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Transcript of interview with

A. M. ANISUZZAMAN

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By: John Lewis, Richard Webb, Devesh Kapur

FOREWORD

The following is a transcript of an oral interview conducted by the authors of the World Bank's fiftieth anniversary history: John P. Lewis, Richard Webb and Devesh Kapur, *The World Bank: Its First Half Century*, Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1997. It is not a formal oral history, and it is not a systematic overview of the work of the person interviewed. At times the authors discussed the planned publication itself and the sources that should be consulted; at other times they talked about persons and publications extraneous to the Bank. Some interview tapes and transcripts begin and end abruptly. Nevertheless, the World Bank Group Archives believes that this transcript may be of interest to researchers and makes it available for public use.

A. M. Anisuzzaman
November 20, 1991 - Verbatim

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

ANISUZZAMAN: First I actually came to Agriculture in 1967.

LEWIS: '67. I see.

ANISUZZAMAN: I joined secretariat then. We used to call them, actually, the provincial--the state governments now--we used to call them not the ministry but the agriculture departments. During '67, I was just joint secretary in charge of self-sufficiency program, green revolution, self-sufficiency. And then from there—I was there for a year—and then from there I actually switched over to Agricultural Development Corporation, member director in charge of [inaudible] issues. I stayed there during the pre-liberation days; for about three, four years I was in Agricultural Development Corporation.

Then there was the War of Liberation; I was transferred from here to West Pakistan. So there on the other side, in Sind, I was Secretary, Agriculture and Rural Development and Cooperative also; was there for about two years.

I came back. I was, for about a year, I was Land Reforms Commissioner.

LEWIS: You were . . .

ANISUZZAMAN: Land Reforms Commissioner. And then actually I came again, found myself as Secretary, Agriculture, in 1974-'75-'76.

Then I had some problems for a short while. For about six months I was chairman, Tele-Commission, and then after that actually I was Managing Director, Agricultural Development Bank.

LEWIS: I see.

ANISUZZAMAN: From Agricultural Development Bank I landed myself in Rural Development Cooperatives and Local Governments. There I was for about four, five years. Then again came back as Secretary of Agriculture, so continued there for about three years, then went to Planning Commission for a short while, Secretary, Planning Commission, for about a year, and then from Planning Commission I went to Ministry of Defense, and then again came back to Agriculture. And that, actually, that period was the most critical and the challenging, and all the controversies were picked up which . .

LEWIS: After you came back from Defense, which year is this?

ANISUZZAMAN: From Ministry of Defense to Agriculture again.

LEWIS: Yeah, when?

ANISUZZAMAN: That was from '86-'88. So '86-'88 was a very critical actual year because agriculture—actually the growth rate of agriculture sector was going down like anything. So you have heard already about—that we had a review. UNDP [United Nations Development Program] had a review of how is agriculture performing, what has gone wrong.

LEWIS: Just Faaland was involved.

ANISUZZAMAN: Just Faaland was, yes, my good friend there. Just Faaland was the leader. And what can be done about. So that was the time, '86-'88.

So after--I actually in '88 I left. And then I went as Director of Administrative Staff College. And then from there I actually retired.

And meanwhile for a short, actually, that I actually left a job, I was appointed to be Ambassador to Japan, but actually I had some problems so I had to leave that job. And then I was then called as Director, Administrative Staff College, then from there I actually retired in 1990. So that's all.

So these are the critical days I have seen.

Because the first involvement of the Bank—I started with the Bank as officer on special duty for self-sufficiency program in 1967, and that was my first encounter with the Bank. And those were the days of massive irrigation expansion. So that was one phase.

Then in '74, now when I came back again to Agriculture, the Bank was taking—they had continued, actually, the interest in agriculture so they were having projects and the programs for agriculture sector. So that was another phase.

And then '82, '86 or '85, that was another phase. And '86-'88 was.

So you have found--what I have actually found for myself now—the approach of the Bank, '67-'74, then '82 and '86, the approach was actually all totally different.

LEWIS: It was different?

ANISUZZAMAN: Yes. So these were the three, actually, I have seen. And I do not know what will happen in the future because we are passing '88 after this review, sector review. In '88 we are passing through that period after the review. So this is actually—this is my background.

LEWIS: How did these approaches differ, the Bank's approaches?

ANISUZZAMAN: Now, in '67 we have not been talking--actually I compare '67 and the subsequent with the exception of the '86 one. It was different—'82 that it actually started, actually in '82, actually during this phase. Now what I actually came back and

then actually what I found. The philosophical approach now, conceptual, actually, the framework, that was actually altogether different. It was more of a projected in '67, '74 now, it was more of a projected. In '67 now we were actually thinking in terms of expanding our irrigation, rapid expansion of irrigation for winter, safe agriculture during winter seasons. So we were talking actually project formulation; we were formulating projects for the first series of irrigation equipments.

So I was not actually used to the words, what you call actually the “conditionality.” Those things were not very much there. The engineers used to come—I do not know if you have any engineers in the company over there so I'm not actually casting any aspersions on those—so they used to come, we used to talk more about the engineering specifications, what should be the specification of the pump, this type of thing, more often technical things, actually, we were going more into the technicalities of—engineering technicalities, if I can put it like that—we were going more into that. So the conditionalities, actually we were not used to this type of expression now, neither in '67 nor in '74, 'til we actually now—and that, actually, we were not—it was not very, very loud in 1982, but they were already there. The import policy credit, actually, which used to come from the Bank now, and the conditionalities used to, and those conditionalities--when I recollect my thoughts in tranquility now what I actually find that the conditionalities were already there now and they have taken a final, actually, the form through your structural adjustment, this, that and the other, in '86.

So from '82 actually there was a significant shift, that you were not providing actually the credit for actually the project, for the purpose of buying actually hardware from abroad, for the purpose of building construction, this, that and the other now. But we were actually cost-sharing philosophically and conceptually; the Bank was cost-sharing the desirability or otherwise of many of these things, that what should be—their policy, of course, now if I may again [inaudible]—so this changed now in a broader way, what I may say, that in '67 this was more of a projected.

LEWIS: Projects, yeah.

ANISUZZAMAN: Meant particularly for the purpose of hardwares from abroad and then we can substitute local expenditures on construction of infrastructural facilities for the use of those hardwares within the country. So that was the basic thrust in the field of 1967 right up to 1982. It became more prominent in actually '86, but now from '82 onward now—'82 it was coming very quietly.

We had not realized—I had not realized—I actually understood actually the implications of the cost of substitution. Is it desirable? In '82 now I perceive that we shall have to gradually withdraw subsidy both from irrigation, seeds, from all the agriculture industries, then the task for actually the privatization, that we shall have to gradually move for the privatization of this agricultural input trade. This was in the hands of a public sector organization, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation. So when the Bank started raising these cautions now, raising the actually--questioning, the Bank was questioning the desirability of keeping it in the hands of a public sector agency, the

distribution of agricultural inputs, then the question of subsidy and all the philosophical issues were coming. So this is the difference, if I'm actually—so the difference between '67, the qualitative difference between the '67 and '82 was this. So this is actually just to answer your question.

LEWIS: Right, right.

ANISUZZAMAN: This is actually what I have—we have seen.

Now, if you actually [inaudible] what is your claim: now what was actually the impact. '67 onward now, when we were in that phase now—this is my again, because now the Bank, my friend, you should go and talk to Frank in the Bank now because I have been working with Mister Frank Thornley for a long time now. Now it is—you can very conveniently--by “you” I mean actually not you; I mean the Bank was actually the, foreign actually the, persons, foreigners interested in the development of Bangladesh who can actually very conveniently shift you, change your position. But it becomes somewhat difficult for us now, nationals, to do it because we are very much in the thick of the things now, socially, politically and otherwise. And definitely as a bureaucrat—I'm a bureaucrat and I should not have but I cannot—I do not work in a vacuum. I shall have to always keep these type political realities, social realities. And it is not a crime on the part of a bureaucrat now, a member of the permanent bureaucracy now, to have some sort of social and political philosophy of his own. That is very strong, person to person, from Secretary to Secretary, but we used to have this.

So that the Bank has changed. This is what actually I now [inaudible] whenever I meet now Frank now I tell him, “When I was in rural development we used to . . .”

Now we had a number actually of joint commissions now: for minor irrigation with the Bank, for agriculture credit and what was the—for agricultural extension research and other things. And we have jointly signed that we have--we have argued over a period of six months, one year now in the commission as what should be the appropriate approach for Bangladesh for the development of cooperatives, for the growth of agricultural credit and also for the growth of the agricultural sector. We have argued, but we have adopted a particular type of policy now and then made a number of recommendations.

Now what I find and actually what I actually started finding in 1982 onwards now, particularly from 1986 now, that there has been a significant departure on their side, but we were actually sticking to our—that the old approach is likely to be useful, more appropriate and in that sense more beneficial for us on the question of subsidies, on the question of privatization of agricultural activity, input distribution program, on the question of institutional framework, now, for providing the backup support for the use of hardware, this, that and the other.

So what Frank actually tells me nowadays that he has--there is nothing I actually—whenever we meet now I just ask him, “This is what you have, we have agreed, and this is what you have prescribed and this is what we have gone for. Now all of a sudden I

find that you have changed your position, and you are coming up with a new set of recommendations, policy recommendations,” putting in a straightforward manner.

So he says, “There is nothing wrong. The world changes.”

LEWIS: Can you give us some examples?

ANISUZZAMAN: I’m coming to examples.

Now, I’d like to begin with the last one. In 19—I was not there; my good friend, you may have heard about [A.Z.M.] Obaidullah Khan, he was also; we were colleagues now and then he became the Minister also for Agriculture. So Mister Obaidullah Khan, he was then—he succeeded me as Secretary, Agriculture, when I was in Rural Development, Cooperative and Rural Development.

Then World Bank actually came up for agricultural extension (I’m picking up the specific example here): agricultural extension. We were very—actually we were aware of that agricultural extension plays a very vital role in income generation. [Inaudible] the information appropriate type of technologies, but dissemination of that technology to actually the poor farmers or the subsistence farmers, small farmers in Bangladeshi context is a very important initiative. So we were actually clamoring, so when I entered Agriculture in 1966, ‘67 we were aware of the deficiencies, weakness of agricultural extension services here in Bangladesh which we have inherited from the colonial days. And then we are not very sure now as to how the situation can be corrected. We were just actually thinking about it.

Then came the World Bank’s—actually, there’s some who was then my good friend, actually was the Resident, Leonard Weiss. He actually told me the Bank has adopted a new approach for agricultural extension, the T and V [training and visit] system, the [Daniel] Benor’s method. And he actually handed over a few, a couple of, actually, the literature, a small type of brochure . .

LEWIS: Yeah, Benor and [James Q.] Harrison’s . .

ANISUZZAMAN: The Benor-Harrison’s newspapers now. And initially I was also credited. I said, “Look, is it also possible for us? Mr. Benor is working now right across the border in India, in West Bengal and Rajasthan. Is it possible--I feel quite excited about that program.” It was very simple. And I actually thought at that stage that we may have found the answer, very simple type of answer for a complex type of situation over here. And since we have comparable situation, socially, politically and otherwise, there in India and here in Bangladesh now, then we would like to get the benefit out of that one.

So I requested. Mr. Benor came, and then we were thinking actually of adopting that actually system for here. I was then in—actually I was holding, actually, in two

capacities. I was--for some time I was Secretary, Agriculture, and Chairman, Agriculture Development Corporation, also.

LEWIS: This was about '76, '77?

ANISUZZAMAN: It was in '75, '76, '77, yes.

And then in the meantime Mr. Benor came, and then he spent about seven days over here. And then we are thinking--then when we actually went into the details of the whole thing, now, then actually something was cropping up into all that we cannot actually blindly imitate and transplant that from there, Mr. Benor's system, right . .

LEWIS: Excuse me. You had the Comilla model.

ANISUZZAMAN: I'm just coming to that. That Comilla model, actually that was uppermost in my mind. So the Comilla model, if you have, you must have--actually the Comilla, Mister Akhtar Hameed Khan, because I had been actually now brought up in the agriculture and rural development by him. I was very--actually, in '67, actually I was actually telling him, "Actually I am a disciple."

LEWIS: I see.

ANISUZZAMAN: And I actually agreed with quite a few things. I used to argue a lot with him, and then he used to actually tell me that, "You are committing mistakes, serious mistakes. Now I will not argue with you because you will tell me that I am from the other side, West Pakistan, so I want to hold back." But he used to tell me that, "The time will come. You will repent for it." And I repent, really, actually, repent today that what that old man actually told me was actually—he was right and I was wrong.

I would like to tell you that what was that specific case now. So agricultural extension. So we were actually taught the Comilla model of agricultural extension. Definitely it was the typical model. You may have your views that which one is better, which one is more—it is—don't, actually, theoretically we should not actually come to the question of good or bad, better or best, but which is actually better for our situation over here, because that man, he developed his model—you might be knowing it—after spending about twenty-three years now, working now. It actually has not grown now—it has not fallen all of a sudden from the heaven now.

And it was very difficult for him because we demonstrate we actually believe in what now. We believe in actual deliberations, this is actually what our religion actually teach you. You meditate. And this is actually in the Eastern culture [inaudible], in the Indian culture also you will find that if you want to find the truth now you must actually retire, either into the forest or into--our prophet actually then retired into the cave and actually isolated him from the normal actualities of real life and then actually the truth was revealed. And this is how actually the old Indian [inaudible] actually were. They were meditating now in the forest now, and then they were finding truth. So—but this is very

difficult. You actually do not pick up truth now. You walk between the realities of life and then the empiricism, the empirical approach for finding the truth is very much missing. But that [inaudible] tell things to us now.

That what I'm driving at now, that Mister Akhtar Hameed Khan thought the development of—he's actually the model now. He has worked for a long period of years now, from the grassroots level. He was actually working as the primary school teacher; he was then the headmaster of village school now. Then actually he worked there as the principal of Comilla College now. And for what a period of years now, he actually thought that he had found a suitable—he actually used to tell me that, "Yes, I have found that what is the problem of Bangladesh. What within East Pakistan? What is the problem of Bangladesh? And then I have actually found that this is the key, I'm set up that I have worked, I have understood the farmers, I have understood the middle class, actually, the farmers I have understood actually this, and this is actually what is socially, politically, and culturally in our [inaudible]." So he developed his, actually, the Comilla, actually, the model of extension.

You will find a very good admiration for that; Michigan State invested series of lectures delivered. So one lecture actually or three or four actually series are given on, "What is this Comilla model of extension, and how does it actually differ from the Western actually approach for agricultural extension?"

So when we were discussing—when I was discussing this thing with Mr. Benor, so that was actually—so I was having some reservation about that. Yes, some basic, actually, the points, the basic truths are there, but that truth will have to be tailored, that shall have to be adopted for my purpose over here so that culturally and politically I can assimilate actually that thing also over here. So at that stage actually I left.

And then what happened now? Then actually the World Bank now--I am actually with an apology now; I am actually using very hard words--actually pushed the project as they found it, pushed it down actually our throats now. I used to record--[inaudible] and then Dr. Fasih Uddin Matab was the minister in those days--so I used to be called occasionally report—when they were formulating the project now for the agricultural extension.

I remember Guy Hunter used to come as the consultant, also. So I used to actually tell, "Look. One thing, that you are telling us for the development of the participants we actually [inaudible] agricultural extension. But the project actually you are actually giving, it is not—it is actually top-down type of approach, even making the agricultural extension bureaucracy more. And the element of actually now the participation will be, is likely to be—I'm afraid it is likely to be lost."

Because there again also again I actually, what Akhtar Hameed actually taught me now is that there is something basically wrong with our educational system over here. Our educational system is what? One of my university teachers actually told me that after he had seen my actually tutorial script now in sociology, he called me one day and told me he was very happy that actually "You have actually quoted from James Frazer, this that

and the other, Gordon Childe, so this is good. But I advise you for one thing. So you continue to do this thing, but if you want to actually do well, get a good class in the university examination, then you shall have to prepare yourself also accordingly.” Our actual system of examination is such now that I call it actually the “commit and homage.”

LEWIS: Commit and homage.

ANISUZZAMAN: Commit and homage. So he actually told me that, “You will get three hours. Now there will be five questions. And now if you actually now—lost and if you do not come prepared—at least put three actually down, answering three questions. You must be ready and you must answer them; you must commit; almost actually you must prepare notes. And for the preparation of the notes you must find out who are the best boys, collect notes from them, and then prepare your own note. And then you must be ready, actually you must memorize almost everything. And first three questions now you must actually answer them. And the other—you actually fiddle with the other two questions, so you are out of wisdom and use this, that and the other. I have actually the [inaudible].”

So I said that, “I know, we know how bureaucracy works. So if we build up a bureaucracy like this, the total participatory aspects would be lost.”

I tell you actually how it has been lost, what was that. In 19—old days now, what was before this, actually, the new system was introduced, T and V system, we used to have--the total, actually, the strength of the agricultural extension directorate was somewhere in the region of 7000. We are not managing well, but there are other reasons for that. That was—7000 may have been raised to 14,000. But by a single stroke of pen now, through actually this, the project Agricultural Extension I, and now we have entered into a third phase. And now Frank Thornley—he was also a party to—this is what I actually, I try to tease him now, “You actually said they raised it to 35,000.”

LEWIS: 35,000.

ANISUZZAMAN: 35,000. And actually brick and mortar, the cars, these new, actually the . . .

So I actually said that, “This is becoming a top-down type of thing. And then again this is becoming--it will actually end into a bureaucracy. And the bureaucracy now, whether this is an engineering bureaucracy or the agricultural bureaucracy or the general bureaucracy, this is all with the Bank, because you know actually they’re [inaudible] will start operating there. And then you won’t have the reserves. Now, Mr. Benor’s now actually—this is actually theme. We are not likely to understand that theme well now. And that is likely to be lost.” And exactly this is what I feel now that has been, because during the subsequent days now I actually have—a young lady used to come for the periodic evaluation of those projects. I used to tell her--because then I came back in ’82; we were then having the second phase of agricultural extension--I used tell her . .

LEWIS: [inaudible]

ANISUZZAMAN: . . . that, “What do you actually now leaving in the [inaudible]? This is actually my desk. Your project; you have a number of objectives in quantitative terms that this will happen, this will happen, this will happen. But when I go actually in the field, I’m telling you that I have [inaudible] I am [inaudible] man, but I actually feel very confident now about one thing, that I have not learned agriculture from the Western textbooks now. I have actually now—I have been moving around because I was not a desk-bound Agriculture Secretary now. Most of the time I used to actually spend in the field. And from there actually I have actually—if I have actually now found any wisdom, learned anything, then I have learned it from the other end, not from the university end or from actually the consultants or the advisers actually there now. I have actually learned it from the other end, from the farmers’ end, to feel them now.”

So I used to tell them that, “This is not working well and your objectives are not being fulfilled now. This is what actually you’ll find. So what are the reasons? Have you actually attempted even now to find out the reasons for this thing now?”

I once actually I remember to have once went for the negotiation of a particular project to Washington. And then my friend [M.] Syeduzzaman was our Alternate Director in the Bank. So I was discussing this problem, and there’s the evaluation and actually so he arranged a meeting with the vice president of that.

So I told him that, “This is what you are—how do you actually measure the impact?”

So he said that, “We all--everything we have, but we’ll measure it after the project is completed. And then if you want actually us to measure, then actually my division will do it now and you can request and actually when the project . . .”

And so I said, “If the project, after actually the project is over, and then if you want to get the wisdom for the formulation of the second project, so that’s good, that’s better.”

LEWIS: Was this [W. David] Hopper?

ANISUZZAMAN: No, not Hopper. Hopper’s a good friend of mine. No, tall gentleman, he has left. It was in ’78, ’79.

WEBB: Mervyn Weiner?

ANISUZZAMAN: Ah, yes, yes.

So this was actually agricultural extension, year now one and two. Now this is not one. I find the very frank admission of the same. Now the next, actually, what the Bank is actually telling us today that they’re heading--practically you can—agricultural support services, in this name now. They have changed the nomenclature only. Now they’re coming up--for all practical purposes it means what is agricultural extension.

Here now for the phase three. Now if you read actually the appraisal report and they have rightly, after a long time, after you have spent millions if not billions of dollars, now you have realized that, yes, you have unnecessarily set up a very big bureaucracy. It is not cost-effective, and this big bureaucracy is now creating actually the problems hardest for the flow of information from here, there, to into the field. And that is why what they are suggesting that this shall have to be changed. This is the basic, actually, the message that has been conveyed.

And when—and unfortunately for the Bank and fortunately for me, I came back as the Minister. And they were actually--this project was ready for actually the negotiation, and I wanted to kill it. So he was trying--he came and saw me that, “You cannot do it now. It will bring a bad name for the Resident actually, the office over here,” this, that and the other. So and then there was a compulsion, actually, because we are at the receiving end now, so that actually the compulsion was there. So very reluctantly, unwillingly, I had to, as a minister also, I had to swallow the bitter pill. And then with a little bit of actually—send, actually, the team now for the negotiation, and we give them actually the guideline that this is what you should try to neutralize there during negotiations. That was not there. This never actually happens. Now, I know that during—the trick of the business—so this has never . . .

So this is what the Bank is saying.

I would like to say the same thing for the agricultural research also. Bank has come with the other donors in a deep [inaudible] for agricultural research. Now, what has—yes, one thing I—because life is always actually the--you have the mixed, you see. If I say that no, nothing has happened, we have taken, the Bank has actually given this assistance and nothing has happened, this will not be correct, yes, that what we call in Bengali now (even I found it [inaudible] English actually idiomatic expression also) that even the dark--to quote from actually [inaudible]--even the darkest cloud has a silver lining. So this is something like that now. Yes, because it has—in agriculture—but the basic thing has not been achieved.

Yes, when, in '67 everyone used to complain that the union agricultural assistant (the agricultural assistant was the extension worker at that) is not educationally equipped, number one, so he cannot actually gain the confidence of the farmers. If the farmers come up with a problem now, he cannot prescribe the right type of—so his credibility is gone. And an agriculture extension worker at that level, now, if the farmers actually now do not have any faith in him now, if they come with a problem, base problem, and that fellow actually neither he knows agriculture--he may have actually spent all his life in the urban areas so he doesn't know--nor if I have not equipped him educationally now, then he cannot. The farmers understand it well now, however uneducated, illiterate they might be, so they actually—they argue in his face, “There's a useless fellow.” The government function, in their eyes, in the eyes of the people now, they're actually useless type of persons, actually kept by the government for their exploitation. This is what they feel now. Let us admit the facts. This is our image in their eyes now, who we want to

[inaudible]. The credibility is gone. And if the credibility of the agricultural extension is gone, then what is the [inaudible]?

So there were two problems. There was another complaint in those days, my initial days, that agricultural extension—actually the assistant of the officer—he’s never available in his locality. He used to come to—he usually comes to the district officer once in a while for collecting his checks now. That is actually. So we used to argue a lot that, and we used to administratively enforce the presence, the twenty-four hours presence, but we found that that was a very difficult actually to achieve. And then my—actually, the boss was, ’78, he got training in Pakistan, and so they came—Hassan [phonetic] used to tell me that, “You are actually chasing the wild goose now. How can—you cannot actually go and visit and enforce their presence now in their locality for--because how can you blame them?” He used to tell me, in a very pointed way, that, “A man now he doesn’t have any roof over his head, he doesn’t have any place to stay at that living, he cannot hire a house, and you do not pay him enough, there is no actually provision for his houses, he has to stay as the guest of actually someone. So how can--he has his family, and he has his—to put it this way, he has the human urges now so how can he actually—how can you expect him? You are unnecessarily chasing the wild goose. It will not . . .” And I found that it was not producing. If I’m actually catching him in agricultural extension, so he actually used to stay for a couple of months over there. And then he used to find out that actually I cannot come back to his station for another five, six months. Now I am used to meddling, actually. We worked through the whole thing. Awful.

So what were the problems I have covered? My point is I am driving at. Yes, year now one and two, it was a mixed package, it has given us something. If I say that it was totally actually nothing, that would be a—that would not be real. Yes, so through these things, what we have done, we have built the physical presence, we have provided the Indian agricultural assistant; he has a beautiful roof over his head. He has been provided now through this project, these actually agricultural research, extension and research program, now good by any standard, Bangladeshi standard. He has a good house to stay over there. We have made him more mobile. We have provided him with a bicycle, this, that and the other. Then there used to be a problem now. Actually, he’s actually [inaudible] this, that and the other. So that thing has been done. This is an achievement and without that actually the project possibly we could not have achieved these things with our own local resources for a long, long time to come. So this is an achievement.

But there are other things have been lost. Now, say, agricultural research will make this point very clear. Agricultural research now—I started in 1974; there was nothing. Doctor [Kazi M.] Badruddoza, he’s now an emeritus professor here. So we were together in Karachi. So he was executive vice chairman Pakistani Agricultural Research Council, so he knew well on that. So I told him that nothing is happening in agricultural--research is not giving us. We want—I—we are actually short, deficit in what? In edible oil, right? So what can be done?

The traditional areas now, where the people live, farmers used to grow groundnuts, in the good old days now, in 1930s. Now they have switched over to something else now. They're not growing it. So when I actually—I just used to inquire of them, “Why don't you grow?” Because this is also needed, and in the meantime government now invested—we located those areas, and we thought that possibly the marketing is the problem. If we can actually just ensure the payment of the economical, reliable price to the farmers, farmers will revert. And we set up a very expensive type of groundnut mill in the Industrial Development Corporation, but no one was—because there was—the raw material was not there.

So I was actually—I was actually deputy commissioner in that district. During my days I used to find that the farmers were growing plenty of early winter groundnuts. Then I started talking to the old men I knew, and then they said, “Nothing, this will not be done because you have taken another action in the program, expansion of irrigation program, and then green revolution. Now, in the good old days now, in '30s, '40s, '50s, early '60s, during winter it was not possible for the farmers to grow anything other than these groundnuts which can be grown in the [inaudible] but now you have pushed pawpaws, you have pushed [inaudible], you have pushed, actually, and supplying these at a throw-away price to the farmers now. And you have given a miracle variety of paddy also”—I have eight. Now, you actually--farmers are not fools now. Now the paddy, he can grow now with paddy during the dry season also. That what is the yield of the paddy and what is the yield of this one? You're actually the degenerated, age-old groundnut varieties.

So we get the task that yes, let us do something for the development of a suitable, high-yielding variety of groundnut and then possibly we can actually persuade the farmers to—and automatically they would be persuaded.

Then we were told that the infrastructural facilities do not exist. Man for--qualified manpower we do not have. Then, yes, I started actually picking—those were very difficult days, now, in '74—USAID [United States Agency for International Development], I knew actually LaFew [phonetic], so I told him that, “Why not actually—why don't you actually—you have taken actually an interest for the development of agricultural research in Pakistan and also why don't you.”

So they were saying, “Politically the country is not actually, now, it is not the convenient time for a massive investment. And then again, you do not have a suitable man; you cannot provide leadership also.”

So I said, “What do you want? If I actually did this Doctor Badruddoza now?”

So they actually knew him well now from the Pakistani days. So they said, “Yes, that will be actually the one hurdle you can cross. If you can guarantee that he will be the director”—we used to call him the director of agricultural research.

So I said, “All right. This is done. He will be.”

And then they provided—then the World Bank came ARP I, Agricultural Research I, II, this that and the other.

But then what? You have not developed technology, test of the [inaudible] meeting, technology, actually, whatever they may claim—the research scientists—that I have developed a very good technology, but I used to tell them that actually, “Look here. Wait. Let me see actually how soon actually it is adopted by the farmers because whether the technology you have developed that is good or bad, I will not as an administrator, as a layman, [inaudible] man, I will not, I don’t actually—don’t tell me about, show me your papers, this, that and the other. And high-sounding, actually, don’t come and tell me about your jargons now. I will actually wait for a year or two now to find out how fast the farmers are responding to your technology. If the farmer actually—the technology you have generated, if it is actually really good, then there is no reason why the farmer should not actually respond to it. And if they do not respond, then this is a totally actually—however good--this may be good for the American farmers or for the other farmers, but for my purpose now it is totally useless. I do not pay actually any attention to it, your work.”

Now, what we found. Plus side? Yes, we have built the infrastructure facilities. We have trained manpower. When I started, there were four Ph.D.s of the old days in agricultural research; now we have about two, three hundred or maybe even more than that, agriculture Ph.D.s now. But are they producing their research? No. Because this is what I used to tell my good friends now when they were formulating that, “You shall have to be very careful about: you take a man for a Ph.D. in the Western universities, he cannot interact with his guide over here because for all the many years now, during his impressionable age now, he has gone through a process of commit and knowledge management, so he doesn’t know how to pick up actually the sensations from the field now. We have not actually developed his empirical vision. He has not learned this skill, picked up the skill and the art of actually learning from the field, from the realities of life now. So these Ph.D.s now, they are not also producing research, and they are not generating technologies now which is likely to be useful to the farmers now. They are—number one: annual report. ‘Oh, I have done this thing, I have done this thing, I have done this thing.’ When it comes--how far this is actually, has been gone into the field? Almost zero.”

During those days actually I could come to know—this was particularly during my stays, actually, I went once to my good friend Stephen Biggs, now. He was Ford Foundation, second man over here. He was in CIMMYT [International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center] there. So he actually—I actually from him now I learned the concept of participatory agricultural research and development, and he handed over the three [inaudible]: “You will find answers to all your questions now in that.” They call them--the publications with the participatory concept of research and agricultural development. The opening, actually, the chapters, tells me [inaudible] that--usually the donors now—what actually type of, actually the framework and the design and the conceptual framework and the adoption, which has been discarded by the West long after the Second World War, and then there has been new things. So the parties—this is

actually the concept of, participatory concept. And this is--they switched over in CIMMYT [inaudible] actually that type of thing, too.

So actually I thought that I had found—so I was telling these things to my friends, that this is actually what should be our approach, that you must—and the farmers are not fools now, so that you have read that book now. What is the name of that famous—a classic, actually, called—this was written sometime in 1918—*Farmers at Forty Centuries*. What was the name of that professor? [F. H.] King. So I told them that what actually the farmers—what he has actually attempted to establish in that actually the whole now, that farmers are not fools now. And the farmers have said right, without actually modern—actually agricultural science for forty centuries now they have survived. How have they survived? What we actually say nowadays now, that the farmers, Chinese farmers there—during, actually, they're modern enough—even, actually, they know, actually, they make the best use of the actual resources. They have been—they know what is organic humus, what is this, they actually using the human excreta that for centuries they have been using. So who has told them? Because, in actuality—this is why the question of survival for them, that they don't grow enough food in their field now, then they are gone. So actually they are actually under the pressure for the sake of survival. And this is actually whatever the evolution means, growth, and the survival of the fittest now, so I was telling them what we shall have to do, and how this can be developed, this is what now . .

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[End of interview]