



# US Agency for International Development

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## What We Do

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## Introduction

USAID is the world's largest bilateral donor working to promote global security and human development. We work alongside various other development organizations to achieve these goals. USAID has, for many years, sought to build sustainable partnerships and alliances with other bilateral donors, multilateral donors, foreign governments, local and international private and nonprofit organizations.

USAID, along with its partners, work on a wide variety of issues that have very generally been classified into 10 sectors. These sectors are: Agriculture and Food Security; Democracy, Human Rights and Governance; Economic Growth and Trade; Education; Ending Extreme Poverty; Environment and Global Climate Change; Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; Global Health; Water and Sanitation; and Working in Crisis and Conflict.

This report begins with a brief discussion about the history of USAID over the past 50 years. Next, each of the target sectors mentioned above are discussed with specific examples given about how USAID has contributed to development. Finally, the future of USAID is discussed with a brief explanation of which sectors are the highest priority for the next few years.

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## History of USAID

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) was created in 1961 under President John F. Kennedy in accordance with the Foreign Assistance Act. USAID was organized "as semi-independent of the Department of State to ensure that its mission – development – was not subsumed by the diplomatic concerns of the State."<sup>1</sup>

Post World War II policies helped to shape the discourse on development assistance. The Marshall Plan is one of the first examples of early development assistance given by the United States; the Marshall Plan aimed to reconstruct post-WWII Europe and rebuild their economies. The fundamental goal of the Marshall Plan was to halt the spread of communism and allow European countries to thrive under capitalist ideals. Thus the Marshall Plan was integral in shaping the future policies of American assistance overseas.

The Point 4 Program was also important in regards to the discourse on foreign assistance. Instead of



USAID

aiming to help Europe, however, the Point 4 Program was meant to provide assistance to developing nations.

USAID was originally established as a temporary organization to provide relief. The initial conception of USAID was focused on health, education and training, transportation and agriculture, as well as economic development.<sup>2</sup> USAID has worked to promote democratization across the board and continue to foster positive

relationships with different countries around the world.<sup>3</sup> The mission of USAID has remained consistent since conception, though policies have shifted over time. The "Basic Needs Approach" was popular during the 1970s in creating a shift towards more poverty-alleviating goals rather than market policies.<sup>4</sup> The Millennium Development Goals have also played a major role in shaping the post-2000 agenda for USAID.<sup>5</sup>

USAID continues to uphold the original mission statement as articulated by JFK. USAID works worldwide today to ensure that these development ideals are being implemented.

*"There is no escaping our obligations: our moral obligations as a wise leader and good neighbor in the interdependent community of free nations – our economic obligations as the wealthiest people in a world of largely poor people, as a nation no longer dependent upon the loans from abroad that once helped us develop our own economy – and our political obligations as the single largest counter to the adversaries of freedom." – John F. Kennedy<sup>6</sup>*

The follow sections discuss USAID activities and aid operations within each sector.

## **Agriculture and Food Security**

USAID remains committed to agricultural development and food security all over the globe. Almost one billion people go to bed hungry each night, and because of this, agriculture and food security is one of the most important factors for development. With over 75% of the poor in developing countries living in rural areas, it is imperative to develop agriculture and nutrition in these places. With President Obama's creation of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, the US has led

global partnerships to help invest in food security for today and the future.<sup>7</sup>

Through the Marshall Plan in 1947 the US government sent food relief and funds for agricultural development to Europe, the first example of US agricultural development assistance. The Agricultural Act of 1949 expanded agricultural assistance to developing and allied countries allowing for surplus food to be donated through the US Secretary of Agriculture<sup>8</sup>. With the establishment of USAID in 1961, the US worked to help train farmers around the world to advance best practices for rural and agricultural development<sup>9</sup>.

The Green Revolution of the 1960s focused on increasing food production for a growing global population which increased wheat and rice production, especially in Asia and Latin America. <sup>10</sup>USAID was instrumental in helping to launch these programs and aiding Norman Borlaug, the American scientist, who developed new strains of wheat and rice<sup>11</sup>.

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1973 changed USAID's priorities to follow Basic Human Needs and put emphasis on agriculture, rural development and nutrition for the poorest people in the world<sup>12</sup>. Prior to 1973 there was an average of nearly 16 million tons of food aid shipments, but this number dropped by more than one half during the 1970s and continued to decline. In 1985 Congress added the Food for Progress Program to expand agribusiness and private agricultural markets.

Today the US government program Food for Peace funds the purchase and distribution of U.S. commodities for places of emergencies. The Feed the Future initiative that was launched in 2010 expanded the role of agricultural development programming to help improve productivity growth for developing countries<sup>13</sup>. In the year 2012, agriculture was

the fourth largest budgeted program area for USAID with over one billion dollars.<sup>14</sup>

To improve agriculture and food security around the globe USAID funds research on sustainable agricultural practices, funds childhood nutrition programs, supports universities and extension services to expand agricultural capacity, sends emergency food assistance, and helps to develop markets.

Many of these activities are now run through President Obama's Feed the Future Initiative which was launched in 2010.<sup>15</sup> USAID collaborates with ten other federal agencies to develop agriculture sectors in countries to increase agricultural productivity, generate economic growth, boost harvests of rural farmers, improve



USAID

agricultural research, and increase resilience to prevent recurrent crises. The overall humanitarian goal is to improve nutrition and incomes for families to reduce poverty.<sup>16</sup>

The Food for Peace office gives food assistance to countries and populations impacted by natural disaster or conflict. There are four types of food assistance: US In-Kind Food Aid, Local and Regional Purchase, Cash Transfers for Food, and Food Vouchers.

Emergency food assistance helps feed people who are in desperate situations that are out of their control.<sup>17</sup> President Obama announced a New Alliance of Food Security and Nutrition at the G-8 Summit in 2012. He ends the speech by saying, "We can unleash the change that reduces hunger and malnutrition. We can spark the kind of

economic growth that lifts people and nations out of poverty. This is the new commitment that we're making."<sup>18</sup> USAID is instrumental in promoting these goals to create a world where no child goes hungry and there is greater global security for us all.

### **Empowering Tajikistan Farmers**



[Feedthefuture.gov](http://Feedthefuture.gov)

In Tajikistan the Feed the Future Initiative works with local farmers to improve crop production and link more farmers to markets.<sup>19</sup> The non-profit ACDI/VOCA has been in charge of implementing the USAID-funded project to help facilitate access to capital financing at the farm level and strengthen the distribution of agro-input businesses. The project has brought together farmers and exporters to help sell products when they are at a premium price and create long term commercial relationships.<sup>20</sup> USAID has collaborated with the International Fertilizer Development Center to implement voucher programs and bring new seeds, fertilizers, and crop protection products to impoverished farmers<sup>21</sup>.

By March 27, 2014 Feed the Future helped Tajikistan farmers to create 46 water user associations and rehabilitate more than 13,000 hectares of farmland. The community-based association creates local solutions for irrigation management of this arid, land-locked country.<sup>22</sup> For agribusiness men like Tolibov Muhisn the seminars and training for marketing allowed

him to increase his publicity and generate more business. Through the project support he learned the farmers were unable to purchase crop protection products because they did not have the right equipment, so he expanded to include the sprayers and began holding his own trainings <sup>23</sup>USAID continues to partner with communities to improve their agricultural economy and by doing so lift people out of poverty.

## Democracy, Human Rights and Governance

The United States values democracy and human rights for all people. Promoting democracy is the core of our development work because of its ability to empower people to gain their own rights. Democratic governance leads to less violence and conflict, as well as development. No fragile or conflict state has yet to achieve a Millennium Development Goal, demonstrating the necessity to promote fair governance and human rights for people of all nations. By partnering with communities to protect basic rights and stable governments, USAID is also helping to prevent conflict, encourage economic growth, and improve the basic needs such as education and health that every person deserves.<sup>24</sup>

The United States has a long history of supporting the development of democracy. Since World War Two the U.S. has advocated for the spread of democracy around the globe to ensure human rights and advance national security<sup>25</sup>. USAID works to strengthen government institutions to help further other development goals, because governments that lack accountability make assistance implementation challenging. In the mid-1980s a strong focus on Latin America led to strengthening of judiciaries, civil society, and other institutions<sup>26</sup>. Along with Latin America, countries around the



An Afghan woman displays her finger marked with ink after casting her vote at a polling station in Kabul. Marai Shah/AFP.

world transitioned from authoritarian rule to democratic rule especially with the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. The US provided assistance so that countries in Central Europe, as well as Africa and Asia, could implement democratic forms of government as they transitioned from authoritarian regimes<sup>27</sup>.

In addition to advancing democracy, USAID has also promoted the elevation of human rights. Elevating human rights includes social, economic, and cultural rights with a particular emphasis on rights for women, persons with disabilities, LGBT, and any other marginalized populations.<sup>28</sup> USAID's promotion of democracy is believed to have improved human rights, promoted peace, and contributed to economic development. USAID has supported about 120 countries with democracy development since 1990, and USAID currently spends over one billion US dollars each year promoting democracy.<sup>29</sup> The Center for Excellence on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance was created in 2012 to research and measure the effectiveness of democracies and to then share these resources with the rest of the world.<sup>30</sup> USAID sees human rights and democratic institutions as key factors in a country's development.

Democracy, human rights and governance programs covers a breadth of different areas and works in conjunction with other program areas as well. For democratic assistance USAID supports free and fair elections as well as helping to support civil society groups to hold governments accountable. There are also efforts to provide assistance to survivors of torture and victims of gender-based violence and prevent human-trafficking.<sup>31</sup> In 2012 USAID launched the Counter-Trafficking in Persons policy to focus more efforts on effective, efficient, and evidence-based approaches to counter the trafficking of human slaves.<sup>32</sup> Overall the democracy, human rights and governance programs assist by providing technical support to legislators, increase active NGOs and other civil society groups, assist with decentralization of government services, and bring more women into politics.<sup>33</sup>

### Partnering with Kenyan Voters



[globalcitizencorps.org](http://globalcitizencorps.org)

In 2007, Kenya experienced intense post-election violence that led to 1300 dead and massive infrastructure damage. On December 31<sup>st</sup> once Kibaki's election victory was announced violence erupted in which the ethnic Kikuyu groups were attacked; some Kikuyu retaliated against the

Luo community. The election violence also caused about 600,000 people to be displaced.<sup>34</sup> One of the major problems with the violence was that constituents felt their communication channels to the government were weak. To help build up these channels USAID supported over 50 civil society organizations to work at all levels to ensure that each community and groups voices were heard.<sup>35</sup> In 2008 USAID and Mercy Corps, an international development organization, began funding Yes Youth Can, an organization that brings Kenyan teens and young adults together to encourage political activism and provides resources to start new businesses and non-profits. The leadership of Yes Youth Can has since been turned over to the youth. The organization creates youth councils across the country so each group can work towards problems at the local and national level.<sup>36</sup> USAID also supported the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission to help facilitate Kenya's election in March 2013 which was primarily peaceful and ruled to be free and fair.<sup>37</sup> USAID will continue to support Kenyans through civil society groups, building greater government accountability, and empowering leaders of the next generation.

### Economic Growth and Trade

Stable economic growth is essential for long-term development. By helping to create opportunities and environments where people can buy and sell goods and services in a free market place, USAID is helping to lift millions of people out of poverty around the world. President Obama has created the Global Engagement Initiative and charged USAID with carrying it out. The Global Engagement Initiative is intended to seek out "entrepreneurs and rapidly growing enterprises and helps them improve their operations through training, business networks, financing through private

enterprise funds and credit guarantees, and other support."<sup>38</sup> Access to these markets will help people create additional income to raise them and their family's standard of living.

USAID has also helped to promote change in foreign governments to promote greater efficiency in the services they deliver and to reform policies to expand and incentivize trade. Advising countries seeking to develop fair economic policies, remove trade barriers, and construct fair regulatory institutions are all ways that USAID is helping to mutually strengthen US and foreign economies. Activities that help to ensure a sound monetary policy through low inflation is also essential to promote trade and stability.



USAID Infrastructure in Indonesia

Infrastructure investments and other capital projects are essential for the economic growth and are another area where USAID has been very active. Trade and commerce are only able to expand if there are roads, bridges, clean water and electricity already in place. Phone and internet access are also major impediments to economic expansion and billions of people lack reliable access to both of these.

USAID, together with foreign governments, has helped to spur public-private sector partnerships. These partnerships provide jobs to people located

in recipient countries by encouraging trade between US and foreign businesses to help reduce poverty and unemployment.

Finally, through the Development Credit Authority (DCA), USAID has improved access to capital throughout the world. The poor and women are too often unable to receive lines of credit to invest in capital or have a safe place to keep their money; USAID is working to ensure greater and more equitable access to credit. The DCA strives to empower local people to start small businesses, buy new and better supplies for their farms, and ultimately improve their standard of living.<sup>39</sup> Through these methods, and others, USAID is helping to improve the lives of people throughout the world.

### **Cambodian Garment Industry**

During the last 40 years Cambodia has suffered several impediments to growth, beginning with the genocide by the Khmer Rouge in 1975. The Khmer Rouge were displaced after an invasion by the Vietnamese military in 1978 and a Vietnam-controlled government was installed. This government lasted until 1992 when the United Nations initiated a program to bring stability and reform to the Cambodian government. However, Khmer Rouge forces had continued, since their overthrow, to resist and create instability until 1998, when their leader Pol Pot died. USAID has supported multiple projects in Cambodia since 1993, just after the UN led government reform.

These programs have been largely targeted toward the industrial sector (specifically the garment industry) and include labor rights and dispute resolution and productivity and efficiency training. USAID led programs, among other international and domestic efforts, have resulted in "a hundred fold increase"<sup>40</sup> in the 12 years between 1995 and 2007, when

the garment sectors exports increased from \$27 million to \$2.7 billion.

The groups that are funded by USAID, as well as other partners, influence different sectors within Cambodia. The Solidarity Center works primarily in the political sector and has produced positive changes in labor standards laws in 1997.<sup>41</sup> These labor laws established the requirements for union formation, registration, and allowed multiple unions to exist for a single establishment. This last part has however caused some issues and division between rival unions operating in a single factory, often instigated by local politicians.



Indonesian Garment Factory. AFP.

Cambodia's garment industry has been the main driver behind economic change during this century and prior to the global economic recession of 2008 it comprised almost 300 factories and 350,000 workers. The garment industry comprises 76%<sup>42</sup> of all manufacturing done in Cambodia and has helped to increase per capita income by over 200% and reduce poverty by 20% during the time between 1994 and 2007.<sup>43</sup> The advances in this sector has had a huge positive effect on the state of the economy.

Much of the more recent success in the garment industry has come from the Garment Industry Productivity Center (GIPC), which began in 2005. During the third year of operation (2008) the GIPC

formed a legal NGO under Cambodian law so that it could receive greater foreign support from USAID and other donors. This new organization is called the "Cambodia Skills Development Center (CSDC)," but has retained the GIPC name as it's official brand. Very rapidly after its formation, the GIPC established itself as an authority on efficiency and productivity in the garment sector, reaching 15% of exporting companies and yielding benefits to the economy of up to "eight times the cost."<sup>44</sup>

One international partner that was indispensable in the development of the Cambodian garment industry is the International Labor Organization (ILO) which helped form the Labor Dispute Resolution Project and the Better Factories Cambodia program.<sup>45</sup> The Labor Dispute Resolution Project's objective is to bring labor unions, employers, and the government together to mediate disputes, so that unnecessary strikes and litigation could be avoided. The Better Factories Cambodia program was designed to evaluate and inspect garment factories for safety and efficiency and then report it to the public.

The impacts of USAID's, and partner organizations, involvement in Cambodia's garment industry has proven to be highly effective at growing the Cambodian economy, which between 2000 and 2006 averaged 9.4% annual growth.<sup>46</sup> This growth, as well as the previously mentioned improvements in per capita income and poverty reduction have not eliminated all of the problems within Cambodia, but it has helped to bring it into the twenty-first century.

## Education

Education is arguably the most important determinant of development. Even the most basic ability to read can provide a person with untold opportunities that would otherwise be impossible. Literacy can

empower a farmer to use a different seed, crop, or method to increase yields or grow a more valuable commodity to sell at market. The ability to read can open up all kinds of possibilities for people to advance themselves through knowledge.

Another key area of education that USAID is focused on improving are the "higher education and workforce development programs".<sup>47</sup> By encouraging young adults and women to advance their education through college or workforce training, people in countries throughout the developing world will be able to find better jobs and improve their standard of living. Investments in education have many spillover effects, such as a strong correlation between mother education and infant health. The same is also true for entrepreneurs, who without higher levels of education or specific training would not be able to build or grow effective and sustainable businesses.

A major impediment to education in the developing world is often conflict, be it cultural or political tensions. USAID is committed to bringing children in these environments access to education, which can serve to diffuse future conflicts through tolerance and knowledge.



USAID All Children Reading Program

Education is only as good as the education system, which is why USAID has partnered with World Vision and Australian Aid to create the All Children Reading program.<sup>48</sup> This system is intended to foster innovation within the education community

through friendly competition, testing and implementing the best models (Round 1). After Round 1 is finished, Round 2 will expand the education systems using technology to improve reading skills in students native language.

## Education Reform in Djibouti

Djibouti is a country of few natural resources, limited agriculture, has an unemployment rate of approximately 60%<sup>49</sup>, and is ranked 164 out of 186 on the Human Development Index (HDI).<sup>50</sup> In addition, 80% of Djibouti's GDP is comprised of the service sector, which is also where 80% of the employed population work. While Djibouti's economy is struggling to adapt and diversify, the government has taken great steps to expand access to primary education, committing "28% of the national budget"<sup>51</sup> as of 2013. Since 1999 the government of Djibouti has expanded primary school enrollment rates from 49.5% to 78%, built 36 new schools, and almost doubled the budget for education.<sup>52</sup> Since 2008 Djibouti has seen an average growth rate for their economy of 5%, which may suggest that education reforms that have taken place since 1999 are working.

While Djibouti's education system has expanded greatly and economy have been growing at a steady rate, there are still some major issues with education. Access to primary school has increased, however the quality of teachers and facilities has been static. USAID, beginning in 2009, funded the *Projet AIDE (Assistance Internationale pour le Développement de l'Éducation)* to strengthen the educational system in Djibouti in three ways.<sup>53</sup>

1. Decentralized teacher training and community participation;
2. Strengthened strategic information and communication capacity through an

Education Management Information System (EMIS); and

3. Increased community participation and education and job opportunities for out-of-school youth.

Each of these areas are intended to address the structural issues that have been holding Djibouti's education system back. Decentralizing teacher training has allowed teachers to be trained throughout the country in an effective and efficient manner. An EMIS has allowed the ministry of education to measure and track the progress of education in schools throughout Djibouti and make policy and budgetary interventions when necessary. Community participation was increased after laws were passed enabling the creation of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), which are also eligible for school improvement and performance grants. This step also encouraged the creation of vocational programs for out-of-school youth and "provided incentives for disadvantaged girls to attend...school."<sup>54</sup>



USAID Students in Djibouti

This project encountered some severe problems after the first year when the initial program contractor, the Academy for Educational Development (AED), closed. However, after a seven month suspension of the project, Family Health International (FHI360) both absorbed AED's staff and

resumed *Projet AIDE* in Djibouti.<sup>55</sup> Surprisingly, measurements taken before and after the suspension of the project did not seem to slow progress, which is a testament its sustainability.

While this program was designed to be very stable, USAID has learned much from *Projet AIDE*'s shortcomings. The scope of this project was very large; it included politicians, teachers, students, parents, and community members at the local, regional, and national levels. While improvements were made in the education system, the scope and complexity of the project may have diluted some of the resources and, thus, diminished some of the outcomes.

Performance measurement was another area for this project which needs improvement. With the exception of the Early Grade Reading Assessment, no baselines were established to assess project performance.

Finally, while this program was an overall success, there was a lack of attention given to how and why this program was able to succeed in the face of such difficult circumstances. It would have been immensely useful to have performed internal assessments and recorded more information regarding the operations of project staff to both replicate and improve upon similar projects in the future.

## Ending Extreme Poverty

Extreme poverty is unlike many of the other areas where USAID works because poverty cannot be fixed through education, economic development, health, or food security alone, but must be a combination of each of these sectors working together for the betterment of humanity. In order for people to lift themselves out of poverty they first have to be healthy enough to work and be an active and productive member of

society. Second, and closely related to health, is food security; people must know where their next meal will be coming from and that they will indeed be getting a next meal. Third, they must have at least some basic skills, such as the ability to read, write, and perform simple mathematics or else their productivity will be limited. Lastly, people



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must have opportunities for employment, or the ability to build their own business, so that they can earn an income to support themselves and their families, all the while raising their standard of living. These are just a few of the necessities for eliminating poverty and each step alone is a daunting task, but we now have the tools and the potential to eliminate extreme poverty this century.

### **Fighting Poverty in Indonesia**

The Support for Economic Analysis Development in Indonesia (SEADI) program includes several aspects of poverty alleviation that have been mentioned above; food security, economic development, and education. SEADI is funded by USAID and partners with Indonesia's Ministry of National Development Planning, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Trade, and a special team assembled by the Vice President of Indonesia to reduce poverty (TNP2K).<sup>56</sup> Each of these government agencies are working together to create a more open and inclusive economy, reduce barriers to trade, and fully and more often produce

assessments of the Indonesian economy for use by advocates and investors.

During its first two years of operation, SEADI has worked on advancing issues relating to trade, food security, financial planning, labor regulations and poverty.<sup>57</sup> In September 2012 SEADI and USAID held a conference in Jakarta Indonesia to address Indonesian inequality through publically funded vocational training programs for low-skill workers.<sup>58</sup> In March 2013 the Ministry of Trade held a conference to assess the impacts of recent Indonesian food law reform and how it would demand greater government oversight and resources to manage. Food law reform happened as a result of food security issues between 2008 and 2010, which prompted law-makers in 2012 to adopt new pro-self-sufficiency policies to avoid price shocks and to increase supply. However, the new law also requires extensive government oversight and "if not managed properly can exacerbate domestic price movements"<sup>59</sup> for food.



SEADI Poverty Conference

While SEADI may not be able to convince the Indonesian parliament to change their food policy, they have proven to be a great advocate of research and higher education through their grant and scholarship programs. SEADI has given 28 grants to individuals and institutions to perform research on a wide variety of topics, including poverty, financial markets, small and medium enterprise (SME)

competitiveness, and equitable development.<sup>60</sup> SEADI has also given 16 scholarships (8 Masters and 8 PhD) to Indonesian students to study abroad in the United States.<sup>61</sup>

## Environment and Global Climate Change

Throughout the last three decades USAID has worked alongside countries to better manage natural resources, program projects that are environmentally friendly, and create projects that mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. We focus on fighting deforestation, protecting biodiversity, adaptation to impacts of climate change, and supporting land rights. As global climate change, along with population growth, continues to place great demands on the Earth, USAID will continue to grow and adapt our efforts to protect and nourish our environment.<sup>62</sup>

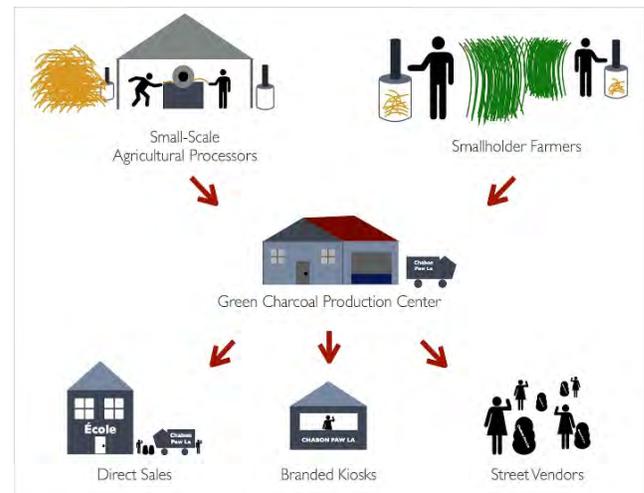


USAID

USAID now employs environmental specialist and works with the American Association for the Advancement of Science to provide up to date environmental policies and programs. These policies are now a top priority for USAID. In the early 1970s USAID suffered the loss of five people because of insecticide exposure on a development project in Pakistan. The issue took great urgency because of this loss, and in 1977 USAID developed a set of regulations and assessments to look at environmental impacts of all of our development projects. As environmental

assessments became integrated into every project done through USAID, our office began expanding projects to focus specifically on environmental protections. Projects throughout Latin America in the late 1970s assisted local people in creating forest reserves and natural parks, implementing incentives to create eco-tourism businesses, and increase awareness of environmental issues. USAID increased technical staff, required environmental impact assessments, and furthered conservation efforts after Congress passed regulations in the 1980s. As natural-resource projects expanded, mainstreaming efforts have been made to produce economic growth and good governance. USAID has worked with local farmers to develop sustainably as these farmers become more active in their economies. As global climate change has become an increasing reality the agency has begun to plan projects to mitigate and adapt to these changes.<sup>63</sup>

## Sustainable Development in Haiti



[carbonrootsinternational.org](http://carbonrootsinternational.org)

In August of 2013 USAID granted funds to Carbon Roots International to build local capacity in Haiti to produce "green charcoal." These charcoal briquettes that burn cleaner and longer than traditional wood charcoal used by most Haitian

families. The first step of the project is to build a green charcoal production center in Northern Haiti, which USAID has pledged \$100,000.<sup>64</sup> Carbon Roots International is a U.S. non-governmental organization that was founded in 2010 to collaborate with rural Haitian communities to develop the green charcoal. With funding from USAID, Carbon Roots International partnered with local people to create a for-profit entity to sell this new green charcoal. The new business addressed several concerns of USAID including job scarcity, rural poverty, energy security, and deforestation.<sup>65</sup> The green charcoal is made from agricultural waste such as sugar cane bagasse, which is supplied by small-holder farmers and agricultural processors. Then the char dust made from the agricultural waste is sent to a production center where the green charcoal is created to then be distributed to schools, kiosks, and street vendors.<sup>66</sup> USAID is excited to help sponsor this new project that is both environmentally friendly and helping to empower and produce economic growth for people in rural Haiti.

## Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Women's issues arose dramatically during the seventies in the development discourse. The Women in Development (WID) sector of USAID was created in 1974 as a result of the 1973 Percy Amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act. The WID approach "calls for greater attention to women in development policy and practice, and emphasizes the need to integrate them into the development process."<sup>67</sup> Women's empowerment and gender equality are also part of the Millennium Development goals. USAID is committed to improving gender equality across the world.

USAID divides the gender equality into the following different areas of interest and work: Addressing Gender in

Programming, Gender-Based Violence, Child Marriage, Countering Trafficking in Persons, Fostering Women's Leadership, Women with Disabilities, The Half the Sky Movement, Women and Girls Lead Global, and International Campaigns.<sup>68</sup> These different divisions highlight the work of USAID. USAID supports and operates training programs for women so that they can gain leadership skills to work in commerce and politics, start hunger initiatives to improve maternal health, and offer legal assistance to those who are victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV).



USAID

A new innovative program that USAID is highlighting focuses on working in development via mobile technology. mWomen is a new program that seeks to give women greater access to mobile technology. According to former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, this allows women greater freedom: "an entrepreneur in Latin America can more easily obtain a business license [and] a woman in Asia can use her mobile banking to control her family finances."<sup>69</sup> This is a global initiative that is being implemented worldwide.

Currently USAID is sponsoring 15 projects worldwide in the following countries: Brazil, Senegal, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Armenia, Georgia, Afghanistan, and India. These programs range from leadership training programs to microcredit assistance

and support for victims of sexual assault or GBV.

### Improving Girls Education in Guatemala

This example focuses on USAID's efforts at improving access to primary education amongst the indigenous people of Guatemala, in particular, aiming to increase girls' participation in primary school. Guatemala had a devastating Civil War, which was detrimental to social development within the country. Guatemala is also marked as having ethnic clashes, inequalitarian economic policies, and poverty<sup>70</sup>. Thus, the education sector remains extremely under-developed. In particular, women are affected by their lack of access to education. Literacy and access to education is especially sparse in the rural areas as compared to the urban areas and has hindered the progress of Guatemalan women. Adding to the disparity, Guatemala also has a high indigenous population, whose women remain predominantly poor. USAID found that "girls have lower initial enrollment and lower retention rates than boys in rural areas because domestic work, agricultural work, and poverty greatly reduce the demand for their education"<sup>71</sup>. Education of girls is proven to delay childbearing, improve overall health, as well as decrease rates of infant mortality.<sup>72</sup>



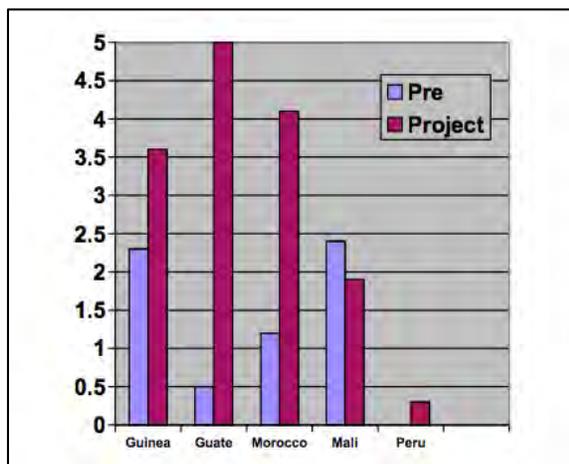
USAID

USAID began working to improve education for girls in 1987; they founded a

nongovernmental organization (NGO) which was called the Guatemalan Association for Sexual Education (AGES). The program provided scholarships for around 600 girls in thirty-three different communities. "An evaluation of AGES found that girls receiving scholarships completed their elementary education in 6.9 years of schooling...the same evaluation found that in addition to the scholarship funds, the role of community promoters was crucial in disseminating the importance of girls' education and motivating parents to be supportive and aware of their daughters' education."<sup>73</sup> The girls were allotted a scholarship of about \$4.30 a month, which is a substantial amount in Guatemala and allowed the girls to buy school supplies and other school-related necessities.<sup>74</sup> The model also provided for a change within the education system: the curriculum reflected a changing gender dynamic and teachers were trained to offer more encouragement to their students.<sup>75</sup> With the success of this program, USAID continued to support another initiative for supporting education in Guatemala. In 1989 the Basic Education Strengthening Project (BEST) was created with the intent of improving primary education.<sup>76</sup> These programs showcased that girls were more likely to remain in school if they were given scholarships to help with fees. One component of the project focused specifically on education for girls and women, relying on a similar model of providing scholarships.

The lessons learned from USAID actions and programs in Guatemala proved invaluable. The success of the program showed how USAID has been successful in implementing development projects but also learning how these programs can be expanded and applied elsewhere. Specific lessons learned included the following: specifically targeting an audience, providing scholarship support, the importance of

involving parents in their children's education, and the fundamental ability to enhance all of civil society in implementing aid programs.<sup>77</sup> This type of model has been applied globally: Morocco, Guinea, Mali, and Peru have also developed a similar model, and results have been overwhelmingly positive.



Total number of years of education, pre and post program. Juaraz and Associates, Inc.

Gender and women's equality are essential in terms of development. Women are a valuable resource in the world and women's rights are integral to helping societies flourish and further develop.

## Global Health

USAID is committed to working in the sector of Global Health. Health affects all aspects of a society; if people are sick or do not have access to medication, or if a majority of women are dying in childbirth, society cannot progress, and therefore society is not productive. A healthy society is important in terms of development. USAID has divided up the different issues in relation to Global Health by the following initiatives: Global Health Concerns, Family Planning and Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS, Health Systems, Malaria, Maternal/Child Health, Neglected Tropical Diseases, Nutrition, Pandemic Influenza and Other Emerging Threats, and finally,

Tuberculosis<sup>78</sup>. USAID has global health projects all across the world; currently USAID is working on 521 global health projects, from Mexico to South Africa, and in Indonesia.

USAID has been working with HIV/AIDS since 1986 with HIV/AIDS outreach currently helping 15 million people worldwide.<sup>79</sup> USAID provides AIDS medication, HIV testing and counseling, as well as Mother-to-child transmission prevention.

Malaria is a pertinent problem in sub-Saharan Africa with an average of 627,000 deaths per year.<sup>80</sup> USAID is committed to finding preventable measures in the fight against malaria because it affects so many people worldwide. The Presidents Malaria Initiative works in 19 sub-Saharan African countries as well as the Greater Mekong region of Asia.<sup>81</sup> Anti-malaria procedures include: spraying houses with insecticide, treating mosquito nets with insecticide, offering intermittent preventative measures for pregnant women, and offering proper diagnosis and medication for those living with malaria.<sup>82</sup>



USAID

Each year USAID saves the lives of 6 million children through their activities.<sup>83</sup> Maternal mortality remains high in some parts of the world. USAID sponsored activities such as Oral Rehydration Therapy

and basic immunizations for children are fundamental for saving their lives.<sup>84</sup>

Nutrition is also important in terms of children and young women; malnutrition prevents children from receiving an education or creates even more poverty and can lead to other threats and diseases.

This brief overview highlights the initiatives undertaken by USAID in promoting and sustaining Global Health efforts worldwide.

### **Enhancing Maternal Health in Peru**

This is an example of a successful project where USAID provided funding to a local NGO to work in reproductive and maternal health. Peru has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in South America with about 265 deaths per 100,000 live births.<sup>85</sup> Family planning has been funded by various organizations but little results have been achieved. A main issue is that "family planning services remain inaccessible...to millions of women, especially in rural areas, where 20 percent of women have an unmet need for contraception."<sup>86</sup> These health services remain underfunded and under-advertised. There is also the issue of illegal abortions being performed for unwanted pregnancies. Thus maternal health is an integral example of a compelling global health issue that USAID is committed to working with.

The Manuela Ramos Movement is a local NGO that works with disenfranchised women in Peru. "USAID awarded the [NGO] nearly \$20 million for a five-year project."<sup>87</sup> This partnership led to the creation of ReproSalud. Susan Brems, the former director of Population, Health, and Nutrition Division of USAID/Lima Mission was responsible for the creation of this project; it was created as a "uniquely multifaceted project that linked women's contraceptive use and reproductive health to initiatives to

improve their personal, social, and ...economic power."<sup>88</sup> This was a large-scale project meant to maximize the number of recipients who benefited. Six regions of Peru were chosen based on rates of poverty, low contraceptive prevalence, and relative accessibility.<sup>89</sup> The essential criteria of the project included credit schemes to help poverty alleviation and increased educational opportunities about health and healthcare.<sup>90</sup>



[thelittlemarket.com](http://thelittlemarket.com)

ReproSalud was extremely innovative and beneficial to local women in that it relied on their output as the main driver of the project. The program relied on grassroots attempts to teach and educate women about their reproductive health. Women from local villages attended workshops and performed skits outlying their concerns. Surveys were then undertaken to find out what women knew about their maternal health and what was an outlying concern.

The results of the study were surprising in that most women cited reproductive-tract infections (RTI's) as their number one health concern. Thus opening up a dialogue for teaching Peruvian women how to treat and diagnose and find proper treatment for RTI's. The success of this project led USAID to fund it for another five years.<sup>91</sup> This case study highlights how beneficial the work of USAID in regards to

maternal health: USAID relied on a partnership with a local Peruvian NGO as well as grassroots efforts to help expand services among the women.

This example of a global health project showcases how the idea of partnership is important for USAID. USAID is proud to support and sponsor local initiatives at the grassroots level. The results that were achieved would not have been possible without sponsorship from USAID. Maternal health remains an impertinent problem for Peruvian women and USAID has achieved positive results.

## Water and Sanitation



[Wsscc.org](http://Wsscc.org)

There are an estimated 1.1 billion people who do not have access to safe drinking water. There are approximately another 2.6 billion people who do not have access to a proper sanitation system.<sup>92</sup> Thus, water and sanitation assistance is integral to development assistance. USAID has been giving water aid since the 1960s, which first focused on infrastructure projects. With the 1970's brought a shift toward an emphasis on health, water, and sanitation. In the 1980s USAID water policy stressed population control. By the 1990s USAID water policy showed a greater emphasis on water management.<sup>93</sup> Recently the discourse on water aid has shifted to examining water supply, sanitation, and wastewater management. In recent years, USAID has

truly honed in on the idea of sanitation in relation to water; lack of sanitation provides a breeding ground for disease and thus having clean water is integral for a society to function and develop.

Senator Paul Simons' Water for the Poor Act of 2005 made access to safe water and sanitation for developing nations a U.S. goal. There are three sectors in this: water supply, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). Teaching people how to be implement hygiene and sanitation standards is extremely important in terms of health. Water and sanitation are also important in terms of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). USAID also created large-scale projects with regards to agriculture, helping urban areas gain access to clean water, and building latrines in rural schools. Three of the MDGs relate directly to water: ensuring environmental sustainability; reducing child mortality, and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

Many people have access to contaminated drinking water. For children, contaminated drinking water can prove to be extremely detrimental as diarrhea is the second cause of death for children under the age of five.<sup>94</sup> USAID is dedicated to innovative techniques that can help people combat contaminated drinking water. USAID has released a groundbreaking project called mWater. Many people have mobile phones and this program aims to take advantage of this type of technology. mWater allows people to test their water sources to see if the water is contaminated or clean. Thus people can choose where to obtain their water from in accordance with where the safest water supply is located<sup>95</sup>. This program is currently being implemented in Mwanza and Tanzania and reception has been overwhelmingly positive.

## Water Education in Jordan

This case study examines the use of educational outreach in helping teach young students the importance of water conservation within their society. Since Jordan is a dry and arid country, water has increasingly become an emergent issue.

"Water scarcity and conservation are two of the most serious environmental problems faced by Jordan."<sup>96</sup> The population in Jordan is growing rapidly and in order to accommodate a larger population, Jordan faces the challenge of needing more water sources when all known water sources are already being used.<sup>97</sup> This study highlights how efficient water consumption is an issue for all households regardless of their socioeconomic status. This study aimed to educate community members about responsible water use.



[foeme.wordpress.com](http://foeme.wordpress.com)

This educational outreach program occurred in 1994 and 1995. The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN), a local NGO, received funding from GreenCOM (Environmental Education and Communication Project), an initiative of USAID.<sup>98</sup> Six schools were chosen to take part in this program. The program was designed to help educate young people about water conservation; students learned different ways in which they could conserve water in the household as well as learning about general information about the water cycle specific to Jordan. "The curriculum

advocated specific...behaviors to conserve water: take a shower instead of a bath, save the cold water that runs out while waiting for the water to heat."<sup>99</sup> This program had an impact on helping promote awareness and education about water and water behaviors.

This example of a project funded by USAID shows an attempt to change local behaviors in regards to water conservation and the impact these types of educational programs can have on youth.

USAID covers a broad range of programs relating to water and sanitation practices. The case study exhibited shows how educational programs are important for teaching communities how to be responsible about their water usage, an issue especially pertinent in an arid country like Jordan.

## Working in Crises and Conflict

Under the mandate of USAID, the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) provides humanitarian assistance to those suffering from natural disasters or violent crises. The OFDA was officially created in 1964, three years after the establishment of USAID with the US Foreign Security Act. OFDA coordinates a variety of US agencies to give relief and also fund relief efforts by NGOs, UN agencies, and other international bodies that respond during times of conflict.<sup>100</sup> Natural disasters in 2013 affected nearly 94 million people leaving many without food or stable homes, USAID seeks to provide humanitarian assistance as a reflection of American values. Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines affected 16 million people, and USAID remains committed to all of these people.

With the creation of the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) humanitarian assistance for countries impacted by crises and conflict began. In the beginning OFDA was viewed to respond to the irregular disasters that would occur

throughout the world, but through the years the U.S. government realized that humanitarian crises occurred much more regularly. To respond to this realization in 1992 USAID created the Bureau for Humanitarian Response which worked with OFDA and the Food for Peace Program. In 1994 the Office of Transition Initiatives was also created to connect the work done by OFDA and the other USAID programs for crises and conflict relief. The Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative was created in 2003 to hold donors more accountable to their affected populations and taxpayers. The goal of this initiative is to disburse funds given toward a humanitarian crises as effectively as possible. In 2004 the administration reorganization the Bureau to include Democracy, Conflict and humanitarian assistance, and added the Office of Democracy and Governance to help provide technical assistance.<sup>101</sup> The U.S. Ambassador or the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State declares the disaster and the OFDA will respond in through monetary assistance or physical assistance of helping bring in teams or distribute necessary supplies.<sup>102</sup>

### **Prevention, Response, Recovery and Transition**

USAID partners with international organizations, as well as local communities and governments to prevent and mitigate conflict and crises. To prepare and mitigate natural disasters, USAID has helped to create early warning systems, analyze hazards, establish better building codes, and train first responders to reduce the amount of people impacted by natural disasters such as volcanoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and droughts.<sup>103</sup> To prevent conflict or mitigate the impacts of violent conflict, USAID provides assessments and trains government and non-government partners to ensure peace-building. USAID also works with other donors to track and monitor

fragile states and help build peace.<sup>104</sup> Through collaboration with the Food for Peace Program as well as Health programs OFDA provides emergency humanitarian assistance to alleviate suffering. After conflicts and crises, USAID works with civil society to promote peaceful transitions and invests in the empowerment of women to improve peace and security.<sup>105</sup> By improving disaster and conflict relief USAID provides vital assistance to millions of people all over the world.

### **Typhoon Haiyan Relief Efforts**

On November 8th 2013 Typhoon Haiyan hit the Philippines damaging about 23,200 houses and significantly impacting



**Catholic Relief Services**

public infrastructure and agricultural land. Following the disaster President Obama pledged both USAID and military assistance to provide emergency shelter, health assistance, and food assistance.<sup>106</sup> USAID deployed the Disaster Response Team (DART) in anticipation of the storm with support of the Philippines government. With the help of international and local aid organizations USAID has airlifted water containers, hygiene kits, and temporary shelters. USAID also helped by purchasing rice on the local markets to send to people. By working together with the Philippine government USAID served millions of people bringing them vital aid immediately following the storm.<sup>107</sup>

## Focus Areas for a Better Tomorrow

USAID has performed a very diverse array of projects all around the world and in many of the most impoverished and dangerous places. For the upcoming Development Aid Consortium 2014, USAID is primarily interested in funding projects that closely relate to either the environment or to conflict resolution. First, given the recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Obama administration, environmental sustainability is becoming an increasingly important issue for all of humanity and must be addressed. Second, with growing tensions in Eastern Europe and the Middle East there is an increasingly important role for democratic governance and conflict resolution. Therefore, the major program sectors that will receive greatest consideration are: Agriculture and Food Security, Working in Crises and Conflict, Environment and Global Climate Change, and Democracy, Human Rights and Governance. All of these programs include the incorporation of women and other historically marginalized groups to promote peace and equality.

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