intervention of dyke vegetable farming can be a new avenue for aquaculture and for horticulture farmers to maximize use of their limited land and increase sales in the southern region, if properly branded and linked with the national market. Dyke vegetables are safe, as they are not exposed to toxic chemicals, and there is a good demand for chemical-free vegetables in chain shops in Dhaka, such as Agora, Nandan, and Meenabazar.

Access to Finance and Investment

1.4 Agriculture loan packages: USAID projects should facilitate new loan products from the banks or microfinance institutions that are designed to have grace periods long enough to cover at least one crop cycle. Micro credits are convenient for small farmers, but the repayment starts one week after the loan disbursement, whereas farmers do not get a return on their investment until after at least one crop cycle, which is usually four months. To improve this process, through USAID, financial institutions can develop special loan packages that work within their crop

schedules to enable local farmers to repay their loan and not accumulate interest that lowers their businesses' profits.

1.5 Post-donor programming agriculture loan packages: USAID should identify and develop business models that provide adequate training and knowledge to the staff of businesses that are credit scheme holders. In doing this, USAID can strengthen the ability of beneficiaries to manage their credit and serve as a facilitator to help them continue sustainable credit practices following project completion. Another USAID project implementation practice that helps local credit scheme holders is collaboration and partnership with non-bank financial institutions, banks, and technical service providers (public or private) regarding adequate technical assistance to borrowers and farmers.

1.6 Agriculture voucher system: USAID should create an agriculture voucher system through which the borrowing farmer would receive vouchers from banks instead of cash and would purchase inputs from input suppliers. This intervention is important in reducing the risk of farmers spending investments on non-productive activities, as a recent study shows that on average only 67 percent of loans are invested into agricultural production.¹⁰ As demonstrated by the PRICE farmers' experience, loans can be disbursed through a voucher system. In this system, there would be designated input suppliers registered with the bank. The input supplier would cash the vouchers from the bank, and farmers would repay the bank after harvesting crops.

Limitations to geographic locations and non-project beneficiaries

1.7 BMO partnerships: As seen during PRICE interventions, partnerships with national-level BMOs and associations, such as BFFEA, can help partners carry project interventions forward into new geographic locations and among non-project beneficiaries. If partnerships are to be established with individual business entities, those with a national distribution network, such as Lal Teer Seeds, should be prioritized over business entities limited to a small geographic presence.

1.8 Nodal organization partnerships: USAID partnerships with nodal organizations, such as the Department of Agricultural Extension in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries in the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock, are also recommended. These government departments have established networks from the national to the village level. They also have technical specialists stationed at local levels.

2. As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value chain market linkages to complement its production focus?

2.1 Group production and synchronization: Future USAID projects should implement group production and synchronization practices at the production level. Group production promotes collectively produced agriculture products to strengthen agricultural value chain objectives as it increases production levels and links marketing intermediaries with groups to benefit those involved. Group production ensures that farmers harvest a sufficient volume of products and encourages large marketing intermediaries to directly collect from the farmers. Synchronization is a mechanism to initiate production of a particular product, such as in eggplant, potato, and carp, at the same time among beneficiaries within close proximity.

¹⁰ Bari, F and Imran, S. 2013. "Market Assessment for CBAS-SRF Project", Developed for World Vision CBAS-SRF Project

2.2 Contract farming: PRICE practiced contract-farming arrangements in northern districts but did not do the same in southern districts, as southern farmers did not have enough expertise and experience to engage in contract farming.¹¹ New projects should identify whether the number of farmers with requisite farming knowledge has increased and follow the contract-farming model developed by PRICE to replicate this practice in the south, linking farmers directly with the buyers. Such relationships can be established for processed varieties of potato, linking potato farmers with processors, such as Golden Harvest and Bombay Sweets, and linking mango farmers with juice producers, such as PRAN, ACME, and Square Group.

3. How did the project extension and 2011 realignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the Feed the Future region affect PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement?

3.1 Partnerships with established organizations: Future USAID projects should emphasize creating partnerships with established organizations to promote continued implementation of project practices following project completion. Examples from PRICE are Murail Rural Development Multipurpose Co-operative Society Ltd and Kansat Mango Farmer Multipurpose Co-operative Society Limited. With these partnerships, local horticulture project beneficiaries could continue mutually beneficial arrangements, although they do not continue direct access to technical assistance.

4. Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions? What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?

4.1 COEL job creation model across all sectors: The COEL job creation model contributed to women's empowerment and strengthened job creation for women through their workforce development initiatives and providing an enabling environment for women in the workplace. USAID needs to examine how to apply this enabling environment among actors in the horticulture and aquaculture sectors and identify which components may work effectively in their respective sectors. For example, in FY 2013, PRICE and COEL initiated a six month-long training for 30 new machine operators. All of the training's graduates were placed in industry. The course included topics such as general English and math concepts, occupational safety and health, the use and maintenance of electrical and mechanical instruments, and an introduction to electronic and hydraulic systems. PRICE encouraged its partners to include more women in these trainings and create more job opportunities for women as both as workers and supervisors.

USAID can conduct similar training in other sectors that best fit their distinct practices. As many of COEL's course topics can carry over to other sectors, this is a manageable job creation mechanism for women.

¹¹ In the north, mango and potato farmers have an age-old culture of cultivating these two horticulture products. PRICE was able to introduce export varieties of potato and link industrial buyers and exporters with farmers. In the south, farmers were not accustomed to farming export quality mango and potatoes. PRICE worked in some basic areas of cultivation and mostly worked with table potato varieties. Although there is a strong local demand in southern areas, table potato varieties do not have any demand in the export market. For this reason, exporters were not interested in working with southern farmers, even if PRICE took an initiative to link them together. Now that they have more expertise and experience to shift towards new varieties, they also have the ability to work as contract farmers.

This is similar for mango farmers. Farmers in the south, such as in Chuadanga, Meherpur and Satkhira, are now accustomed to mango cultivation and they have a reputation as quality producers of a hybrid variety called, *Amrapali*. This variety is good for producing juice as customers enjoy the flavor. During PRICE intervention, the number of farmers was not high and their production was not large enough. In 2011, PRICE could not expand contract farming, as mango farmers did not have enough experience. Now in 2014, they have enough experience to become contract farmers.

5. How effective have the SME and workforce development initiatives by PRICE been in leather products sector growth?

5.1 Partnerships with large manufacturers: Future USAID projects working in the leather sector should assist large manufacturers in prospecting for price-competitive international markets. Projects can engage international leather goods market experts to identify potential buyers and facilitate business-to-business relationship with export buyers. These interventions will increase the export sales of the large manufacturers, which will result in increased production capacity and more workers being employed and also outsource an increased volume of products from the SMEs and cottage-level producers.

5.2 Product marketing initiatives: Domestic sales of leather products can increase through arranging leather product fairs and relevant innovative marketing programs. USAID should continue these practices in upcoming projects. This will increase the sales of large fashion houses, which means that they will outsource more products from the cottage-level producers.

5.3 COEL expansion: The workforce development center established in the form of COEL is already functional with the assistance of large manufacturers and a development project. USAID projects can further assist the establishment of COEL regional centers in Chittagong, Rajshahi, and Khulna to expand the trained workforce in the leather sector.

VIII. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Statement of Work

Statement of Work

Final Performance Evaluation of Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE) project

**United States Agency for International Development (USAID)/Bangladesh
Office of Economic Growth
August 2013**

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Project Information	
Project Name	Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE)
Award Number	Contract No. 388-C-00-08-00021-00
Original Project Dates	February 2008 - February 14, 2013
Original Funding	\$10,998,503
Extension Project End Date	December 31, 2013 (extension date: September, 2012)
Additional Funding	\$2 million (TEC: \$ 12,998,503)
Implementing Partner	Chemonics
Midterm evaluation	March 2011

Contents

- I. Background
- II. Program Components and Descriptions
- III. Evaluation Purpose
- IV. Evaluation Questions
- V. Evaluation Methodology
- VI. Existing Sources of Information
- VII. Deliverables
- VIII. Evaluation Team Composition
- IX. Level of Efforts
- X. Scheduling and Logistics
- XI. Reporting Requirements
- XII. Budget

I. BACKGROUND:

Consistent with USAID’s 2011 Evaluation Policy the goal of this final performance evaluation is to provide evidence so USAID/Bangladesh can determine whether the Poverty Reduction by Increasing the Competitiveness of Enterprises (PRICE) project achieved its desired results. A secondary goal is to inform future project design and implementation.

The PRICE project was designed in 2007 under the Mission’s Strategic Objective 12 “Expanded Economic Opportunities Created through Equitable Economic Growth”. PRICE was intended to be a key element of a new Mission EG activity called Economic Development and Growth with Equity (EDGE). EDGE was designed to help Bangladesh achieve sustainable, broad-based economic growth by improving the way enterprises of various sizes within the sector cooperate and compete. Improving competitiveness in Bangladesh was believed to require investments in policy reform, workforce development, product and service quality, and the availability and use of information and communications technology. EDGE, in turn, was to consist of two complementary implementation components (or sub-activities), PRICE and the Policy Analysis, Monitoring and Assessment (PAMA) activity. The PAMA activity was intended to strengthen the development and reform of pro-poor and pro-business policies and regulations in Bangladesh. However, for a variety of reasons, including the transition from the Caretaker Government to the elected Government in 2008, PAMA was never implemented. The contract to implement the PRICE activity was signed with Chemonics International Inc. in February 2008. From its beginning in 2008 the PRICE project operated in the northern and southern areas of Bangladesh targeting horticulture, aquaculture and leather value chains.

The overall goal of the work performed under the PRICE project is to help advance Bangladesh’s competitiveness in the global market while contributing to pro-poor economic growth. This goal was subsequently refined to the following: Reduce poverty sustainably by promoting the broad-based development and competitiveness of the horticulture, aquaculture, and leather products sectors in Bangladesh.

In 2011, USAID/Bangladesh realigned the focus of PRICE so that it could contribute to USAID’s Feed the Future (FTF) Presidential Initiative. The project’s ‘End of Project’ date was extended from February 2013 to December 2013 with an additional budget of \$2 million to facilitate the new focus on FTF. PRICE has already been operating in the FTF Zone of Influence (ZOI) in the south and southeastern parts of Bangladesh, and further strengthened its efforts in the zone, particularly in horticulture.

PRICE currently falls under USAID/Bangladesh’s Development Objective 2 (DO2): Food Security Improved. DO2 is the flagship DO for the FTF strategy and its objective in Bangladesh: “Availability, Access, and Utilization of Domestically Produced and Nutritious Foods Increased.”¹² The DO2 development hypothesis is: “*addressing vulnerable household constraints to food availability, access, and utilization will lead to positive outcomes for health and income security.*” As increasing staple crop (predominantly rice) availability will not ensure food security, DO2 incorporates integrated, multi-sectoral interventions promoting diversification to more nutritious and high value crops.

¹² USAID/Bangladesh Multi-Year Feed the Future Strategy 2010-2015

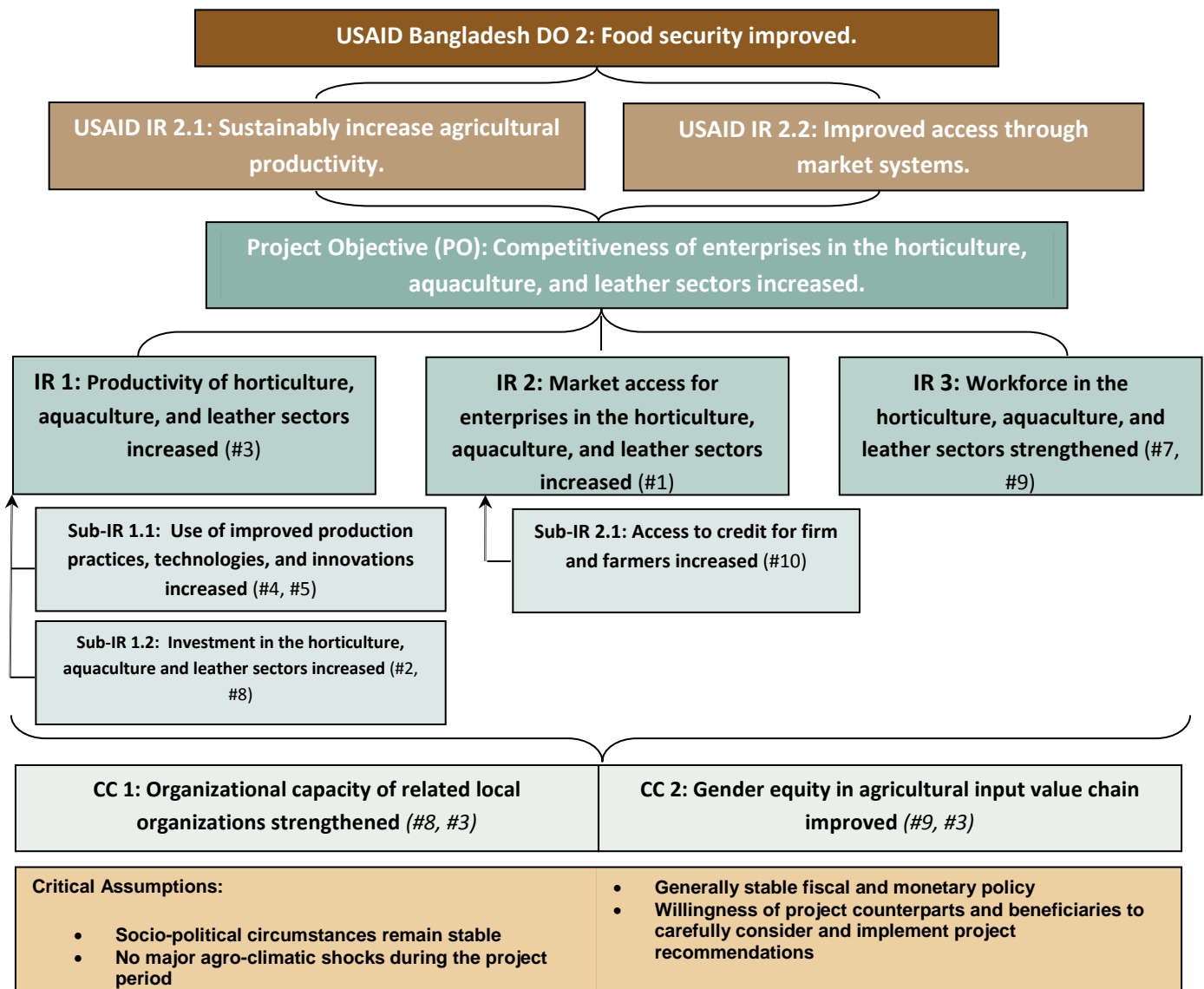
II. PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND DESCRIPTIONS

PRICE project’s original goal was to advance Bangladesh’s competitiveness in global markets while contributing to pro-poor economic growth. This goal was subsequently refined to: “Reduce poverty sustainably by promoting the broad-based development and competitiveness of the horticulture, aquaculture, and leather products sectors in Bangladesh”. Specific PRICE objectives include: 1) increasing pro-poor economic opportunities; 2) improving workforce skills—especially for women and youth—and social compliance practices; 3) improving governance practices relating to economic growth and poverty reduction; 4) increasing SME development; 5) increasing growth of the non-textile private sector; 6) increasing capacity and use of knowledge management systems.

The table below provides more detail on PRICE's three components (horticulture, aquaculture and leather) and the activities that were implemented under them.

Program Component		Description
1	Horticulture - Potato, Eggplant, Mango	<p>1. Facilitate virus free potato seed from tissue culture and demonstrate the benefits of modernizing and adopting the working principles of supply chains.</p> <p>2. Introduce Dike based year round farming for vegetables such as eggplant and assist in setting up primary collection points, and improve post-harvest handling systems — specifically modern grading, packaging, and better transport systems for handling fresh vegetables</p> <p>3. Help existing Mango orchards improve their productivity and reduce post-harvest losses by applying modern crop management practices, including rational uses of chemicals for pest control, harvesting techniques, and appropriate post-harvest handling.</p>
2	Aquaculture	<p>Directly target the key commercial species of local and exotic carp, pangas (Mekong river catfish), tilapia, and some air breathing fish (e.g., stinging catfish, climbing perch, and snakehead fish). Work with hatcheries, commercial producers, fish feed millers, and processors, while strengthening cold chains, marketing, quality assurance, and information technology solutions. Strengthen associations and promote introduction to global markets such as through membership in international trade associations and participation in trade fairs.</p>
3	Leather	<p>Work to strengthen the quality of hides and skins from the raw material to leather. Train workers and supervisors on improved manufacturing approaches, modern techniques, quality assurance, and enterprise development with enterprise and industry promotion. Improve hide value through improved handling during drying, sorting, and transport to tanneries.</p>

Figure 1 below graphically represents the contribution of PRICE indicators with their links to project objectives towards achieving the results of the project:



In terms of expected results, originally PRICE targets were as follow: \$200 million of increased sales by USAID-assisted enterprises; \$4 million of additional investment (or loans) in USAID-assisted enterprises; and 40,000 new jobs created.

As a result of the extension, PRICE will increase the total value of sales by \$66 million, create more than 10,000 new jobs, and increase investments by nearly \$2.3 million over its original targets. PRICE is involved in several coordination activities with other donors and the Government of Bangladesh (GOB), including the Market Development Forum, monthly Ministry of Commerce partner meetings and the Food Safety and Fisheries Working Group,

Among other donor projects, PRICE coordinated with Katalyst project, under the National Action Committee on shrimp, led by Ministry of Fisheries. Katalyst uses a pro-poor market development approach to increase the competitiveness of SMEs in selected sectors. The project is funded by the UK Department for International Development, the Swiss Development Cooperation, the Embassy of Netherlands, and the Canadian International Development Agency.

PRICE also worked with the International Labor Organization (ILO) in establishing and supporting the Centre of Excellence for Leather Skills Bangladesh (COEL), which provides workforce development training to the workers and supervisors in the leather industry.

In addition, PRICE coordinated with the Better Work and Standards Program (BEST), an EU funded and UNIDO managed activity.

The PRICE project is not USAID/Bangladesh's first attempt to promote enterprise development. In fact, the mission has been designing and implementing projects to promote private enterprise development and employment generation in Bangladesh since the 1970s. To varying degrees, these prior projects typically provided assistance aimed at: 1) strengthening product and market development and market linkages; 2) promoting economy-wide and sector level reforms; and 3) increasing lending to target firms.

Of particular relevance are USAID enterprise development activities which immediately preceded the PRICE project. These include: 1) the Job Opportunities and Business Support (JOBS) project (1997 – 2005; \$12 million); and 2) the Agro-based Industries and Technology Development projects (ATDP I and II Projects (1995 – 1999; \$10 million) and (2000 – 2005; \$10 million) respectively). (See Annex-1 for PRICE-Mid-term Evaluation Report for more information.)

III. EVALUATION PURPOSE

The goal of this final performance evaluation is to provide information so that USAID/Bangladesh can determine whether PRICE project achieved its desired results or not. Since a mid-term evaluation of the project was conducted in March 2011 (see Annex-1 for the report), the final performance evaluation will also assess as to what extent the recommendations made in the mid-term evaluation were incorporated into the project implementation and what have been the results.

Some major objectives of this evaluation are:

- 1) To review, analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of PRICE project in achieving the program objectives and contributing to USAID/Bangladesh's efforts to increase private sector competitiveness and value chain development
- 2) Evaluate major constraints in achieving expected project results

3) Provide specific recommendations and lessons learned on strategies and approaches
USAID/Bangladesh should continue in its future value chain development programs and keep in mind for future program planning

The evaluation will cover the project period from February 2008 to August-September, 2013, with a special focus on post mid-term evaluation period.

Since PRICE is a follow-on project to previous USAID investments in this area, therefore the project activities need to be examined in the overall context of private sector competitiveness and value chain development in the country.

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be used to improve implementation of the newly awarded Agricultural Value Chains (AVC) project and will also be used in the design of other relevant projects. With the exclusion of procurement sensitive sections, USAID intends to disseminate the report widely with the stakeholders such as USAID implementing partners and other donors.

USAID will actively share the document through the Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC), mail correspondence and seminar/workshops¹³. USAID expects the evaluation report will benefit implementing partners, host government, and other donors in improving their understanding on the program and in designing private sector interventions for future programs.

IV. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The Contractor's evaluation of PRICE must be comprehensive. Whenever possible, the evaluation team should ensure that data is gender disaggregated and subject to gender analysis. The Contractor shall assess PRICE performance and achievements against the performance indicators, targets, reporting requirements, outputs and deliverables described in the M&E plan, Annual Work Plans and the contract. While this evaluation is not a data quality audit, the Contractor shall assess and describe the quality and use of performance monitoring data and information generated during PRICE implementation. Evidence-based conclusions and recommendations on how PRICE used performance monitoring data and information in performance management are required when describing PRICE effectiveness in component management.

The following questions should be addressed in order of priority:

1. How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels? Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?
2. As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value chain market linkages to complement its production focus?

¹³ The public version of the evaluation report will exclude any procurement sensitive information.

3. How did the project extension and 2011 re-alignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the Feed the Future region affect PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement?
4. Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions? What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?
5. How effective has been the SME and workforce development initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth?
6. What institutional capacity building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value chain, hunger and poverty alleviation investments?

Following the Team Planning Meeting involving the entire evaluation team, the team can engage with USAID to seek clarification and context (as required) on these evaluation questions. Some changes to the questions may be considered as part of these discussions.

V. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Contractor will work in close consultation with USAID/Bangladesh and Chemonics. The key issues to be addressed by the evaluation team should be developed in consultation with the Office of Economic Growth Office (EGO) during the evaluation team's first meeting with the Mission. In answering the evaluation questions, the Contractor will collect data and information that underpins valid and reliable evidence. It is recommended that the Contractor consider a mixed-method evaluation approach. The methodology should combine a review of quantitative data and application of qualitative evaluation techniques to obtain information, opinions, and data from counterparts, evaluation teams, partners, clients, beneficiaries, GOB entities, and other donors. The approach should be participatory and should involve the use of questionnaires as appropriate. The questionnaires should be presented to the PRICE COR for review before dissemination. By using a mixed approach, the evaluation team will gain insight on the impact of PRICE project activities (mostly from quantitative data collected by the project and others) and the processes (mostly qualitative information provided by the project staff and key informants) that lead to those impacts. Sequential and iterative approaches should be used to integrate the mixture of methods at various stages of the evaluation.

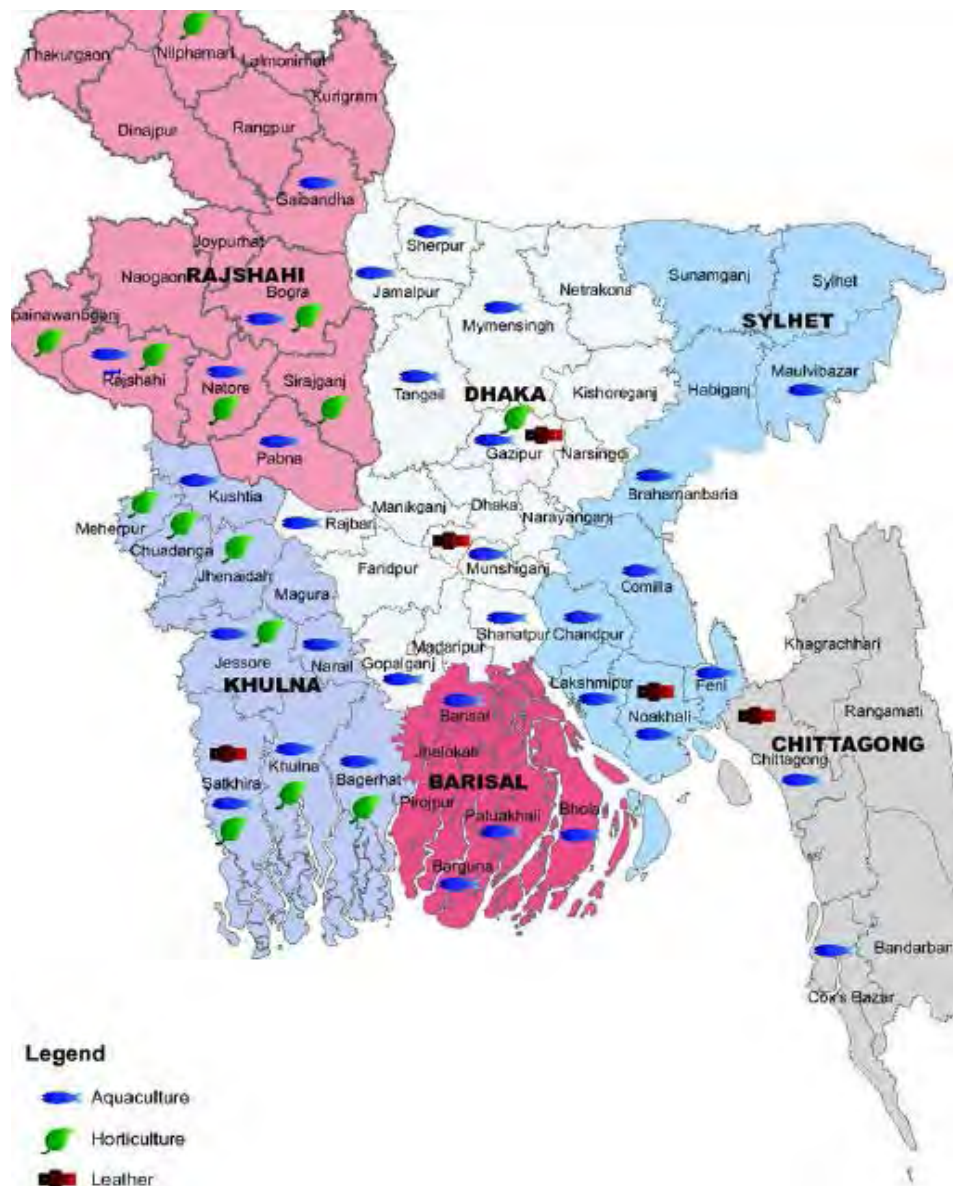
Prior to the start of data collection, the Contractor must develop an Evaluation Design Matrix that will detail the data collection and analysis method that will be used to collect data for each of the evaluation questions. This will include details on how focus group interviews will be transcribed and analyzed; what procedures will be used to analyze qualitative data from key informant and other stakeholder interviews; and how the evaluation will weigh and integrate qualitative data with quantitative data from the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan and project performing monitoring records.

The evaluation methodology should yield gender disaggregated data and reflect attention to gender relations such as the participation of women in microenterprise management, farmer

training, and community institutions. Methodological strengths and weaknesses should be explicitly described in the evaluation report.

Data collection methods should include, but are not limited to, field visits, in-person interviews, direct observations, and a review of relevant USAID, GOB, and private sector reports and documents, secondary data sources (the Ministry of Agriculture agricultural census, for example). The Contractor should start its work with a review of documents provided by PRICE and USAID. The Contractor will interview the PRICE COR and other relevant USAID Contract Officers Representatives (CORs), PRICE Chief of Party, PRICE staff, other donors (particularly those with agricultural technology or value chain projects), private sector representatives, key USG officials, GOB officials and farm families. The Contractor should conduct structured individual and focus group interviews with a sample of program beneficiaries and stakeholders.

PRICE operated in the districts illustrated in the map below:



The Contractor will focus its field visits in the FTF Zone of Influence. Site visits will afford the Contractor the opportunity to interview beneficiaries and stakeholders where PRICE activities were implemented and collect additional information and documentation.

The Contractor will analyze the data and information collected and identify correlations, major trends and issues. The basic unit of analysis will be data and information collected by the evaluation team.

VI. EXISTING SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

The evaluation team should consult a broad range of background documents apart from project documents provided by USAID/Bangladesh. These include, but are not limited to, documents such as the National Food Policy Plan of Action and Country Investment Plan, Bangladesh Feed the Future Multiyear Strategy as well as other relevant national strategies and policies. USAID and the PRICE Project will provide the assessment team with a package of briefing materials, including:

- The Statement of Work for the PRICE Project and relevant amendments
- M&E plan of PRICE project
- Project quarterly and annual reports, work plans and management reviews developed as part of routine monitoring
- Training reports
- DQA reports
- PRICE Mid-term Evaluation Report (See Annex-1)
- USAID/Bangladesh Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2011-16 (Public version)
- USAID Bangladesh DO:2 PMP
- USAID Bangladesh Agricultural Value Chains project statement of work

VII. DELIVERABLES

All deliverables are internal to USAID and the Evaluation Team unless otherwise instructed by USAID. Evaluation deliverables include:

Evaluation Team Planning Meeting: Essential in organizing the team's efforts. During the meeting, the team should review and discuss the SOW in its entirety, clarify team members' role and responsibilities, work plan, develop data collection methods, review and clarify any logistical and administrative procedures for the assignment and instruments and to prepare for the in-brief with USAID/Bangladesh.

Work Plan: The Contractor will prepare a detailed work plan that includes task timeline, methodology outlining approach to be used in answering each evaluation question, team responsibility, document review, key informant and stakeholder meetings, site visits, survey implementation, travel time, debriefings (for USAID, implementing partner and, if decided, the GOB), draft and final report writing. The work plan will include a data analysis plan. The work

plan will be submitted to the PRICE COR and DO:2 M&E specialist at USAID/Bangladesh for approval no later than the fifth day after commencement of the evaluation.

In-brief Meeting: In brief with USAID/Bangladesh: Within two working days of international team members' arrival in Bangladesh;

Evaluation Design Matrix: A table that lists each evaluation question and the corresponding information sought, information sources, data collection sources, data analysis methods, and limitations. The matrix should be finalized and shared with USAID/Bangladesh before evaluation field work starts. It should also be included as an annex in the evaluation report.

Data Collection Instruments: Development and submission of data collection instruments to USAID/Bangladesh during the design phase and after the evaluation is completed;

Regular Updates: The Evaluation Team Leader will brief the PRICE COR and the DO:2 M&E specialist on progress with the evaluation on at least a weekly basis, in person or by electronic communication. Any delays or complications must be quickly communicated to USAID/Bangladesh as early as possible to allow quick resolution and to minimize any disruptions to the evaluation. Emerging opportunities to strengthen the evaluation should also be discussed with USAID/Bangladesh as they arise.

Preliminary Draft Evaluation Report: The Contractor will submit a Preliminary Draft Evaluation Report to the USAID/Bangladesh COR and DO:2 M&E Activity Manager five working days before the Mission debriefing. Within three working days after receipt, USAID staff will provide preliminary comments prior to the Mission debriefing.

Debriefing with USAID: The Contractor will present the major evaluation findings to USAID/Bangladesh through a PowerPoint presentation before the team's departure from country. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and issues as well as any preliminary recommendations. The team will consider USAID comments and incorporate them in the Draft Evaluation Report.

Debriefing with Partners: The team will present the major findings from the evaluation to USAID partners (as appropriate and as defined by USAID) through a PowerPoint presentation prior to the team's departure from the country. The debriefing will include a discussion of achievements and activities only, with no recommendations for possible modifications to project approaches, results, or activities. The team will consider partner comments and incorporate them appropriately in drafting the evaluation report.

Debriefing with USAID/W: Presentation of evaluation findings and recommendations to USAID/W (upon USAID/Bangladesh request); timeframe will be coordinated between USAID/Bangladesh and USAID/W.

Draft Evaluation Report - A draft report on the findings and recommendations should be submitted to USAID/Bangladesh 10 days after departure of international team members from Bangladesh. The written report should clearly describe findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The draft report must be of high quality with no grammatical errors or typos. A report is high quality when it represents a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized

effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why. The draft report must have well-constructed sentences that are presented in a way that clearly presents findings, conclusions and recommendations. The report should answer all the evaluation questions and the structure of the report should make it clear how the questions were answered. The draft report must meet the criteria set forth under the Final Report section below. USAID will provide comments on the draft report within 10 working days of submission.

Final Evaluation Report: The Contractor will submit a Final Evaluation Report that incorporates Mission comments and suggestions no later than five working days after USAID/Bangladesh provides written comments on the Draft Evaluation Report. The format of the final report is provided below. The report will be submitted in English, electronically. The final report should meet the following criteria to ensure the quality of the report:

- The evaluation report should represent a thoughtful, well-researched and well organized effort to objectively evaluate what worked in the project, what did not and why.
- Evaluation report shall address all evaluation questions included in the scope of work.
- The evaluation report should include the scope of work as an annex. All modifications to the scope of work, whether in technical requirements, evaluation questions, evaluation team composition, methodology or timeline need to be agreed upon in writing by the PRICE COR and DO:2 M&E specialist.
- Evaluation methodology shall be explained in detail and all tools used in conducting the evaluation such as questionnaires, checklists and discussion guides will be included in an Annex in the final report.
- Limitations to the evaluation shall be disclosed in the report, with particular attention to the limitations associated with the evaluation methodology (selection bias, recall bias, etc.).
- Evaluation findings should be presented as analyzed facts, evidence and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay or the compilation of people's opinions. Findings should be specific, concise and supported by strong quantitative or qualitative evidence.
- Sources of information need to be properly identified and listed in an annex.
- Recommendations need to be supported by a specific set of findings.
- Recommendations should be action-oriented, practical and specific, with defined responsibility for the action.

The format of the final evaluation report should strike a balance between depth and length. The report will include a table of contents, table of figures (as appropriate), acronyms, executive summary, introduction, purpose of the evaluation, research design and methodology, findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Where appropriate, the evaluation should utilize tables and graphs to link with data and other relevant information. The report should include, in the annex, any dissenting views by any team member or by USAID on any of the findings or recommendations. The report should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes. A second version of this report excluding any potentially procurement-sensitive information will be submitted (also electronically, in English) to Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC) and for dissemination among implementing partners and other stakeholders.

All quantitative data, if gathered, should be (1) provided in an electronic file in easily readable format; (2) organized and fully documented for use by those not fully familiar with the project or the evaluation; (3) owned by USAID and made available to the public barring rare exceptions. A thumb drive with all the data could be provided to the PRICE COR and the DO:2 M&E Specialist.

The final report will be edited and formatted by the Contractor and provided to USAID/Bangladesh 5 working days after the Mission has reviewed the content and approved the final revised version of the report.

VIII. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION

The team should include two international and one local consultant. The former should include specialists with the following areas of expertise: agricultural and non-agricultural value chains, value chain design and implementation, business development, project evaluations and assessments, private sector, agriculture and food security. The local consultant should have an excellent understanding of agricultural and non-agricultural value chains in Bangladesh.

Team Leader (Evaluation Specialist):

The team leader should have a post graduate degree in agricultural economics, agribusiness management or an applicable social sciences field. The Team Leader should have experience in leading evaluation teams, especially for value chain projects, and preparing documents that are objective, evidence-based, and well organized. S/he should have extensive experience in conducting quantitative and qualitative evaluations and strong familiarity with value chain development. The Team Leader should be familiar with USAID regulations and systems including Feed the Future performance monitoring guidance, gender policies and guidance, project management, budgeting, and financial analysis and reporting. Experience in international donor development program management and overseeing multiple program areas simultaneously is preferred. Excellent oral and written skills in English are required. Relevant experience in Bangladesh or South Asia preferred.

The Team Leader will provide overall leadership for the team, and s/he will finalize the evaluation design, coordinate activities, arrange periodic meetings, consolidate individual input from team members, and coordinate the process of assembling the final findings and recommendations into a high quality document. S/he will lead the preparation and presentation of the key evaluation findings and recommendations to the USAID/Bangladesh team and other major partners.

Senior Value Chain Specialist:

The Senior Value Chain Specialist must have a Bachelor's degree or higher in economics, agricultural economics, business management, marketing or any other applicable field. S/he should have minimum of 8 years of international experience in areas of value chain design, implementation, analysis and evaluation, business development, private sector and economic

growth. S/he should have demonstrated knowledge of the latest developments in advancing good/best practices in value chain development that reaches women, youth, and very poor. Background and understanding of value chain programs in South Asia is preferred.

Familiarity with USAID regulations and systems including Feed the Future performance monitoring guidance, evaluation guidance, gender policies and guidance and project management is preferred.

The Senior Value Chain Specialist will be responsible for assessing the effectiveness of value chains and will provide technical leadership in this area. S/he will participate in team meetings, key informant interviews, group meetings, site visits, and draft the sections of the report relevant to his/her expertise and role in the team. S/he will also participate in presenting the report to USAID or other stakeholders and be responsible for addressing pertinent comments provided by USAID/Bangladesh or other stakeholders.

Value Chain Specialist:

The Value Chain Specialist must have a Bachelor's degree in economics, agricultural economics, business management, marketing or any other applicable field. S/he will be a Bangladeshi national with a minimum of 5 years of experience in areas of value chain design, implementation and evaluation, business development, private sector and economic growth. S/he will have excellent understanding of the developments in the agribusiness, private sector and value chain projects of Bangladesh. Experience and background in aquaculture, horticulture, and leather value chains in Bangladesh will be good. Familiarity with USAID regulations and systems including Feed the Future performance monitoring guidance, evaluation guidance, gender policies and guidance and project management is preferred.

The Value Chain Specialist will support the Senior Value Chain Specialist, serving as a "local resource person" on value chains in Bangladesh.

S/he will participate in team meetings, key informant interviews, group meetings, site visits, and draft the sections of the report relevant to his/her expertise and role in the team. S/he will also participate in presenting the report to USAID or other stakeholders and be responsible for addressing pertinent comments provided by USAID/Bangladesh or other stakeholders.

Conflict of Interest

All evaluation team members will provide a signed statement attesting to a lack of conflict of interest, or describing an existing conflict of interest relative to the project being evaluated. USAID will provide the conflict of interest forms.

IX. LEVEL OF EFFORT (LOE)

Below is an estimate of the evaluation level of effort (LOE).

Level of Efforts of Team Members by Task Deliverables		
Task/Deliverable	Duration / LOE	
	Team Leader	Technical Specialists
Review background documents and offshore preparation work	4 days	3 days
Travel to Bangladesh	2 days	2 days
Team Planning meeting and meeting with USAID	2 days	2 days
Development of Evaluation Work Plan (concurrent with document review and initial meetings)	2 day	2 day
Information and data collection. Includes interviews with key informants (stakeholders and USAID staff) and site visits	18 days	18 days
Discussion, analysis, and draft evaluation report in country including discussion with USAID	10 days	10 days
Debrief meetings with USAID (preliminary draft report due to USAID)	1 day	1 day
Debrief meetings with key stakeholders	1 day	1 day
Team Leader meets with Technical Specialists and USAID to synthesize findings/discussion	1 day	1 day
Depart Bangladesh/Travel to U.S.	2 days	2 days
USAID provide comments on draft report		
Team revises draft report and submits final to USAID (out of country)	10 days	5 days
USAID completes final review		
Editing and formatting of report (one month)	10	
Total Estimated LOE	63 days	47 days (2 people)

X. SCHEDULING AND LOGISTICS

Funding and Logistical Support

The Evaluation team will be responsible for all off-shore and in-country administrative and logistical support, including identification and fielding appropriate local staff. They will take care of arranging and scheduling meetings, international and local travel, hotel bookings, working/office spaces, computers, printing, and photocopying.¹⁴ A local administrative assistant/service providing firm may be hired to arrange field visits, local travel, hotel, and appointments with stakeholders and provide translation services.

The evaluation team should be able to make all logistic arrangements, including the vehicle arrangements, for travel within and outside Dhaka and should not expect any logistic support from the USAID/Bangladesh Mission. The team should also make their own arrangements on space for team meetings, and equipment support for producing the report. The Mission may advise on the arrangements if needed.

Scheduling

Work is to be carried out over a period of approximately 10-12 weeks, beginning in September, 2013, with field work completed in September, 2013 and final report and close out concluding o/a /October 2013. See Annex-2 for Bangladesh Mission Holiday Schedule.

A six-day work week (Saturday-Thursday) is authorized for the evaluation team while in Bangladesh. The evaluation team will submit a work plan as part of the evaluation methodology proposal with timeline and develop a GANTT chart displaying the time periods during which activities occur.

Pre-departure arrangements should include: travel approval; airline tickets; visa; lodging; work facility and vehicle transport arrangements; dates for meetings with USAID/Bangladesh EG staff and key contacts; in-country travel agenda; and accommodations.

¹⁴ USAID/Bangladesh will assist with the coordination of initial meetings and providing project contact information.

XI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The total pages, excluding references and annexes, should not be more than 30 pages. The following content (and suggested length) should be included in the report:

1. **Table of Contents**
2. **Executive Summary** - concisely state the project purpose and background, key evaluation questions, methods, most salient findings and recommendations (2-3 pp.);
3. **Introduction** - context in which intervention took place, including a summary of any relevant history, demography, socio-economic status etc. (1 pp.);
4. **The Development Problem and USAID's Response**- brief overview of PRICE project, USAID program strategy and activities implemented in response to the problem, (1pp.);
5. **Purpose of the Evaluation** - purpose, audience, and synopsis of task (1 pp.);
6. **Methodology** - describe evaluation methods, including strengths, constraints and gaps (2pp.);
7. **Findings/Conclusions** - describe and analyze findings for each evaluation question using graphs and tables, as applicable, and also include data quality and reporting system that should present verification of spot checks, issues, and outcome. Conclusions should be credible and should be supported by the findings (12-15pp.). Conclusions are credible when they are presented as analyzed facts, evidence, and data and not based on anecdotes, hearsay, or the compilation of people's opinions. Finding should be specific, concise, and supported by strong quantitative and qualitative evidence;
8. **Recommendations** –prioritized for each evaluation question; should be separate from conclusions and be supported by clearly defined set of findings and conclusions. Include recommendations for future project implementation or relevant program designs and synergies with other USAID projects and other donor interventions as appropriate (3-4pp.);
9. **Lessons Learned**- provide a brief of key technical and/or administrative lessons that could be used for future project or relevant program designs (2-3pp.);
10. **Annexes** –to include statement of work, documents reviewed, evaluation methods, data generated from the evaluation, tools used, interview lists and tables. References, including bibliographical documentation, meetings, interviews and focus group discussions, must be included as an annex. Annexes should be succinct, pertinent and readable. Should also include if necessary, a statement of differences regarding significant unresolved difference of opinion by funders, implementers, or members of the evaluation team on any of the findings or recommendations. The Evaluation Design Matrix (methodology for each question) must be presented as an annex to the report.

The Mission should have an electronic copy of the final report. The report format should be restricted to Microsoft products and 12-point type font should be used throughout the body of the report, with page margins one inch top/bottom and left/right.

Appendix 2 – Reference List

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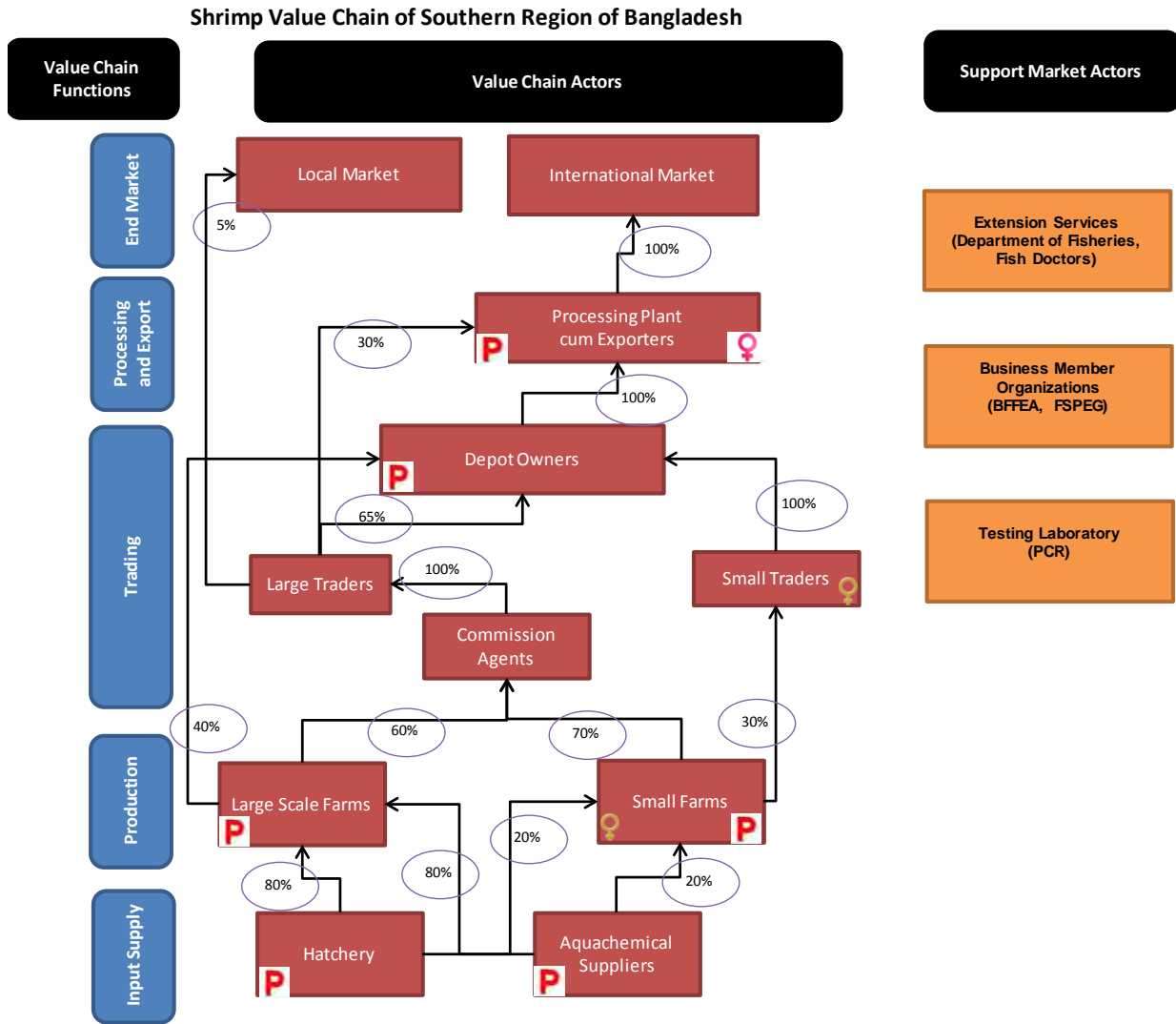
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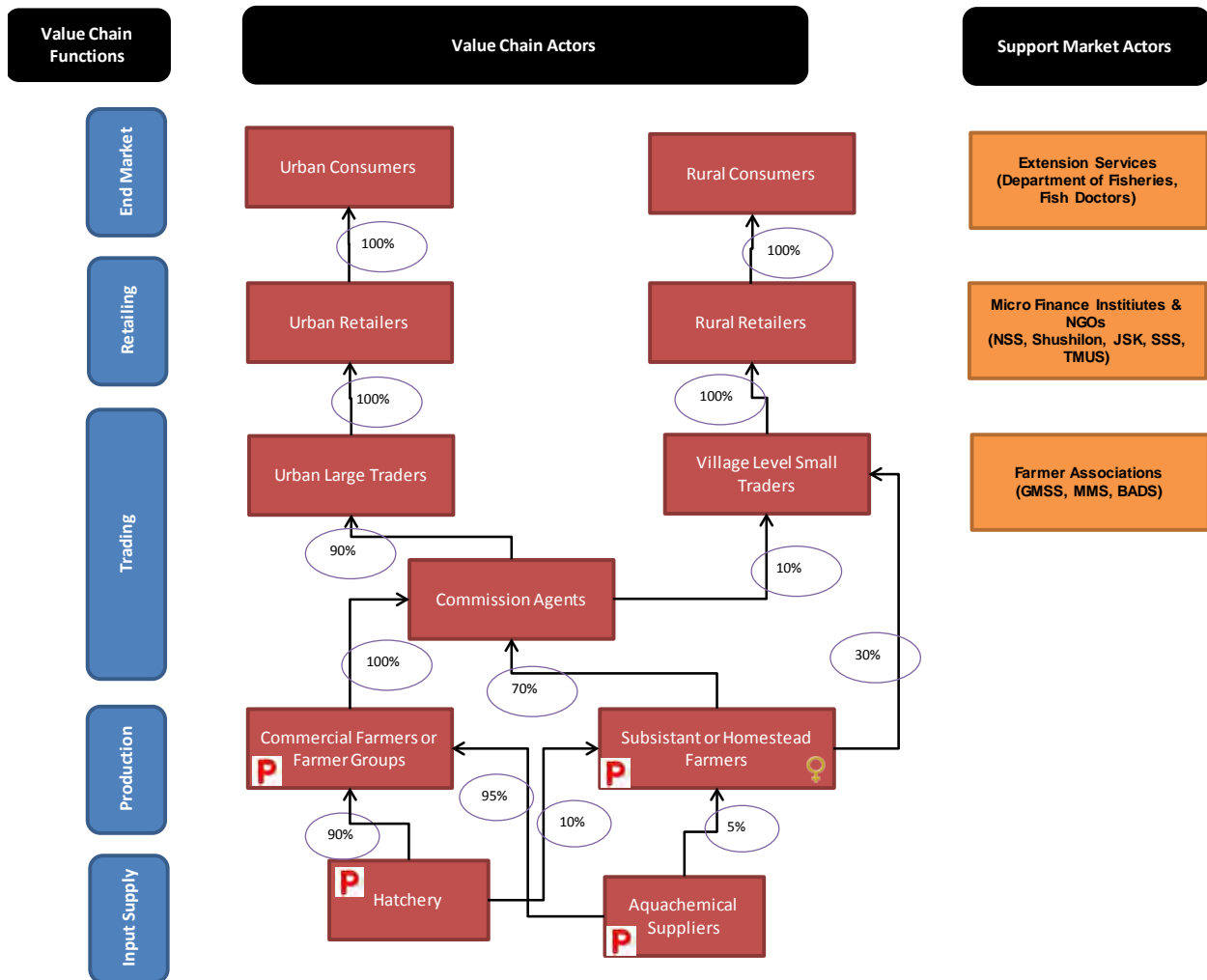
Appendix 3 – Value Chain Maps

1. Shrimp



2. Fish

Fish Value Chain of Southern Region of Bangladesh



Legend

PRICE Intervention Areas
 Significant Women's Involvement
 Slight Women's Involvement

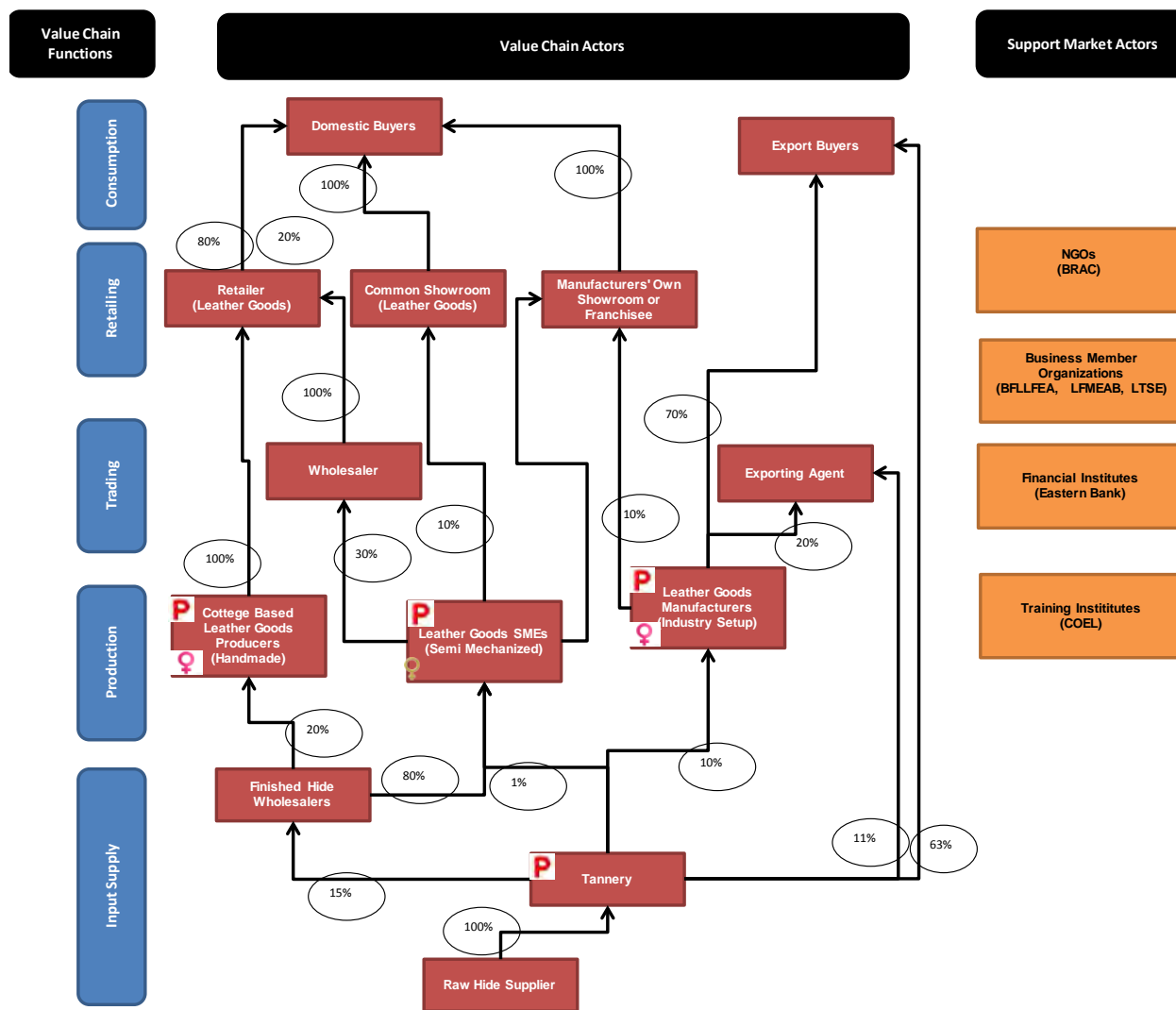


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3. Leather

Leather Product Value Chain in Bangladesh



Legend
 PRICE Intervention Areas
 Significant Women's Involvement
 Slight Women's Involvement

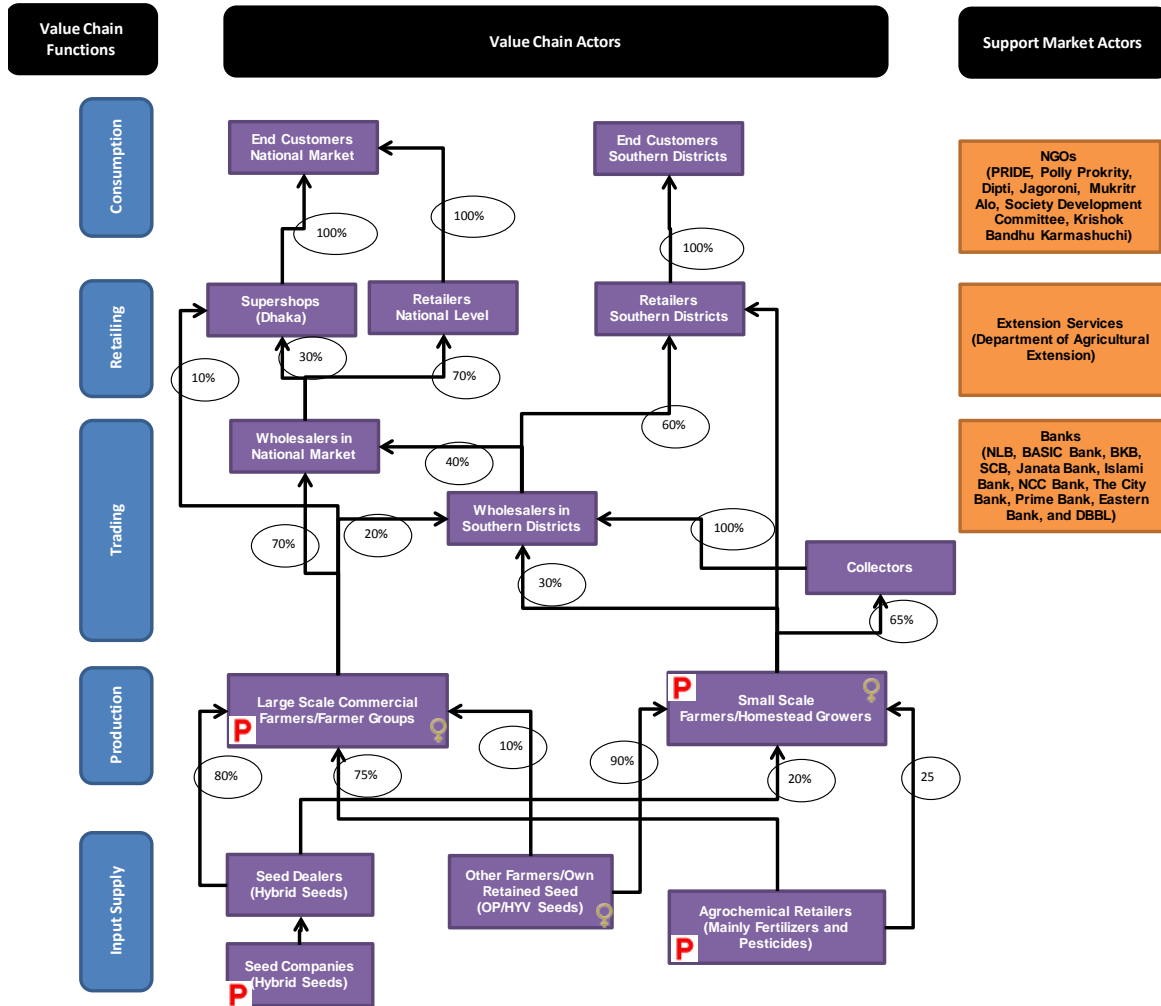


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3. EU INSPIRED Program, 2013, "Technical Report: Leather Sector Includes a Value Chain Analysis and Proposed Action Plans"
4. PRICE Leather Products Sector Brief

4. Eggplant

Eggplant Value Chain Map in Southern Region of Bangladesh



Legend
 PRICE Intervention Areas
 Significant Women's Involvement
 Slight Women's Involvement

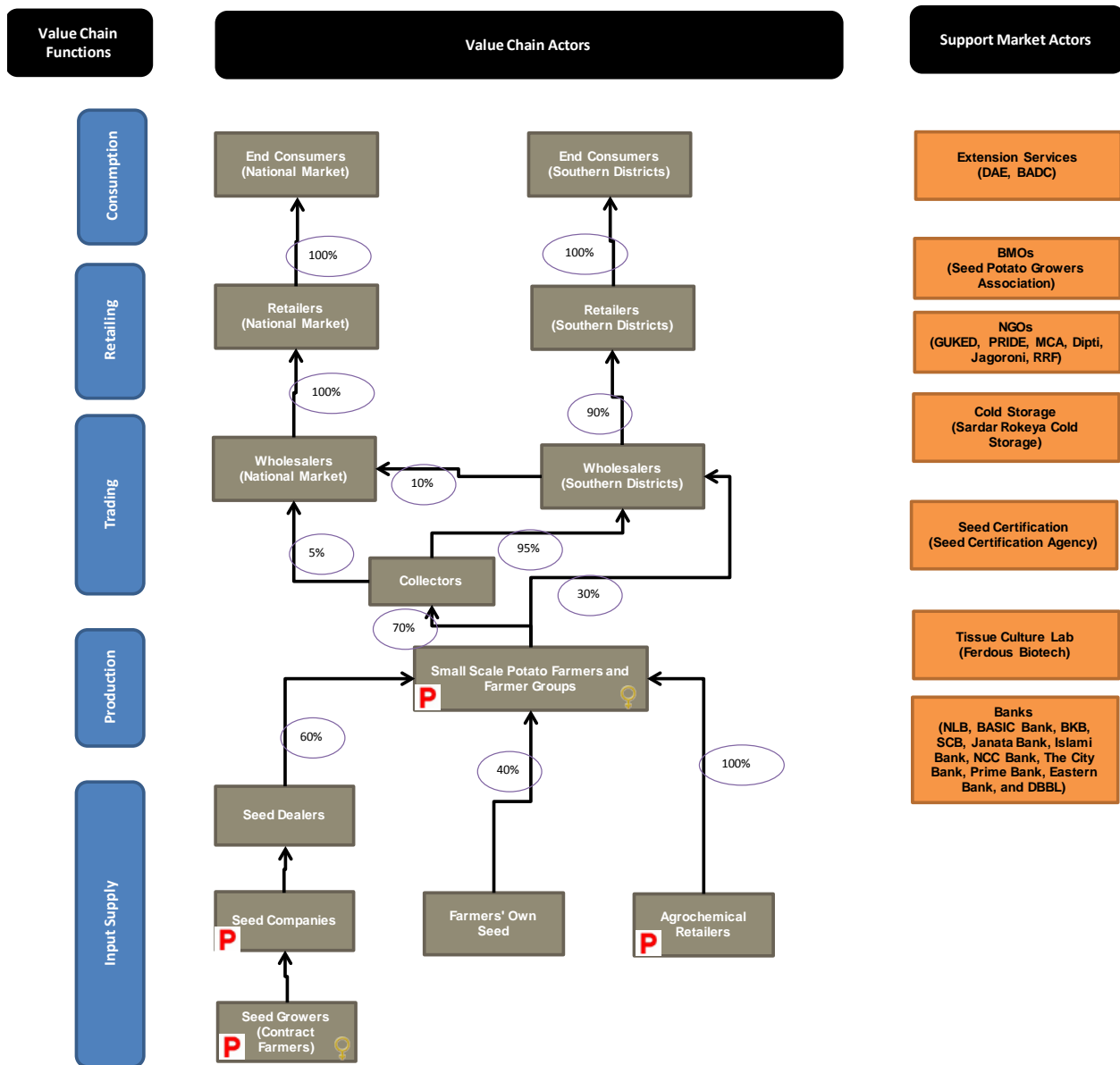


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4. PRICE Annual Report 2011, 2012 and 2013

5. Potato

Potato Value Chain Map in Southern Region of Bangladesh



Legend

PRICE Intervention Areas
 Significant Women's Involvement
 Slight Women's Involvement

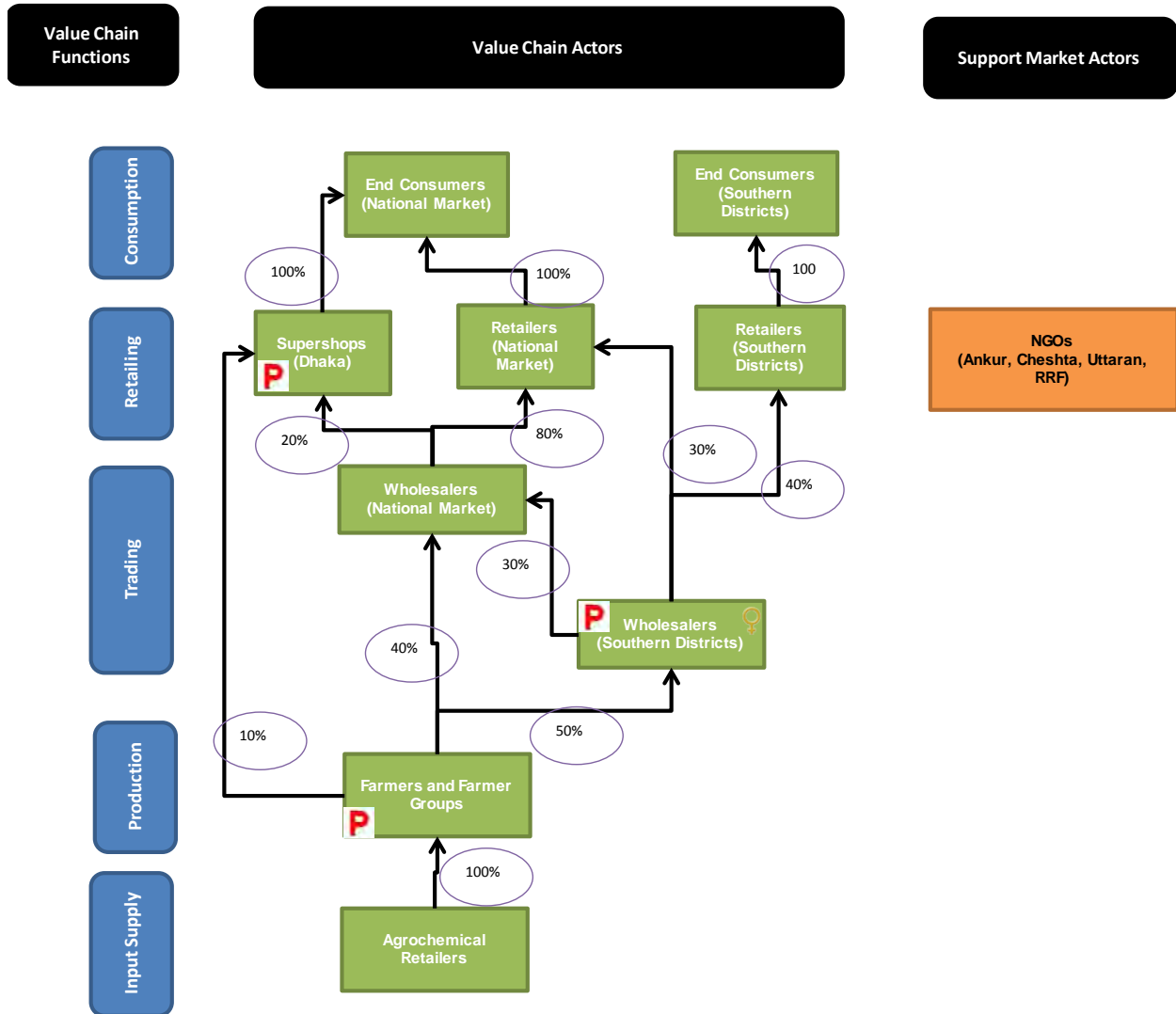


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3. PRICE Annual Report 2011, 2012 and 2013

6. Mango

Mango Value Chain Map in Southern Region of Bangladesh



Legend

PRICE Intervention Areas

Significant Women's Involvement

Slight Women's Involvement



Reference

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Appendix 4 – Case Studies

Box #1: Leather Sector Empowering Merina Sultana

Challenge: Merina Sultana was born to a simple farming family in Gaibandha. In 2005, she completed her secondary studies and got married. She gave birth to a child in 2006. Her husband, Nazmul Huda, was the main earner of the household. He worked in a ready-made garment-manufacturing unit in Dhaka, while Merina lived with her in-laws along with her child. Depending on the salary of only one member of the family caused severe economic problems. Merina was very worried about the education of her child but could not do much, being a housewife. Desperate to provide a stable future to her child, she started seeking opportunities that would help her finance her child's education and would give her proper first-hand industrial working experience. Being a dynamic Bangladeshi Muslim woman, she had to face numerous obstacles from infancy, ranging from gender discrimination to financial crisis. From her experience, she learned that there is no alternative to building one's own skills and capacities to enhance career opportunities. After making the decision to come to the capital city with her child, she had been looking for a job that would be physically, socially, and economically secure and would allow her to take care of her child. The necessity of formal and technical education was embedded in her mind. She knew that the only way the life she sought for her child would come true would be through putting her potential assets to work.

Initiative: Merina went to work at a ready-made garment-manufacturing plant in Savar as an entry-level worker in early 2011 with a salary of BDT 3,800 (US\$48) per month. But the unfriendly working conditions and little time she got to take care of her child made her want to switch to a more flexible job. Moreover, the lack of formal training, apart from the on-the-job training she got from the factory she worked with, was making it difficult for her to increase her income. At this point, a woman in her neighborhood told her about the COEL training programs. She learned that this kind of vocational training program would help her achieve the milestones she had set for herself. In late 2011, she left her previous job and registered as a trainee for the COEL training program on belt manufacturing, which would be applicable for both ready-made garments and the leather-goods sector. She made a real effort to understand the concepts as well as gain practical skills. As a result of her hard work, she was designated as one of the best students after finishing training, and the training committee hired her to work for COEL as a junior trainer.

Results: Merina advanced over time to become a senior trainer with COEL. She is now conducting training programs in various COEL facilities for entry-level operators in leather-goods and footwear manufacturing companies. Her starting salary in COEL as a trainer was BDT 3,600 (US\$45) per month, which was a little less than what she had earned previously at the garment plant. However, she welcomed the money, as it gave her the opportunity to take care of her child and get back to studies to secure a better future for her family. Currently, she is earning BDT 6,300 (US\$79) per month, which she mostly invests in her child's education. Merina believes that she has been empowered by PRICE's training and capacity-building efforts. Now she is able to spend more time with her child and can take part in her household's economic decision making.

Box #2: COEL Strengthens the Leather Sector

EVOLUTION OF CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN LEATHER

Industry Need: In 2008, an initial needs assessment for the sector revealed a heavy demand for machine operators in all three areas of the leather value chain (i.e., tanneries, leather goods, and footwear). Floor supervisors were also needed, making it clear that the leather industry would need its own training facility.

Initial Model: The original version of COEL was developed before the PRICE initiative (it came from an initiative from the Technical and Vocational Education and Training program). This initial partnership in 2008 grew between the government (through the technical training centers) and Apex. The skills development program initially took the form of an apprenticeship program and operated out of the Tangail Technical Center, 50 kilometers from the Apex factory. The government contributed the required space, and APEX contributed 50 percent of the start-up funds and machinery. APEX also had the authority to recruit up to 300 skilled workers. However, the center attracted only local (unskilled) participants, which resulted in a turnover rate of more than 50 percent and did not increase APEX's skilled workforce.

Evolution: The training center later shifted to the APEX facility, and PRICE was invited to participate. Around the same time, PRICE was seeking partnerships, and based on the strong industry need, decided to contribute to the program. One important contribution was in the form of a 50 percent stipend for apprentices. This venture was more successful; 50 to 60 percent of trainees lived in the factory location. The center initially catered to one or two firms but later, with the establishment of COEL, it was mandated to service the entire industry. This change helped prevent poaching of skilled staff, which frequently occurred in the initial days of the program.

Present: COEL was an initiative of the industry skills council. Initially, private companies like Apex donated machines and other infrastructure. Then COEL invited donor organizations like SDC, PRICE, UNICEF, etc. to invest in this venture. PRICE was the first to provide funding to the institution. The PRICE funding was used to develop training manuals, which were later replicated and disseminated by ILO. PRICE also paid for the trainers and a fee to the trainees.

COEL is now considered an industry model, and trainees have the opportunity to get certified by NTVQF and BMET. SDC and DFID have also started to invest in this model by sharing a certain cost component.

Future: Industry representatives believe that COEL's growth has been good but cannot be called significant. COEL is currently working with only 10 or 11 firms, yet approximately 250 companies cater to the leather sector. If COEL aims to be the center of excellence in leather in real terms, many other kinds of service providers, such as designers and pattern makers, are also needed. Industry representatives want to see more donors invest in various aspects of institution building, including infrastructure, equipment purchases, modern facilities for training, training for more designers and pattern makers, and so on. Such models need investment, and donors have an important role to play in their success.

Sustainability: Sustainability in any real sense is still a long time off, as the center needs to evolve in several ways. However, the component of a placement fee equivalent to one month's salary for workers after they complete training and industry placement is important in ensuring sustainability.

Box # 3: Changing Lives Through Market Linkage

Challenge: People's Resources in Developmental Enterprise (PRIDE) is a non-profit, non-political nongovernmental organization that started operating informally in 1998 and formally in 2001. Its activities are focused on the sustainable development of underprivileged and vulnerable groups of people, particularly women. In 2009, PRIDE started a new initiative with agricultural farmers in and around Jessore, especially in potato and eggplant farming. Farmers in the area were mostly involved in subsistence farming rather than commercial production. The goal of this new initiative was to help the farmers increase their production, improve their marketing capabilities, and, consequently, earn a better living.

To achieve this goal, PRIDE entered into a partnership with PRICE. PRICE helped PRIDE address the major challenges (e.g., lack of quality inputs, especially seeds and pesticides, and quality assurance constraints, particularly in post-harvest processing, which prevent these farmers' produce from accessing the larger markets). Additionally, a secondary challenge was to increase access to finance for these small-scale farmers.

Initiative: With PRICE's support, PRIDE began organizing training sessions for farmers aimed at developing better production techniques from sowing to harvesting and post-harvest. For example, PRICE helped in establishing sources for good seeds, by which farmers associated with PRIDE could get good-quality virus-free seeds from potato-seed sellers in Rangpur. Production was only half the battle; as production volumes increased significantly, they became too large for small retailers to handle. PRIDE worked with PRICE to establish links with larger markets within the region, such as Khulna. PRIDE also established links with larger market actors, such as wholesalers. Eventually, PRIDE established linkages with national markets, including Karwan Bazar, Dhaka, which is one of the biggest vegetable markets in the country.

PRIDE trained 400 women in post-harvest handling of potato and eggplant crops: They worked as day laborers in fields and in cold storages. Links with producers have generated more income for them, as they graded, sorted, and cleaned the potatoes once they are harvested. In addition, PRIDE worked with Jagoroni Chakra Foundation, a microfinance institution, to train 1,980 farmers in better production techniques, and select individuals in this group received loans from the foundation after training.

Results: Through these initiatives, farmers associated with PRIDE have achieved a remarkable increase in production volume as well as better market access and a more stable business environment conducive to growth. On average, farmers have increased their productivity by 80 to 120 percent, while costs have remained consistent or have only increased marginally (5 to 15 percent). Women's participation has also increased, and some new women entrepreneurs have emerged. Increased participation by women in post-harvest potato processing led to their acceptance in cold storage, which now accounts for a significant portion of their business (5 to 40 percent). PRIDE itself has expanded its investment beyond farmers—before the initiative, the investment was around Tk.1,000,000 but now it is a staggering Tk.14,300,000—in the form of direct business investment, not grants or loans from other projects. The consultants hired by PRICE to conduct the training sessions during the initiative have also trained staff members in PRIDE to continue the work. Among the farmers who received loans from the Jagoroni Chakra Foundation, 70 percent have maintained this business relationship after the project's completion, indicating the sustainability of the initiative in building access to finance.

Appendix 5 – Evaluation Design Matrix

	Evaluation Question	Data Collection Method	Data Collection Instrument	Sample Question on the Instrument	Data Source
1.	How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	What were the direct desired program outcomes and were they obtained?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, and sector stakeholders
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	How successful, for full-time job creation, has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
		Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) analyses	Focus group protocol	How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local level?	Local PRICE farmers
		Desk research	Annotated reference list	NA	USAID, and PRICE staff
	Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	What are the common characteristics of successful sectors and geographic locations?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, and sector stakeholders
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
		Desk research	Annotated reference list	NA	USAID and PRICE staff
	2.	As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value-chain market linkages to complement its production focus?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	Are there areas within the value chain that require more focus, and why?
Stakeholder surveys			Survey instrument	Since 2011, how has PRICE improved the value chain market linkages to complement its production focus?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
Desk research			Annotated reference list	NA	USAID, and PRICE staff
3.	How did the project extension and 2011 realignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the Feed the	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	Were there any lessons learned as a result of the re-alignment?	USAID, project managers, project staff, sector stakeholders, and farmers
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	Did PRICE's decision in 2011 to concentrate on the FtF regions affect horticulture sector effectiveness and results achievement?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders

	Evaluation Question	Data Collection Method	Data Collection Instrument	Sample Question on the Instrument	Data Source
	Future (FtF) region affect PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement?	Desk research	Annotated reference list	NA	USAID and PRICE staff
4.	Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	What measures were put in place to encourage women to participate in trainings and activities?	USAID, project managers, project staff, sector stakeholders, farmers, and other beneficiaries
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	Are women more empowered across the value chain than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
		Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): PRA analyses	Focus group protocol	Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions?	Local PRICE farmers
		Desk research	Annotated reference list	NA	USAID and PRICE staff
	What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	Is there an increase in entrepreneurship skills among women across value chains?	USAID, project managers, project staff, sector stakeholders, farmers, and other beneficiaries
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
		FGDs: PRA analyses	Focus group protocol	What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?	Local PRICE farmers
		Desk research	Annotated reference list	NA	USAID and PRICE staff
5.	How effective have the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and workforce development initiatives by PRICE been in leather-products sector growth?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	How do you ensure that trainings provided to SMEs translate into outputs (business owners practice what they are taught)? How is this determined and/or tracked?	USAID, project managers, project staff, sector stakeholders, farmers, and other beneficiaries
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	How effective are the SME initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
		FGDs: PRA analyses	Focus group protocol	What are the PRICE strengths in developing SME in the leather products sector?	COEL trainees
		Desk research	Annotated reference	NA	USAID and PRICE staff

	Evaluation Question	Data Collection Method	Data Collection Instrument	Sample Question on the Instrument	Data Source
			list		
6.	What institutional capacity-building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value-chain, hunger, and poverty-alleviation investments?	Structured interviews	Interview protocol	Does PRICE have an exit strategy for each sector and sub-sector? What is the best sustainability strategy for each sector?	USAID, project managers, project staff, sector stakeholders, and farmers
		Stakeholder surveys	Survey instrument	What institutional capacity-building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value chains?	USAID, project managers, project staff, farmers, Ministry of Commerce, and sector stakeholders
		FGDs: PRA analyses	Focus group protocol	Do you have any suggestions for recommendations or lessons learned?	Local PRICE farmers and COEL trainees
		Desk research	Annotated reference list	NA	USAID and PRICE staff

Appendix 6 – Stakeholder Survey

Name:							
Date:							
Location:							
Contact Information:							
Organization:							
Practices in Price:							
	Survey question	0	1	2	3	Score	Feedback
1.1	How successful, for full-time job creation, has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness?	There is no change in job creation as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a slight increase in job creation as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is an increase in job creation as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a significant increase in job creation as a result of PRICE project interventions.		
1.2	How successful, for total increase in investments, has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness?	There is no increase in investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a slight increase in investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is an increase in investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a significant increase in investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.		
1.3	How successful, for total value of sales increased, has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness?	There is no increase in the total value of sales investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a slight increase in the total value of sales investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is an increase in the total value of sales investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a significant increase in the total value of sales investments as a result of PRICE project interventions.		
1.4	How successful, for new market access, has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness?	There is no increase in new market as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a slight increase in new market as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is an increase in new market as a result of PRICE project interventions.	There is a significant increase in new market as a result of PRICE project interventions.		
1.5	How successful has PRICE been in removing sector constraints at the local, national, and international levels?	PRICE has removed no constraints.	PRICE has removed constraints at one level.	PRICE has removed constraints at two levels.	PRICE has removed constraints at three levels.		
1.6	Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises?	Yes	No				
1.7	Is success limited to selected geographic locations?	Yes	No				
2.1	Since 2011, how has PRICE improved the value-chain market linkages to complement its production focus?		PRICE had no improvements on the value chain since 2011.	PRICE had slight improvements on the value chain since 2011.	PRICE had significant improvements on the value chain since 2011.		

3.1	Did PRICE's decision in 2011 to concentrate on the FtF regions affect horticulture sector effectiveness and results achievement?	PRICE'S decision had a negative effect on PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement.	PRICE'S decision had no effect on PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement.	PRICE'S decision had a slightly positive effect on PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement.	PRICE'S decision had a significantly positive effect on PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement.		
4.1	Are women more empowered across the value chain than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions?		Women are not more empowered across the sector value chain.	Women are slightly more empowered across the sector value chain.	Women are significantly more empowered across the sector value chain.		
4.2	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in management of production?	No	Yes				
4.3	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in management of resources?	No	Yes				
4.4	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in management of income?	No	Yes				
4.5	As a result of PRICE, do women have more leadership roles?	No	Yes				
4.6	As a result of PRICE, are women more empowered in management of time?	No	Yes				
4.7	What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for women in the value chains?		PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains have had no impact.	PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains have been slightly positive.	PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains have been significantly positive.		
5.1	How effective are the SME initiatives by PRICE in leather-products sector growth?		The SME initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth have had no effect.	The SME initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth have been slightly effective.	The SME initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth have been significantly effective.		
5.2	How effective are the workforce development initiatives by PRICE in leather-products sector growth?		The workforce development initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth have had no effect.	The workforce development initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth have been slightly effective.	The workforce development initiatives by PRICE in leather products sector growth have been significantly effective.		
6.1	What institutional capacity-building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value chains?						

Appendix 7 – Evaluation Survey Questions

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions
<p>1. How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local, national, and international levels?</p>	<p>a) Field contractors: Did you revise your product quality or quantity as per project requirements? Do you intend to maintain this practice?</p> <p>b) Lead firms: What was the support received by PRICE for opening these new outlets? Has this been beneficial to your company’s bottom line? Will you open similar outlets beyond the existing 10? If yes what costs are involved?</p> <p>c) PRICE: Do sector stakeholder recognize the mutual benefits of value chain interaction?</p> <p>d) PRICE: Have you been able to strengthen any gaps or weaknesses in the value chain? Give an example of how you introduced a service that was missing? How will you continue this activity?</p> <p>e) PRICE: How do PRICE interventions or outcomes benefit value chain stakeholders at the local, national, and international levels, respectively?</p> <p>f) PRICE: How many new jobs have been created?</p> <p>g) PRICE: How much have sales increased in the sectors or subsectors since project commencement?</p> <p>h) PRICE: Will youth continue to remain in rural areas for livelihood purposes?</p> <p>i) PRICE: Were desired program outcomes obtained?</p> <p>j) PRICE: What, if any, unintended side effects (spill-over effects) did the program produce across the three sectors?</p> <p>k) PRICE: What is the sustainability of the increases in sector competitiveness and reduction in constraints?</p> <p>l) PRICE: What is the volume of additional investment into each sectors or subsector?</p> <p>m) PRICE: What types of enterprises were selected to participate in PRICE interventions? Why were they selected?</p> <p>n) PRICE: Which beneficiary target groups were reached as a result of the PRICE intervention?</p> <p>o) Producers: Has there been any increase in increased sales as a result of increased sales volume and/or increased price?</p> <p>p) Producers: Has there been any improvement in post-harvest processing in reducing waste, improvement of product and/or value addition throughout the value chain?</p> <p>q) Producers: Has there been improvements in quality, availability, or price of inputs? Has there been any improvement in productivity cost reduction?</p> <p>r) Producers: Have price interventions lead to increase in productivity and market access at the farmer level?</p> <p>s) Sector Experts, development partners and government officials: Was there any creation of service providers providing better technology and/or updated information in the sector or subsector as a result to PRICE interventions?</p>
<p>Is success limited to a few PRICE beneficiaries/enterprises and selected geographic locations?</p>	<p>a) GoB officials: On the policy level, was there collaboration or transfer of knowledge among project beneficiaries within in different geographic areas from PRICE interventions?</p> <p>b) PRICE: Among different geographic areas, are there differences in implementing the gender project components?</p> <p>c) PRICE: Did PRICE intervention (PRICE knowledge, technology, or market linkages) promote the emergence of new producers, producer groups, SMEs or enterprises within different geographic areas?</p> <p>d) PRICE: What are the common characteristics of successful sectors and geographic locations?</p> <p>e) PRICE: What are the distinct geographic challenges and opportunities in each sector and subsector value chains? (Global gap, organic certification, identity preservation, international competition, etc.)</p>

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions
	<p>f) PRICE: What is the number and geographic locations of indirect beneficiaries as a result of project interventions?</p>
<p>2. As suggested in the mid-term evaluation, how has PRICE improved the value-chain market linkages to complement its production focus?</p>	<p>a) Business Member Organizations (BMO): Is there an increase in market opportunities created by PRICE interventions, nature of linkage (such as direct market linkage, linkage through intermediaries, export or domestic, supply of basic products vs supply of value added products)?</p> <p>b) DAM/EPB sector experts: What are the market opportunities created by PRICE interventions?</p> <p>c) Lead firms: Which new markets have opened up for you due to PRICE intervention? What was the specific intervention? (For example, accessing Malaysian exporter TESCO) How will this intervention benefit the producers?</p> <p>d) PRICE: Are there areas within the value chain that require more focus, and why?</p> <p>e) PRICE: What are some of the new markets your program has succeeded in opening up to the producers?</p> <p>f) PRICE: What was the effect of a greater emphasis on market development and linkages and less on production?</p> <p>g) PRICE: What was the effect on the number of contract or institutional buyers linked with producers, export or local market linkages, or quantity of product sourced by the contract buyers?</p> <p>h) Producers: Are you able to access high value markets?</p> <p>i) Producers: Are you able to access new markets?</p> <p>j) Producers: Which intervention do you think has been critical to accessing new markets?</p>
<p>3. How did the project extension and 2011 realignment of PRICE's focus to support horticulture in the Feed the Future region affect PRICE's effectiveness and results achievement?</p>	<p>a) PRICE: How was the plan rearrangement accommodate interventions in FtF areas?</p> <p>b) PRICE: What is the overall impact and effects of re-aligning PRICE to FtF areas for beneficiaries? For example, increased in overall project number of jobs, sales, or investments.</p> <p>c) PRICE: What were the changes in intervention approaches on the ground in FtF districts?</p> <p>d) PRICE: What were the target interventions, target beneficiaries and target impacts planned during 2011-2013?</p> <p>e) PRICE: Were there any lessons learned as a result of the re-alignment?</p> <p>g) PRICE: When transitioning to FtF sites, what was the response of those geographic areas that were left out?</p> <p>f) PRICE: When transitioning to FtF sites, what was the response of those sectors that were left out?</p> <p>g) PRICE: Which approach is more sustainable? Ftf or original approach?</p>
<p>4. Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions?</p>	<p>a) PRICE: Are these practices sustainable?</p> <p>b) PRICE: How did PRICE ensure participation of women?</p> <p>c) PRICE: How did PRICE ensure that partner organizations include women in leadership roles?</p> <p>d) PRICE: What communication strategies have been established to ensure that communities are knowledgeable about PRICE activities and interventions?</p> <p>e) PRICE: What measures were put in place to encourage women to participate in trainings and activities?</p> <p>f) PRICE: What measures were put in place to ensure gender equality exist across value chains?</p> <p>g) PRICE: What was the methodology of identifying the "gender implications of engaging various sectors"?</p> <p>h) PRICE: What were the program activities and outcomes focused on inclusiveness of gender?</p>
<p>What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating</p>	<p>a) Lead firms: Have you entered any contracts with women's groups. If yes do you see any advantages? If not why?</p> <p>b) PRICE: Have you consciously targeted women enterprise development? If so where and how?</p> <p>c) PRICE: Is there a change in the number of women in traditionally gender-unfriendly sectors? What</p>

Evaluation questions	Sub-questions
jobs for the women in the value chains?	<p>about in all sectors?</p> <p>d) Producer Groups, Sector Experts and BMOs: Is there an increase in entrepreneurship skills among women within each sector and subsector?</p> <p>e) Producer Groups, Sector Experts and BMOs: Is there an increase in the number of women involved in each sector and subsector?</p> <p>f) Producer Groups, Sector Experts and BMOs: What is change in the roles of women in sector activities?</p>
<p>5. How effective have the Small & Medium Enterprise (SME) and workforce development initiatives by PRICE been in leather-products sector growth?</p>	<p>a) COEL and BMOs: What is the impact on productivity, quality, and design of the leather products?</p> <p>b) COEL and BMOs: What is the number of potential workers trained in COEL?</p> <p>c) COEL and BMOs: Which fields are workers capacity strengthened?</p> <p>d) PRICE: Are there significant linkages between the leather product industry and international market?</p> <p>e) PRICE: How are the interventions related to market access expected to continue given the dynamic nature of markets?</p> <p>f) PRICE: How do you ensure that trainings provided to SMEs translate into outputs (business owners practice what they are taught)? How is this determined and/or tracked?</p> <p>g) PRICE: How does the workforce development translate into benefits for SMEs</p> <p>h) PRICE: How many beneficiaries were reached as a result of the PRICE intervention within the leather products sector?</p> <p>i) PRICE: What challenges were faced with program implementation targeted at the SMEs and how were these mitigated?</p> <p>j) PRICE: What were the program activities and outcomes focusing on gender equality and the disadvantaged within the SME sector?</p> <p>k) PRICE: Which processes/ activities in project implementation contribute to the successful implementation and achievement of targeted outcomes?</p> <p>l) SME: What was the support received by PRICE/ Will you travel to access new trade fairs without any financial support from PRICE?</p>
<p>6. What institutional capacity-building lessons learned from PRICE should USAID carry forward to future value-chain, hunger, and poverty-alleviation investments?</p>	<p>a) PRICE: Are PRICE interventions replicable in non-intervention areas of Bangladesh?</p> <p>b) PRICE: Can the value chain linkages established by PRICE be sustained locally? If yes, how?</p> <p>c) PRICE: Is it possible to construct a PRICE Working Group or Department of Commerce coordination body on the national level?</p> <p>d) PRICE: Do you have any general institutional lessons learned?</p> <p>e) PRICE: Do you have any institutional capacity building lessons learned from PRICE that USAID should carry forward to future value chain, hunger and poverty alleviation investments?</p> <p>f) PRICE: If you could design a new value chain project, what would you do differently?</p> <p>g) PRICE: Since PRICE staff have encountered policies, particularly at the sector level, that hamper value chain growth, what is likely to happen?</p> <p>h) PRICE: What did PRICE do to maintain local capacity to sustain technical training upon completion of PRICE?</p> <p>i) PRICE: What implementation and program design limitations in PRICE were avoidable?</p> <p>j) PRICE: What is Chemonics' PRICE exit strategy?</p> <p>k) PRICE: What is the Local Currency Development Fund's (LCDF) effect on PRICE and is there a longer term strategy to work effectively with LCDF?</p> <p>l) PRICE: What measures were set in place to ensure that PRICE programs continue after USAID funding is completed?</p>

Appendix 8 – Focus Group Discussion Questions Template

Names:
Date:
Location:
Contact Information:
Organization:
Practices in PRICE:
Background:
1. How successful has PRICE been in increasing sector competitiveness and removing constraints at the local level?
2. Are women more empowered across the three value chains than they otherwise would have been as a result of PRICE interventions?
3. What has been the impact of PRICE interventions and trainings in creating jobs for the women in the value chains?
4. Do you have any suggestions for recommendations or lessons learned?

Appendix 9 – Document Review Summaries Template

Sector	Product	Oct-Dec YYYY	Jan-March YYYY	April-June YYYY	Annual Report YYYY
General					
Horticulture	Potato				
	Eggplant				
	Mango				
	Cross-cutting Issues				
Aquaculture	Fish				
	Shrimp				
Leather	Assistance to SME Development				
	Assistance to Workforce development				
	Other Sector Development Initiatives				
Equity Integration	Horticulture				
	Aquaculture				
	Leather				

Appendix 10 – List of Stakeholder Interviews

Sector	Stakeholder/Organization	Type	Location of Respondent	Interview Code
Horticulture	Chemonics (Team Leader)	Interview	Dhaka	8
	PRIDE	Survey	Jessore	16
	Chesta Agro	Survey	Jhenidah	17
	Konika Seed	Survey	Jhenidah	18
	iDE Bangladesh	Survey	Dhaka	28
	Lal Teer	Survey	Dhaka	34
	Farmer Interview (Potato)	Survey	Jessore	36
	Farmer Interview (Tomato)	Survey	Dhaka	37
	Farmer Interview (Potato and Eggplant)	Survey	Jessore	38
	Farmer Interview (Eggplant and Cucumber)	Survey	Jessore	39
	Farmer Interview (Potato)	Survey	Jessore	40
	Farmer Interview (Potato and Vegetable)	Survey	Chuadanga	41
	Farmer Interview (Potato and Vegetable)	Survey	Chuadanga	42
	Farmer Interview (Eggplant)	Survey	Jessore	43
	Farmer Interview (Eggplant)	Survey	Jessore	44
	Murail Multipurpose RDC	Survey	Bogra	49
	GUKED	Survey	Bogra	50
Jagoroni Chokro Foundation	FGD	Jessore	51	
Aquaculture	BFFEA	Survey	Khulna	10
	BFFEA	FGD	Khulna	11
	Jalalabad FF	Survey	Khulna	12
	Mondol	Survey	Khulna	13
	World Fish	Survey	Khulna	14
	GMSS	Survey	Khulna	19
	Gazi Fish	Survey	Khulna	20
	FAO/Chemonics	Survey	Dhaka	21
	Fishtec	Survey	Dhaka	24
	Farmer Interview (Fish)	Survey	Khulna	25
	Farmer Interview (Fish)	Survey	Khulna	26
	Farmer Interview (Fish)	Survey	Khulna	27
	Farmer Interview (Fish)	Survey	Khulna	33
	Farmer Interview (Fish)	Survey	Khulna	35
	Talora Association	Survey	Bogra	48
Leather	Chemonics	Survey	Dhaka	3
	LFMEAB	Survey	Dhaka	4
	COEL and Apex	Survey	Dhaka	6
	LTSE	Survey	Dhaka	15
	Aarong	Survey	Dhaka	22
	Bengal Shoes	Survey	Dhaka	23
	International Labor Organization (ILO)	Survey	Dhaka	30
	COEL	FGD	Dhaka	32
	Eastern Bank	Survey	Dhaka	46

Multi-Sector	Chemonics (PRICE COP)	Survey	Dhaka	2
	Katalyst	Survey	Dhaka	5
	Wiedemann Associates	FGD	Dhaka	7
	Chemonics (Former PRICE M&E Manager)	Survey	Dhaka	9
	Chemonics (Former PRICE DCOP)	Survey	Dhaka	29
	USAID PRICE COR	Survey	Dhaka	45
	Ministry of Commerce	Survey	Dhaka	47

Appendix 11- Data Coding Methodology

Evaluation Question	Focus Area	Horticulture	Aquaculture	Leather	Multi-sector
1	Job creation	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Total increase in investments	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Total value of sales increased	✓	✓	✓	✓
	New market access	✓	✓	✓	✓
	PRICE addresses sector constraints	✓	✓	✓	✓
	PRICE limitations	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Mid-term evaluation production focus	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Feed the Future horticulture interventions	✓			✓
4	Women's empowerment across value chains	✓	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index</i>	✓			✓
	Job creation for women	✓	✓	✓	✓
5	SME development		✓	✓	
	Workforce development		✓	✓	
6	Institutional capacity building	✓	✓	✓	✓

Appendix 12- Life of Project Comparison Tables

Table 1: PRICE Performance Data

	Indicator	Unit	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY 2009		FY 2010		FY 2011		FY 2012		FY 2013	
				Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
1	Total value of increased sales	USD	\$230,300,059	12,700,000	5.51%	39,343,393	17.08%	129,192,657	56.10%	124,885,117	54.23%	98,588,574	42.81%
2	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	Number	49,492	1,658	3.35%	9,585	19.37%	19,736	39.88%	28,325	57.23%	23,900	48.29%
3	Total value of increased investments	USD	\$7,832,346	520,000	6.64%	1,870,585	23.88%	3,993,362	50.99%	12,595,841	160.82%	2,045,717	26.12%
4	Number of persons who participated in workforce development programs	Number	27,840	1,616	5.80%	3,137	11.27%	8,643	31.05%	28,400	102.01%	7,481	26.87%
5	Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or microcredit	Number	19,098	-	NA	2,239	11.72%	4,216	22.08%	6,553	34.31%	18,304	95.84%
6	Value of incremental sales at farm level attributed to FtF implementation	USD	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	64,240,241	NA	61,320,959	NA
7	Value of new private-sector investment in the agriculture sector or food chain leveraged by FtF implementation	USD	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	12,415,721	NA	1,693,153	NA
8	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	ha	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	5,310	NA	8,868	NA
9	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Number	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	15,743	NA	33,609	NA
10	Number of individuals who have received USG-supported short-term agricultural-sector productivity or food-security training	Number	NA	-	NA	-	NA	-	NA	57,208	NA	48,509	NA

Table 2: Gender Disaggregated Performance Data

	Indicator	Unit	Life of Project (LoP) Target	FY2010		FY2011		FY2012		FY2013	
				Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP	Achievement	% of LoP
2	Number of full-time equivalent jobs created	Male	53,537	8,212	15.34%	13,652	25.50%	24,524	45.81%	19,030	35.55%
		Female	13,738	1,373	9.99%	6,084	44.29%	3,801	27.67%	4,869	35.44%
4	Number of persons who participated in workforce development program	Male	11,743	1,064	9.06%	3,327	28.33%	2,867	24.41%	5,027	42.81%
		Female	16,658	2,074	12.45%	5,316	31.91%	3,529	21.19%	2,454	14.73%
5	Number of firms and farmers receiving USG assistance to access formal loans or micro-credit	Male	27,843	1,108	3.98%	20,328	73.01%	5,102	18.32%	9,479	34.04%
		Female	4,834	1,131	23.40%	6,701	138.62%	1,451	30.02%	8,825	182.56%
8	Number of hectares under improved technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Male	NA	-	NA	-	NA	4,352	NA	7,247	NA
		Female						958		1,622	
9	Number of farmers and others who have applied new technologies or management practices as a result of USG assistance	Male	NA	-	NA	-	NA	11,668	NA	25,465	NA
		Female						4,076		8,144	
10	Number of individuals who have received USG supported short-term agricultural sector productivity or food security training	Male	NA	-	NA	-	NA	44,526	NA	13,507	NA
		Female						12,682			

¹ In FY 2009, PRICE recorded the above indicators but did not disaggregate by gender. For this reason, FY 2009 is not included in this table.

² Indicators 6 to 10 began in 2011, with the shift to the FtF framework. During this year, PRICE re-oriented to support a more production- and market-based approach with the assumption that development in these areas would improve the skills of producers and other vital players in the respective value chains, thus leading to more efficient agricultural productivity, improved market access and increased food security. Indicators 6 to 10 aim to capture PRICE reorientation to the FtF framework.

Appendix 13 – Additional Evaluation Findings

WEAI Findings in the Leather Sector

The evaluation team also asked questions about women's empowerment based on WEAI. Although the WEAI addresses women's empowerment in agriculture, since the leather sector successfully addressed women's empowerment, the study team felt that the leather sector stakeholders would provide valuable feedback.

Questions based on the WEAI were simplified in order to understand the role of women in making decisions, managing production, resources, time, and leadership. Stakeholder perceptions about the impact of PRICE on women included the following:

- 50 percent expressed that women were more empowered in making resources.
- 20 percent indicated that women were more empowered in managing production
- 100 percent said that women were more empowered in the management of their income.
- 67 percent expressed that women were more empowered in taking on leadership roles.
- 83 percent said that women were more empowered to manage their time.

Respondents commented that the project strongly contributed to empowering women with regard to various aspects of employment within the leather sector. An increase in jobs through skill development trainings, particularly for floor workers, made a valuable contribution to women's empowerment. However, very few women hold managerial, supervisory, or entrepreneurial roles. This means that in some of these roles, women were not making decisions on what to produce.

One hundred percent of trainees mentioned that the leather sector maintains better work hours and flexible terms than other sectors. As a result, women who worked in this sector are able to devote more time to their families. All stakeholders perceived the ready-made garments sector to be more oppressive, with longer work hours and no flexibility to allow women to better manage their time.

Job creation for women was ranked 2.80 out of 3.00, indicating a significant increase in the level of job creation for women. As mentioned earlier, a total of 7772 jobs were created through the project. As per the reported data, approximately 50 percent of these (3800 jobs) were created for women, which supports the perception of the stakeholders.

Evaluation Question 5: How effective have the SME and workforce development initiatives by PRICE been in the aquaculture sector growth?

Although the original evaluation question did not target the aquaculture sector, throughout the evaluation, our team found that PRICE implemented regular SME and workforce development initiatives within the aquaculture sector. For this reason, the study's findings also include the aquaculture sector.

There were two indicators that reveal stakeholders' perceptions of SME and workforce development initiatives within the aquaculture sector. The average score provided was 2.33, which means the stakeholders thought that the project was effective in SME and workforce development initiatives in fish and shrimp subsector growth. However, further research among individual stakeholders revealed that both SME and workforce development did not occur simultaneously for the overall aquaculture sector. Rather, due to the dynamics of the subsectors, SME initiatives were more successful in the fish subsector while workforce development efforts were more effective in the shrimp subsector.

The targeted fish subsector is the domestic market, and the entire value chain is comprised of micro and SME level entrepreneurs. Through successful PRICE initiatives—such as improved technology for fish farming, linking fish farmers with other farmers and marketing intermediaries in the area, enhancing fish quality, and linking fish farmers with microfinance institutions to receive micro credits in the fish subsector—individuals became successful entrepreneurs. According to farmer estimates, profit among entrepreneurs increased approximately 150 to 200 percent through various PRICE interventions, although the reported profitability of PRICE project indicators is even higher, nearly 400 percent. But the fish industry structure does not allow a large number of full-time workers to be involved in the fish farms. In fish farms, the main staff are household members and the entrepreneur. The workforce training interventions targeted household members and entrepreneurs to improve their technical skills and knowledge. Thus, for the fish subsector, while the SME development may be deemed moderately effective, workforce development was not effective.

On the contrary, the shrimp subsector mostly follows an industry structure, in which a large number of workers are involved, especially in processing plants. The SMEs are involved at the farming and depot level of the subsector. The interventions in the shrimp subsector actually began with the sector constraint of worker compliance, and interventions were focused on improving workers' competitiveness. There were interventions related to improving workers skills and working conditions within the plants. In the discussions, the shrimp sector stakeholders and processors indicated that the interventions were significantly effective in workforce development for these processing plants.

The workforce development interventions were also extended to the workers in depots, which helped in improving the skills of the depot workers in post-harvesting handling of shrimp. There were few PRICE SME development interventions in the shrimp sector apart from a few to improve the production and quality of products at the farmer level, which eventually increased incomes for the farmers. However, the success was not as significant as the production level interventions in the fish subsector. Thus, the workforce development interventions in the shrimp subsector were significantly effective, but the effectiveness of SME development interventions was only moderate.