

USAID Gambia
Operational Closeout Plan

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I. Introduction.

USAID Senegal was requested by Acting DAA Lucretia Taylor to prepare an operational closeout plan for the USAID Mission to The Gambia. After discussion with AID-W, we agreed upon the following parameters for the closing:

- The Mission closing will be completed by September 30, 1996 with all personnel dismissed by that date.
- The program will be closed except for a CRS Title II Grant which will be managed by REDSO/WA and an NGO-based democracy and governance activity which will be managed from USAID Senegal. No direct hire USAID staff will be in the Gambia to monitor these programs. A US-PSC and an FSN will work with the embassy to monitor the currently envisioned D/G program.
- While the Ambassador was advised of the firm decision to close the Mission, approval of the closeout plan will be the means through which the decision is formalized.

USAID Senegal established an ad hoc Gambia close-down team consisting of the RLA (Belinda Barrington), the RCO (Sharon Cromer), the EXO (Barnett Chessin), the Controller (Igor Nesterczuk) and USAID Deputy Director Douglas Sheldon as chair of the committee. We also consider as virtual team members John Wall (PDO/REDSO), Paul Tuebner (AFR/WA), Gary Cohen (USAID Gambia, and Sean O'Leary (USAID Gambia.

A four person team from Dakar (the RLA, RCO, EXO and D/DIR) traveled to Banjul in April for 3 days. preliminary information to finalize the plan. REDSO Project Development Officer John Wall also visited to review project closeout

activities. During this visit the team met extensively with USAID Gambia staff, the Ambassador and other Embassy staff, and with other agencies. Based on these consultations and preliminary observations we developed this plan. Though the USAID staff, and the Ambassador, were understandably concerned, the decision to proceed with the closeout was not unexpected.

Our initial conclusion was that the closeout could be done in this time-frame (by September 30) but that it was very tight, given everything that needs to be done. In this context, we identify in the closeout plan key actions and recommendations which will have an impact on meeting the target closeout date.

II. Closeout Issues.

A. Democracy and Governance Activities to be undertaken with FY 1996 funds.

An Action Memorandum for the Administrator from AA/AFR (Annex A) proposes the continuation of short-term assistance to The Gambia through NGO's for democracy and governance activities. Specifically, \$350,000 for election assistance is proposed for election assistance through a US NGO, and \$200,000 is planned for small grants to local NGO's through the Democracy and Human rights fund (DHRF) project. The small grants activity would be administered and monitored through the embassy by a US PSC and FSN. The election assistance program would be monitored by the USPSC as well. Additional monitoring and back-stopping would be provided by USAID Senegal. Given that the elections have been postponed from the previous June date, the implementation of these D/G efforts would probably run several months into FY 1997. Let us assume an end date of March 31, 1997. Assuming that the action memorandum is ultimately approved, and that the funds are allocated, the following actions must be taken.

- **Action No. 1.** USAID Senegal and the American embassy in the Gambia would have to formalize understandings (probably through an MOU) on administrative support for the USPSC and FSN located in the Embassy.
- **Action No. 2.** USAID Senegal will need to identify funding and be granted a personnel ceiling for the USPSC and the FSN for the period of the envisioned activities e.g. through 3/31/97. Program funding would be appropriate.

B. Extension of the PL 480 Title II Program with CRS.

The AFR bureau is assuming that the CRS title II program will continue, at

least through FY 1997. However, the Administrator's National Interest determination (Annex B) which represents the basis for continued program activities in the Gambia, specifies FY 1996 as the final year for the project. Thus, from our perspective, the national interest memorandum needs to be amended to permit the program to continue past FY 1996.

- **Action No. 3** AFR/WA should secure an amendment to the national interest memorandum or other form of approval to permit the PL 480 title II program to continue past September 30, 1996.

C. Additional OE and staffing for the Closeout.

As discussed verbally with AFR/WA, USAID Gambia will need extra funding and a personnel ceiling extension to accomplish the closeout in a business like manner, and to meet the timetable. This is discussed in greater detail in section IV E (financial plan. In brief, USAID Gambia will need an extra \$167.0 in OE funding (from the current net allotment of \$410.0 to a new total of \$577.0). Secondly, we need the authority, e.g. the PSC ceiling, to extend the PSC of Sean O'Leary, the EXO from his current contract expiration date of June 30, 1996. both of these actions are critical. We cannot undertake this closeout with the OE funding and the services of Mr. O'Leary.

- **Action No. 4.** AFR/WA needs to secure and provide the necessary OE funds and personnel ceiling for the close out.

III. Program Closeout

In the aftermath of the change of government in 1994, most of the USAID assistance program for The Gambia was closed out. The Annex B National Interest Determination identified certain activities which could be continued in the short term. USAID/The Gambia's current project portfolio consists of one active project, eight active centrally-funded projects, one active PL 480 Title II Program, and residual activities under an old Title II Program and one old bilateral program.

The active bilateral project is the \$3 million Gambia Democracy Education Promotion Project (Project No. 635-0238), which was authorized on July 17, 1995 and is due to end on December 31, 1996. All other mission bilateral projects were closed in 1995, PACRs prepared, project-funded property disposed of, and project-financed contracts terminated.

The currently active centrally-funded projects are: Climate Change Country Studies, run by the US Department of Energy; the Peace Corps Small Project

Assistance Program; a grant to UNICEF for their Expanded Program on Immunization (through FY 1996); a grant to the International Planned Parenthood Federation; a PASA with DHHS for trials of the Haemophilus Influenza Type B Vaccine; a grant to the WHO Division of Diarrheal and Respiratory Disease Control; a grant to WHO for HIV/AIDS activities; the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund; and the Democracy and Human Rights Fund program.

In addition, there are residual Section 206 activities remaining under a 199 PL 480 Title II Program, which consist of local currencies programmed for the support of the Kiang West National Park in The Gambia. Lastly, two participants, sent abroad under the Agriculture and Natural Resources Management Project (635-0236) will not have returned to The Gambia by the time of Mission closeout.

A. Active Bilateral Projects

Gambia Democracy Education Promotion Project (GDEP), No. 635-0238

PACD: December 31, 1996

Project Activities: The \$3 million GDEP Project was designed to channel USAID resources through US and Gambian NGOs to support activities destined to bring about a return to democracy in The Gambia. \$2,871,141 was committed through Grant No. 635-0238-G-00-5310-00 to the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in July 1995. In January 1996, NDI removed its project personnel from The Gambia and suspended its operations. The Regional Contracting Officer (RCO) in Dakar is in the process of terminating the grant to NDI for changed circumstances.

Less than \$500,000 has been spent by NDI to date. Approximately \$350,000 of the unexpended funds remaining in the Project will be used to finance a buy-in to the Democracy Center's IQC (No. AEP-5468-I-00-6003-00) with the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) for the training of election monitors and poll watchers and the fielding of an international observer mission to the forthcoming elections. Additional project funds will be used to fund the costs of two personal services contractors (one US citizen, one Gambian) to assist the US Embassy in Banjul to implement an expanded program of assistance to Gambian NGOs targeted to civic education.

Financial Closeout: NDI is in the process of preparing a pipeline analysis, and submitting final reports and a final voucher to USAID. It is anticipated that approximately \$2 million will be recovered by USAID for reprogramming.

Project Staff: All NDI Project staff have been terminated. USAID PSC Barbara Jensen serves as the Project Officer for the GDEP Project. The Mission intends to

terminate her PSC and put her on a new PSC, reporting directly to the USDH Political Officer at the US Embassy/Banjul, where her role will be to support the Embassy as it implements its expanded assistance to Gambian civil society.

Project Equipment: All GDEP Project-funded equipment has been removed from the country by NDI (if purchased by NDI), in accordance with their Grant. Vehicles, housing, and other commodities financed under earlier USAID projects which were being used by NDI have been transferred to the Government of the Gambia.

Audits and Evaluations: No audits or evaluations have been performed on the GDEP Project. An evaluation may be performed when the project is concluded.

Grant Closeout: Negotiations with NDI are ongoing, and the grant with NDI will be terminated during June 1996 by the RCO in Dakar.

Disposition of Project Files: Project files will be sorted, packed, and shipped to USAID/Dakar by September 1, 1996. After the Project's PACD, the files will be disposed of in accordance with Handbook 21, App. 6B.

Remaining Project Documentation: Remaining Project obligations will consist of the signing of two Personal Service Contracts for the support of the Embassy's assistance to civic education, and the signing of a buy-in to the Agency's IQC with IFES. All three documents will be prepared and signed by the Regional Contracting Office in Dakar in May or June, 1996.

- **Action No. 5.** REDSO and AFR/WA need to coordinate on freeing-up funding for election assistance through decommitting/deobligating funds from the closed NDI grant.

B. PL480 TITLE II FOOD AID PROGRAM

(1). CRS

PACD: the current Multi-Year Operating Plan ends on September 30, 1996.

Program Activities: The Mission's PL 490 Title II Program is managed by Catholic Relief Services (CRS). The 100% monetization program generates local currencies which are used to improve the nutritional status of rural Gambian women and children and expand income-earning opportunities for rural women. The program has been approved through FY 96 under the National Interest Determination. However, CRS has applied for a one-year extension of the program, through

September 30, 1997. This request is being handled as a Previously Approved Activity (PAA), has been approved at the mission, and is currently under consideration by BHR in USAID/W.

Audit and Evaluation: An Assessment Team from REDSO/WCA recently completed a review of the CRS Title II activities in The Gambia, and recommended a continuation of the Program.

Program Documentation: As noted, the FY 97 PAA Proposal is currently being reviewed in Washington. CRS intends to submit a new 5-year DAP in March of 1997 to cover proposed activities in The Gambia from 1998 through 2002. The REDSO Assessment Team recommended the development of the 5-year DAP.

(2). Section 206

PACD:

Program Activities: This Section 206 Program, funded by the PL 480 Title II Program of 1986-88, supports the development infrastructure and management of Kiang West National Park in The Gambia. Approximately \$1 million of GOTG-owned local currencies was made available to refurbish Park Headquarters and staff housing, drill boreholes, and purchase radio equipment. Funds are spent by the GOTG Director of Wildlife Conservation, with the concurrence of the USAID Project Officer.

Financial Closeout: Some \$300,000 remains to be expended. The Mission has instructed the Director of Wildlife to expend all program funds by September 30, 1996.

Program-Funded Staff: N/A.

Program-funded Equipment: N/A.

Audit and Evaluation: An audit was completed in February 1996 of the Section 206 Program. The audit uncovered evidence of mismanagement on the part of the Wildlife Service, and prompted the development of final plans to liquidate remaining funding. No further audits or evaluations are deemed necessary.

Program Files: Program files will be sorted, packaged, and disposed of according to Handbook 21, App. 6B instructions in September 1996.

Program Documentation: Apart from a final report on expenditure of funds, no additional documentation needs to be prepared.

As noted previously, the national interest determination memo will have to be extended to permit the program to continue into FY 1997.

C. Active Centrally-funded Projects

(1). Climate Change Country Studies

Run by the US Department of Energy, this activity comprises an assessment of the impact of climate changes on sustainable development in The Gambia. The project was recommended for continuation in 95 Banjul 825. No USAID support is needed.

(2). Peace Corps Small Project Assistance Program (SPA):

The SPA is funded on an annual basis through a Memorandum of Understanding, and is currently funded through September 30, 1996. Under this program, the Peace Corps works in forestry and education and health. The Program was recommended for continuation in the National Interest Determination. No USAID support is needed.

(3). UNICEF Expanded Program for Immunization (EPI):

The centrally-funded grant to UNICEF/NY, designated for UNICEF/The Gambia, runs through September 30, 1996.

(4). International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF):

According to 94 Sec State 323780, this centrally-funded grant to IPPF/London was to have been dropped under the Mission's wind-down plan following the July 1994 coup. However, 95 Banjul 825 recommended its continuation, and contraceptive commodities funded under the grant are still being delivered to Banjul by IPPF. The Mission recommends that the grant be terminated, as far as the Gambian portion is concerned.

(5). Haemophilus Influenza Type B (HIB) Vaccine:

This PASA with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is scheduled to continue as per 95 Banjul 825. USAID funds are fully disbursed.

(6). Diarrheal and Respiratory Disease Control (DRDC):

This grant to the Division of Diarrheal and Respiratory Disease Control of the

World Health Organization (WHO), for studies aimed at new strategies for the prevention and case management of acute respiratory infections and the related illnesses of malaria and malnutrition, is scheduled to continue per 95 Banjul 825.

(7). HIV-AIDS:

This grant to WHO's Global Program for AIDS is scheduled to continue per 95 Banjul 825.

(8). Ambassador's Self-Help Fund:

This program, managed by the Embassy, provides assistance to community-based development initiatives. It is scheduled to continue under the National Interest Determination.

(9). Democracy and Human Rights Fund (DHRF):

This program, managed by the Embassy, provides assistance to Gambian non-Governmental organizations on various aspects of human and civic rights, democracy and governance. The program is scheduled to continue under the National Interest Determination.

D. Additional Planned Activities Before Closeout.

In addition to the Buy-in to IFES mentioned in Section III A 1 above, the Mission and USAID/Washington have agreed to program some \$250,000 in Section 517 resources through the DHRF program for civic education. The program will be managed by the US Embassy/Banjul, specifically by the Political Officer and a US PIT Coordinator currently employed by the Embassy to manage the Self Help and DHRF Programs. These two individuals will be assisted by one US PSC and one Gambian PSC, currently working for USAID/Banjul, who will be assigned to the Embassy to assist in program implementation. These individuals will be the USPSC Project Officer for the DGEP Project, and the mission's chief FSN financial analyst. These individuals will be responsible for supporting Embassy staff on the award and monitoring of the grants through the completion of all grant activity, which will be sometime between September 30 and March 31, 1997. The staff responsible for implementing the program will be assisted, as necessary, by the Regional Legal Advisor, and other USAID staff.

E. Participant Trainees

The Mission in Banjul has four participants, funded under the Agriculture and

Natural Resources Management Project (635-0236) who are currently pursuing their studies overseas. Of the four, two - Alpha Jallow and Lamin Kassama, both studying Wildlife Management at Mweke College of Wildlife Management in Tanzania - are scheduled to complete their studies and return to Banjul by June 30, 1996. The last two participants - Kebba Sonko and Abdoulie Sanneh, both studying Forestry at the University of the Philippines, may not return until after September 30, 1996. Mr. Sanneh is currently programmed to complete his studies and return to The Gambia by June 30, 1997, and Mr. Sonko - although expected to return by June 30, 1996 - is having trouble completing his studies. Mr. Sanneh, and if necessary Mr. Sonko, will be tracked by REDSO/WCA after September 30, 1996, and the files of the participants who have not yet returned to The Gambia will be sent to REDSO by September 30, 1996.

- **Action No. 6.** As of June 30, 1996 REDSO should formally assume responsibility for tracking the remaining participants who have not returned to the Gambia.

IV. **Continuation of Activities after the Closeout.**

The closeout action envisioned in this plan, closes the bilateral USAID Mission to the Gambia as an administrative organizational unit. Yet, as described in this memo certain forms of assistance will continue. USAID provided, in a letter to the Ambassador (Annex C) some suggested public text on dealing with Mission closing.

Current USAID assistance proposals for civic education and for election assistance are indicated in annex B. Except for a continuation of the PL 480 title II program through FY 1997, no additional assistance is planned at this time. Any future assistance to the Gambia would depend on the outcome of the scheduled elections and/or other steps seen to be leading towards a restoration of democracy.

If the election results are positive and/or other events warrant additional assistance activities may be approved most probably for continued work in democracy and governance. Rather than try to implement directly small grants -- as we are doing as an interim step for civic education -- it would be preferable to work through an American NGO. CRS, in the country, is an American NGO with a presence and considerable experience. Similarly, we seek to run any additional approved activities through central or regional activities and through intermediary organizations on the ground, under USAID Senegal's general supervision. We do not envision the re-establishment of a USAID Mission. Depending on the monitoring needs of a reconfigured program we would probably not retain the USPSC in a reconfigured program. We may or may not retain an FSN PSC.

V. Administrative and Financial Closeout.

A. General timetable and Plan.

The USAID Mission to The Gambia consists of one USDH two USPSC's and 13 FSN PSCs. the Mission is located in a USG owned building in the city of Banjul. there is significant nonexpendable property for sale or disposal. Key target dates for the closeout are as follows.

- May 15 Closeout plan approved.
- May 15 Specific Plans for property disposal and records disposal approved by Dakar.
- June 01 Building advertised for sale
- June 15 USDH departs post. USAID Senegal takes over.
- July 01 Records disposed of or forwarded.
- July 31 Unit set up in the Embassy with one PSC and one FSN to monitor D/G.
- August 31 Sale or disposal of property complete.
- August 31 Building is vacated.
- August 31 Most FSN employees released.
- August 31 Temporary office/computer set up in embassy,
- Sept. 15 Building sold.
- Sept. 30 US PSC contract terminated.
- Sept. 30 USAID The Gambia signs off.

B. Personnel.

The approved Mission staffing level as of October 1, 1995 totaled 22 (1 USDH, 2 USPSC and 19 FSNs). The current staffing consists of one USDH, 2 US PSCs, and 13 FSN PSCs. Based on our discussion with the Mission, the Ambassador and AID/W we propose the following actions.

- (1) **USDH.** The USDH position in Banjul should be vacated o/a June 15, 1996, with the employee and family departing post for onward assignment at that time.
- (2) **USPSC - Executive Officer.** The US PSC Executive Officer must remain through mission closeout in September. See Action No. 4 in Section II. C (Close out Issues) of this memo.

- (3) **USPSC - Democracy and Governance Monitor.** The USPSC designated for D/G monitoring will be extended, probably under program funds, and moved to the embassy. See Actions No's 1 & 2 in Section II. A (Closeout issues) of this memo.
- (4) **FSN Staff.** We currently envisions no FSN staff reductions at least through the end of July, 1996. Thereafter, such drawdowns as may be considered feasible shall be effected as individual closeout tasks are completed. All departing FSN personnel shall be provided with three months' advance notice.

In preparing the personnel phaseout plan, USAID shall coordinate with the Embassy to ensure compliance with provisions of the approved local compensation plan. USAID will also seek Government of the Gambia Labor Office approval of the proposed personnel phaseout plan to the extent that such approval will serve to help the Mission avoid undue litigation. Further to the above, the Mission is soliciting locally available legal representation in order confirm that any termination actions are in accordance with local law.

95 State 154282 urged all closing missions to develop out-placement programs for their FSN staff. USAID is actively assisting current employees in seeking future employment. To the extent possible, the Mission will also provide nearby USAID missions with information regarding the availability and skills of USAID/Gambia employees, and has actually already done so in at least one case.

The limited time available for closeout activities will necessarily limit any "new career" training for FSN employees. Nonetheless, the Mission will attempt to upgrade skills where it may, and where such activities do not directly conflict with closeout work. Such training may include (not exclusively) computer-skill upgrade, resume writing, and training in interview techniques and follow-up.

- **Action No. 7.** With the departure of the USDH staffer, AID/W should take the necessary action to transfer the vacant position to USAID Senegal.
- **Action No. 8.** With the departure of the USDH staffer, AID/W should designate the USAID Senegal Mission Director as responsible for programs in The Gambia.

C. **In-country Support.**

As the USAID will have a minimum staff of FSNs until the near the end of FY 96; the organization can provide most of its own general and administrative

services during the closeout period. USAID relies on the Embassy to provide most administrative support services through a local FAAS agreement. Since timing of the closeout notification precluded any FAAS-decrease notification, FAAS costs and services are expected to remain constant - as originally established for this fiscal year.

USAID management and financial personnel will continue operations through mid-September, 1996. Thereafter, any residual work will be assumed by the Embassy Administrative Office; however, such services are expected to be minimal: primarily reflecting incomplete NXP sales or other disposal; general oversight of the USAID Office Building, if not sold prior to closeout; and final shipment of PSC EXO effects, if not already completed prior to departure.

Those residual financial management functions still being handled in Banjul shall be transferred to REDSO/WCA (already responsible for financial oversight of the Mission) in September. USAID/GAMBIA will also arrange with the Embassy to forward any late invoices received to REDSO/WCA as well. This does not include any Special Self Help, Human Rights and SPA activities which are included under separate Embassy/USAID agreements, and which the Embassy will continue to implement with REDSO/WCA support. Otherwise, the volume of residual USAID-related financial transactions after September, 1996 are expected to be minimal.

Extra assistance will be required from time to time to assist with specialized tasks a/o general closeout activities. Therefore, the Mission will be requesting technical assistance as follows:

- a maximum of eight visits by USAID/SENEGAL personnel (EXO, RLA, RCO a/o Deputy Director), as such personnel may be needed;
- at least two visits by REDSO/WCA personnel; and
- possibly one TDY by a records-management consultant to assist with records closeout and disposal.

Funding for the above TDYs as well as for at least one TDY for a Gambia financial management person to assist REDSO/WCA, in Abidjan, with financial record reconciliation in September, 1996 is included in an amended budget request included as an attachment to this planning document.

D. Real Property.

(1). Residential Property includes two OE-funded leased houses one of which will be released in July after the departure of the USDH officer. The other residence

will be released in late August. Notification to respective landlords will be forwarded as soon as possible. After the lease termination, the EXO will reside in a local hotel.

(2). Office Building. On August 27, 1984, USAID/BANJUL exercised the option to purchase the current USAID Office building. The property is described in Annex E - Real Property.

Closure of the Mission involves disposal of the property. the ambassador has indicated that the property is not needed by an other agency of the USG at post. We have therefore determined that it is appropriate to try and sell the property. The Mission is now in process of obtaining a current appraisal to permit a sale of the property. The steps envisioned in the sale process are indicated in Annex E. We do need AID/W approval to sell the property.

-- **Action No. 9.** The USAID Senegal EXO in coordination with AFR/WA should seek formal AID/W permission to sell the Office building.

While we are planning a sale of the building, hopefully by the September 30 closeout date, we must prepare for the possibility that we are not able to sell the building at the present time because either we receive no bids or alternatively, because the offered prices are not acceptable. (AID/W, AA/M makes this determination). In such circumstances our preference would be to attempt to lease the property, or, alternatively, if possible, to permit some organization such as an American NGO to utilize the property rent-free in return for maintenance etc. This would better safeguard the value USG real property investment. USAID Senegal will follow up on this issue with the Embassy in the Gambia after the closeout if the property is not sold.

E. **Non-expendable Property.**

Currently, USAID Gambia's non-expendable property (NXP) records are in Abidjan (REDSO/WCA) for reconciliation with the financial records of the regional controller. Nonetheless, physical records are currently available, both in the Mission and in Dakar, to allow verification of the physical count. USAID/GAMBIA NXP is valued at \$709,217.00, and is composed of the following:

Office Furniture & Equipment	\$ 89,567
Residential Furnishings & Appliances	\$131,639
ADP Equipment & Accessories	\$193,580
Other(including category 319)	\$156,919
<u>Motor Vehicles/Spare Parts</u>	<u>\$137,512</u>

TOTAL

\$709,217

In disposing of the property the Mission currently plans to follow procedures as noted below:

1. Provide USAID/W (M/AS/OMS) and nearby missions with data regarding equipment/furnishings which are in excellent shape, and may be shipped to other posts.
2. As use at post diminishes, pack and ship NXP required by other posts as soon as fund cites have been received.
3. Property not requested by other missions will then be made available to other USG agencies at post as they may require (the Mission has already received an extensive "wish list" from the Peace Corps).
4. After and depending on the above, we will then sell off whatever or otherwise dispose of any property remains in stock.

F. Records Management.

USAID/GAMBIA has approximately 15.92 cubic feet of records (official and working files). This accumulation of files and records shall be transferred or otherwise disposed of in accordance with Handbook guidance. The Mission will do as much as it can on its own, but has reserved funds in the closeout budget to hire a records advisor to assist with records closeout and disposal. There is no one on the staff with the requisite experience or time available to determine the proper disposition of all unclassified records and materials. Once the Mission has determined which files are to be transferred to USAID/W, USAID/SENEGAL, REDSO/WCA or the Embassy, transfer will begin.

G. Financial Management and Plan.

REDSO/WCA has maintained the Gambia accounts on the MACS system, and USAID/GAMBIA will remain a fully serviced post, with basic financial management servicing provided by the REDSO Controller until the Mission closes. Thereafter, the REDSO Control will continue to maintain accounts until all obligations have been liquidated, certify non-cash expenditure transactions, and arrange for any residual payments. The Mission has 3 FSN accountants who currently provide minimal financial servicing at post. They will remain on board until the Mission closes, and continue to perform basic financial functions as follows:

1. maintenance of local summary records on OE budget allowances;
2. maintenance of obligation records and controls of OE funds, including prevalidation of funds availability;
3. maintenance of OE liquidation records;
4. control of the payment process through voucher preparation, administrative or project officer approval, personal review, transmission to REDSO/WCA for certification, and voucher tracking;
5. control of cash payments made by the Embassy on behalf of the Mission.

In September, 1996, as operations wind down, USAID will ship all residual records pertaining to Gambia accounts to the REDSO/WCA Controller.

FINANCIAL PLAN

In addition to funds already made available for Mission operations (\$410,000.00), the Mission will require an additional \$167,000.00 to cover closeout-related activities. The revised budget includes funds for (1) a records specialist TDY; (2) a series of USAID/SENEGAL TDYs to Banjul to provide assistance and advice; (3) severance payments for FSN employees; (4) costs related to building sale; (5) legal services as necessary; and other miscellaneous closeout expenditures. Details are provided in the budget presented in Annex F.

Annex A AA/AFR to Administrator Action Memo to be added later.

Annex B Administrator's National Interest Determination to be added later

Annex C

April 12, 1996

To: Ambassador Scott

From: Douglas L. Sheldon, Acting Director USAID Senegal

Subject: Information for public release on the closing of USAID
Gambia

As we discussed, the Embassy will no doubt be called on to discuss the details and implications of the USAID Gambia closing. The following are some comments and observations, which may be of some use to you in this regard.

Press Release.

You wish to issue a press release at some appropriate time. If possible, it would be nice to be able to announce approval of the proposed funding (\$550,000) for democracy and governance activities at the same time as you indicate that the bilateral assistance mission is closing. We hope this will happen soon. But, I wouldn't delay your announcement more than a couple of weeks. Anyway, in your announcement, I would hit the following general points

- The Agency for International Development is closing its field office -- USAID Gambia -- on or before September 30, 1996.
- This does not mean that official US assistance is ending. Some programs such as Peace Corps, assistance in democracy/governance, and Food Aid are continuing.
- The US has been a partner of long standing in Gambia's development effort. Our total assistance to date of \$166 million is quite significant on a per capita basis. We hope circumstances and the bilateral relationship will soon permit an increase of assistance and a renewal of our partnership.

Talking Points.

Question: We understand that the USAID Gambia Office is closing. Is this true?

Response: Yes. The Agency for International Development (USAID), in consultation with the Department of state, has decided to close its field office in The Gambia as of September 30, 1996. This decision relates partially to the legally mandated evolution and reduction of the Gambia program which has occurred over the last two years. More importantly, however, the decision reflects the changing policy directions of the USG which have resulted in lower funding levels for international affairs in general and for foreign assistance in particular. The international press has reported well the budget debates within the U.S. Congress on these matters. Also, USAID as an organization is reconsidering -- through its re-engineering process -- how foreign assistance can be best targeted and administered to achieve results. To better focus its human and financial resources, USAID has identified for closing a number of field offices, or Missions, including the Office located in Banjul.

Question: Does this mean that US assistance to the Gambia is ending.

Response: No, on the contrary, US assistance to the Gambia is continuing, though at a significantly reduced level. In this context, development and other forms of official US assistance are an integral part of the bilateral relationship between our two countries and such assistance takes many forms. For example, we have on ongoing programs involving the US Peace Corps, and the distribution of food assistance (PL 480 title II) through CRS, an American NGO. We also plan to administer, through the Embassy and with assistance of USAID Senegal, a program to support The Gambia's efforts in respect to democracy and governance. Other regional development programs -- particularly as related to health, child survival and AIDS -- may have an assistance component in the Gambia. Thus, while some official US assistance is continuing, the nature, form and management of assistance is changing.

Question: How much assistance has the United States provided to the Gambia and how have assistance levels changed in recent years?

Response: Total official U.S. assistance, from all sources will amount to an

estimated \$166.0 million through 1996. Primary components include economic development assistance through USAID (\$93.7 million), Food assistance through the PL 480 program (\$48.7 million), the Peace Corps Program (\$22.4 million), and military assistance for training (\$1.2 million). Assistance levels have declined from \$10.7 million in 1994, to \$5.3 million in 1995, and, lastly to \$4.1 million.

Question: Why has US assistance to the Gambia declined so much in recent years?

Response: U.S. Law requires a termination of most forms of economic assistance when an elected government is replaced or overthrown outside of the State's constitutional processes. The law is exacting in its terminology and does not permit interpretation of country specific circumstances. Due to the July 1994 change of government in The Gambia, the USAID program was suspended. Peace Corps programs are not subject to this law and continue unaffected. A special exception authority permitted USAID to continue in 1996 the Food Assistance Program (\$2.1 million) and certain activities designed to support the return to democracy.

Question: Will USAID assistance to the Gambia resume or expand after the elections? If so, will the USAID Mission be started-up again?

Response: Circumstances and our bilateral relationship in the future may be such as to warrant increased assistance. This would require a determination by the Department of State and USAID that the legal situation, under which assistance was curtailed, has changed.

Any approved increase in economic assistance would probably be administered through USAID regional or central activities, rather than through bilateral projects with the GOTG per se. It is unlikely that a bilateral assistance Mission e.g. USAID Gambia will be reestablished.

Question: In what ways would a renewed assistance program be different from the previous bilateral assistance program administered through USAID Gambia.

Response: USAID is changing the way foreign assistance is administered and delivered through a process which is called re-engineering. This is a part of President Clinton and Vice President Gore's initiative to reinvent government processes. The main thrust of USAID's approach is to emphasize the achievement of measurable development results in specific target areas such as child survival, environment/natural resources, AIDS awareness, family planning, and democracy and governance. Specifically in countries without a direct USAID presence, like

The Gambia, programs would largely be administered through intermediary organizations such as NGOs. (CRS, an American NGO administers the Food Program for example.) It is also possible that regional organizations or USAID grantees would establish relations and activities directly with counterpart Gambian organizations. Lastly some programs could be administered directly through the Peace Corps or the Embassy.

Annex D - Personnel Listing
USAID Gambia staffing pattern and phase out plan

Gary Cohen	USDH	Agr Dvl Off	June 30	
Sean O'Leary	USPSC	EXO		Sept 30
Barbara Jensen	USPSC	HRDA Off		Extended
Edrissa Jarju	FSNPSC	System Specialist	Sept 30	
Fatou John	"	Chief Accountant	Sept 30	
Lolley Fall	"	Project Accountant		Sept 15
Tijan Sinyan	"	Budget Analyst		Sept 15
Momodou Jallow	"	Gen Service Specialist		Sept 15
Sainabou Secka	"	Purchasing Agent		Sept 15
Sandi Darboe	"	C&R Assistant		Sept 15
Satang Taal	"	Part Trng Specialist	Sept 15	
Mariama Jatta	"	Janitor		Sept 15
Festa Manneh	"	Gardener		Sept 15
Sarjoe Kinteh	"	Driver		Sept 15
Lamin Sanneh	"	Driver		Sept 15
Seedia Bojang	"	Driver		Sept 15

Annex E. - Real Property
USAID Gambia Office Building

On August 27, 1984, USAID/BANJUL exercised the option to purchase the current USAID Office building. The property is described in Annex E - Real Property. The original purchase price of the office was \$332,850.00. The total area of the property measures 10,214.9 sq.ft. (948.96 sq.m.) and is composed of two sections:

- **OAU Boulevard** (previously called 60 Lemman Street) is to the rear of the property and is freehold property containing the two-story USAID Office building, a driver's waiting room, and a two-room storage shed w/toilet and shower room attached. The office building contains 19 staff offices, 1 conference room, a visitor/reception area, a secure receptionist room, 2 small storage areas, a telephone room and 5 toilets.
attached equipment: water pump, water tank, cistern, generator, fuel tank/pump, electrical wiring, 4 security doors, split air conditioners, and window type air conditioners.
- **60A OAU Boulevard** (previously called 60A Lemman Street), a leasehold property, is the main entrance to the property, consisting of the driveway, generator room, and enclosed fuel pump area.

The steps envisioned for the sale of the USAID Gambia Office Building Properties are as follows:

Building Sale Schedule (Est.)

Washington approval of sale proposal	ASAP
Selection of legal representation	ASAP
Appraisal pro-formas received	ASAP
Lawyer contracted	ASAP
Property appraisal POs complete	ASAP
IFB Prepared	May 20
Building appraisals complete	May 25
IFB reviewed by lawyer	May 26
IFB approved by RLA	May 29
Bidder selection process complete	June 31
Approval by RLA	June 31
Promissory Agreement complete	July 10
Approval - RLA	July 17
Promissory Agreement signed	July 19
Final agreement prepared	July 30

Approval - RLA
Signature of final agreement
Building turnover

Aug 7
Aug 15
Sept 25

Annex F - Financial Plan.
USAID Gambia - Revised 1996 Budget

**Revised FY 1996 Operating Expense budget
\$ (000.0)**

<u>FUNCT CODE</u>		<u>OLD LEVEL</u>	SUP	<u>NEW LEVEL</u>	Footnotes
U100	USDH	8.7	9.7	18.4	_1/
U200	FSNDH	0.0	0.0	0.0	
U300	USPSC	59.0	25.0	84.0	_2/
U300	FSNPSC	156.4	87.6	244.0	_3/
U400	Resid.	47.1	0.0	47.1	
U500	Office Ops	138.8	44.7	183.5	_4/
TOTAL		410.0	167.0	577.0	

Footnotes.

1. Costs assume the USDH goes to another overseas posting with costs of transport beyond airfare paid by receiving Mission. If USDH is rotated to AID/W, an additional \$20,000 would be needed.
2. USPSC costs calculated as follows: 3 months (UHC 3.0, guards 2.4, rent 2.0, sal. 17.0, maint 0.6)
3. Severance Pay - thirteen FSNs.
4. Office operations cost estimate based on: [Abj TDYs X 2= 3.7; Dakar assist TDY X 32= 4.6; lawyer, building appraisals, C&R TDY=50.0; copier maint.=1.0; property movement/disposal assistance= 7.0] [Decreases: equip. 4.7; conference travel 8.0; and site visits 11.0]

Annex G
USAID Gambia
Summary of Actions in the Closeout Plan

- **Action No. 1.** USAID Senegal and the American embassy in the Gambia would have to formalize understandings (probably through an MOU) on administrative support for the USPSC and FSN located in the Embassy. (Section II. A.)
- **Action No. 2.** USAID Senegal will need to identify funding and be granted a personnel ceiling for the USPSC and the FSN for the period of the envisioned activities e.g. through 3/31/97. Program funding would be appropriate. (Section II. A.)
- **Action No. 3** AFR/WA should secure an amendment to the national interest memorandum or other form of approval to permit the PL 480 title II program to continue past September 30, 1996. (Section II. B.)
- **Action No. 4.** AFR/WA needs to secure and provide the necessary OE funds and personnel ceiling for the close out. (Section II. C.)
- **Action No. 5.** REDSO and AFR/WA need to coordinate on freeing-up funding for election assistance through decommitting and deobligating funds from the closed NDI grant. (Section III A.)
- **Action No. 6.** As of June 30, 1996 REDSO should formally assume responsibility for tracking the remaining participants who have not returned to the Gambia. (Section III. E.)
- **Action No. 7.** With the departure of the USDH staffer, AID/W should take the necessary action to transfer the vacant position to USAID Senegal. (section V.B.)
- **Action No. 8.** With the departure of the USDH staffer, AID/W should designate the USAID Senegal Mission Director as responsible for programs in The Gambia. (Section V.B.)
- **Action No. 9.** The USAID Senegal EXO in coordination with AFR/WA should seek formal AID/W permission to sell the Office building. (Section V. D)